

Company registration number 08608287 (England and Wales)

**HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

CONTENTS

	Page
Reference and administrative details	1 - 2
Trustees' report	3 - 29
Governance statement	30 - 34
Statement on regularity, propriety and compliance	35
Statement of trustees' responsibilities	36
Independent auditor's report on the accounts	37 - 39
Independent reporting accountant's report on regularity	40 - 41
Statement of financial activities including income and expenditure account	42 - 43
Balance sheet	44
Statement of cash flows	45
Notes to the accounts including accounting policies	46 - 68

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members

D Smith (Resigned 31 August 2024)
I Cunningham
L Laidler
A Boddison

Trustees

J Bromiley (Resigned 31 August 2024)
E Horne CBE (CEO)
M Jones
D New
R Nicholls (Resigned 7 February 2024)
Dr B Sinha
D Walker MBE (Chair of the board)
A Ward
C Whittaker
A Thompson (Appointed 1 October 2024)

Senior management team

- Chief Executive	E Horne CBE
- Deputy Chief Executive	R Whelan
- Executive Principal	D Penny
- Principal	L Beaumont
- Principal	K Fenton
- Principal	R Glover
- Principal	M Lyons
- Principal	J Newman
- Principal	S Thomas
- Principal	K Thompson
- Principal	M Hockham
- Head of Finance	C Thomas

Company secretary

A Ascough

Company registration number

08608287 (England and Wales)

Principal and registered office

Abbey Hill Academy
Ketton Road
Stockton-On-Tees
TS19 8BU

Academies operated

Abbey Hill Academy
Archway Academy
Green Gates Academy
Hollis Academy
Mo Mowlam Academy
Westlands Academy
Woodlands Academy

Location

Stockton-on-Tees
Redcar and Cleveland
Stockton-on-Tees
Middlesbrough
Redcar and Cleveland
Stockton-on-Tees
North Yorkshire

Principal

J Newman
L Beaumont
M Lyons
K Fenton
R Glover
S Thomas
M Hockham

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Independent auditor

Azets Audit Services
Bulman House
Regent Centre
Gosforth
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 3LS

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc
27 High Street
Stockton-On-Tees
TS18 1SG
United Kingdom

Solicitors

WBD (UK) LLP
The Spark
Draymans Way
Newcastle Helix
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE4 5DE

Internal assurance provider

Clive Owen LLP
140 Coniscliffe Road
Darlington
County Durham
DL3 7RT
United Kingdom

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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

Horizons Specialist Academy Trust is a Multi-Academy Trust that sits across four local authority areas. In that capacity, it acts as one employer across all Academies within the Trust. The schools forming part of the Academy Trust during the financial year were:

- Abbey Hill Academy & Sixth Form – Ketton Road, Stockton on Tees, TS19 8BU
- Archway Academy – Learning Lane, The Venue, Teesville, Middlesbrough, TS6 0BE
- Green Gates Academy - Melton Road, Stockton on Tees, TS19 0JD
- Hollis Academy – Saltersgill Avenue, Middlesbrough, TS4 3JS
- Mo Mowlam Academy – Corporation Road, Redcar TS10 1PA,
- Westlands Academy – Eltham Crescent, Thornaby, Stockton on Tees, TS17 9RA
- Woodlands Academy – Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO12 6QN

Structure, governance and management

Constitution

Horizons Specialist Academy Trust (the "Trust") was incorporated on 12 July 2013. It is a company limited by guarantee with no share capital (registration number 08608287) and an exempt charity under the Academies Act 2010. The Charitable Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are the primary governing documents of the Trust. The charitable company is known as Horizons Specialist Academy Trust.

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

Members' liability

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

Trustees' indemnities

The Trust has purchased insurance to protect Trustees and staff from claims arising due to negligent acts, errors or omissions whilst carrying out Academy business. A Trustee may benefit from any indemnity insurance purchased at the Trust's expense to cover the liability of the Trustees which by virtue of any rule of law would otherwise attach to them in respect of any negligence, default or breach of trust or breach of duty of which they may be guilty in relation to the Trust: Provided that any such insurance shall not extend to any claim arising from any act or omission which the Trustees knew to be a breach of trust or breach of duty or which was committed by the Trustees in reckless disregard to whether it was a breach of trust or breach of duty or not and provided also that any such insurance shall not extend to the costs of any unsuccessful defence to a criminal prosecution brought against the Trustees in their capacity as Trustees of the Trust.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of trustees

Trustees are appointed under the rules contained within the Trust's Memorandum and Articles of Association and membership of the Board of Trustees is in accordance with the structure contained within it, i.e. the Chief Executive, up to six Member appointed Trustees, a minimum of two parent Trustees (unless there are Local Governing Bodies which include at least two parent members) and the discretion to appoint Co-opted Trustees. The number of Trustees is not subject to any maximum and the appointments made are in line with the guidance in the Articles of Association.

Following the establishment of Local Governing Bodies – referred to as Academy Councils – considerable work has taken place to appoint two parent governors to each of the five Academy Councils and this continues as terms of office end and vacancies occur. Parent governors must be a parent of a pupil at one of the Academies at the time they were elected; however, if it is not practical to do so, a person can be appointed who is the parent of a child of school age.

The Chief Executive of the Trust holds a Member appointed position and shall be a Trustee for as long as he/she remains in that position.

The Trustees may appoint Co-opted Trustees. The Trustees may not co-opt an employee of the Trust as a co-opted Trustee if thereby the number of Trustees who are employees would exceed one third of the total number of Trustees. There is currently one vacancy for a Member appointed Trustee. The appointment of new Trustees involves analysis of the present Trustees' skills and identification of any gaps. The process of Trustee recruitment ensures prospective Trustees have the skills required by the Board.

The Secretary of State may appoint additional Trustees as she thinks fit if she has given a warning notice and the Trustees have failed to comply, or secure compliance, with the notice to the Secretary of State's satisfaction, within the compliance period. The Secretary of State may also appoint additional Trustees following an inspection by the Chief Inspector of Schools (Ofsted) where the Trust receives a grading which amounts to a drop of two Ofsted grades.

As set out in the articles and funding agreement – The Trust has the following Trustees:

James Bromiley (resigned wef 31.08.24)

Elizabeth Horne CBE

Maurice Jones

David New

Rosemary Nicholls (resigned wef 07.2.24)

Dr Baxi Sinha

Alastair Thompson (wef 01.10.24)

David Walker MBE

Anna Ward

Colin Whittaker

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees

In line with the Trust's Induction Guidance, all new Trustees are provided with induction, appropriate to their experience and expertise, by the Trust's Governance Operations Manager and members of the Trust's Executive Leadership Team.

Training requirements are identified during the Board's annual self-evaluation process, through the skills audit review process and also to reflect changes to legislation. Bespoke induction training is also provided for newly appointed Governors.

Further development of local governance to focus on the quality of education and the Ofsted framework is an ongoing process, supported through training and development. Link Governor roles for each academy ensure focussed visits take place and feedback is provided to the appropriate Academy Council.

Trustees also have access to National Governance Association (NGA) weekly briefings to support them in keeping up-to-date with national education and governance issues, and also the NGA's online training and development programmes.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

During the 2023/2024 period, Trustees and Governors completed safeguarding training and also ensured that they were fully up-to-date with the revised 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' document. Induction training was provided to the new Trustee and new Academy Council Governors. In addition, Trustees and Governors had access to the 'Annual Training Plan 2023/2024' which identified mandatory safeguarding, staying safe online, data protection and cyber security training for Trustees and Governors to undertake. This also provided access to both taught training sessions and suggested sessions accessible through the NGA and National College online training platforms. Taught sessions included protected characteristics, Ofsted inspection expectations, the Trust's vision, values and strategic priorities for 2023-2026, understanding progress through the curriculum and the Academy Trust Handbook and Audit requirements. Trustees and governors were also signposted to a number of online training sessions which included Equality & Diversity: A practical guide for governors and trustees, Pupil Premium, and tackling unconscious bias as part of a positive approach to mental health.

Organisational structure

The Trust Board is supported by an effective Committee structure comprising the Resources, Audit & Risk Committee, the Standards Committee and the Pay Review Committee. Reporting to the Standards Committee there are five Academy Councils - Academy Council (Complex Needs) for Abbey Hill Academy and Abbey Hill Academy Sixth Form, Academy Council for Archway Academy (Pupil Referral Unit PRU), Academy Council (SEMH - Primary) for Green Gates Academy and Mo Mowlam Academy (Primary), Academy Council (SEMH – Secondary) for Hollis Academy, Mo Mowlam Academy (Secondary) and Westlands Academy and Academy Council for Woodlands Academy.

The Chair of the Board of Trustees and Chief Executive meet regularly with the Chairs of the Academy Councils in order to ensure a consistency of approach across the Trust.

There is an Education Leadership Team comprising the CEO, Deputy CEO, Executive Principal, Academy Principals and the Trust's Safeguarding Lead. In addition there is an Operational Leadership Team including the CEO, Deputy CEO, Head of Finance, HR Manager, Head of Estates & IT and Governance Operations Manager. The Trust's Executive Leadership Team, comprising the CEO, Deputy CEO, CFO and Executive Principal, along with the key leaders from these groups work closely with the Board of Trustees to inform strategic decision making.

In addition, there are individual academy Senior Leadership Teams. The aim of the management structure is to devolve responsibility and encourage involvement in decision-making at all levels. In addition, there is a Joint Consultative Group, involving representatives from trade unions within the Trust, which meets minimally on a termly basis with the Chief Executive, members of the Executive Leadership Team, and a member of the Board of Trustees. The Trust also has a fully established Safeguarding Forum that is attended by the Lead Safeguarding Trustee.

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility and is ultimately accountable for the academies within the Trust. They hold the Chief Executive to account, who in turn holds the Executive Leaders, Operational Leaders and Academy Principals to account. The Academy's Senior Leadership Teams are responsible for the day-to-day operation of each individual academy in addition to supporting the wider work and objectives of the Trust.

Powers are delegated from the Board via the Trust's Scheme of Delegation, which is reviewed on an annual basis.

The Trustees, through meetings of the Board and its Committees and the Academy Councils, are responsible for the strategic direction of the Trust and its individual academies. This includes:

- Setting the strategic direction of the Trust.
- Adopting and monitoring the Trust's Strategic Improvement Plan and individual Academy Improvement Plans.
- Detailing and reviewing the curriculum.
- Identifying Key Performance Indicators and monitoring performance.
- Monitoring progress and performance against Key Performance Indicators.
- Monitoring the standards and performance of the Trust's academies.
- Ensuring robust safeguarding arrangements are in place in each academy.
- Compliance with the Equality Act 2019.
- Budget approval and monitoring, and
- Making major decisions in relation to the Trust.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

Salaries for members of the Executive Leadership Team are set in line with national Teachers' Pay & Conditions linked to Individual School Ranges (ISRs) or as a result of formal job evaluation and benchmarking arrangements.

The Board appointed Elizabeth Horne CBE, Chief Executive of Horizons Specialist Academy Trust, as Accounting Officer for the Trust.

Trade union facility time

Relevant union officials

Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	3
Full-time equivalent employee number	2.44

Percentage of time spent on facility time

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

Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time

Total cost of facility time	£	4,697
Total pay bill	£	19,319,836
Percentage of the total pay bill spent on facility time		0.02%

Paid trade union activities

Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours	-
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Engagement with employees

The Trust recognises the importance of people as being key to its success. Staff help maintain our strong reputation for high standards that are fundamental to the delivery of our strategic plan. At Board level, employees are recognised as a key asset to the Trust. The Board receives regular updates on progress against the Trust's Employee strategic objectives including the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) on staff attendance and information related to recruitment and retention. The Trust's annual staff survey also looks at trends around staff satisfaction, understanding of their role in the Trust and ambitions for remaining working in the academy they are employed to work in. At academy level, to facilitate engagement, there is an established meeting structure, appraisal system and arrangements for staff representation at the Trust's Joint Consultative Group, which aims to capture and represent staff voice as well as inform strategic direction. Each academy is committed to supporting employee wellbeing and for that reason follow the Trust's wellbeing policy and procedures, such as not holding any meetings or training sessions during wellbeing week, which usually takes place during the fourth week of each half-term.

Good communication throughout any organisation is key and the Trust holds an Investors in People Gold award - recognising the continuous improvements in leading, supporting and improving the organisation by ensuring staff are valued, supported, and rewarded in their roles. Staff have access to high-quality professional development and feel empowered in their quest to drive continuous improvement. The health, safety and well-being of all of our employees is one of our primary considerations. During November 2023, Investors in People reviewed the Trust's progress and confirmed that the Trust continues to meet the Gold standard for people management. The assessor recognised the high levels of engagement from the staff team and how people in the organisation are values driven. They are hugely motivated by the fact that they are making a difference to young people's lives and life opportunities.

Engagement with our people takes many forms with regular and ongoing discussions. This includes presentations to staff groups, annual career discussions via the appraisal meetings and bespoke professional learning pathways. Regular briefings take place throughout the week and e-bulletins are shared to provide key information.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

High-quality, effective continuous professional development (CPD) is at the centre of our vision to “provide infinite opportunities for all”. We value and invest in all of our staff to ensure we deliver on the very best outcomes for all our pupils.

The type/quality of CPD offered matters when improving teaching quality and pupil outcomes. We use the latest recommendations and research such as EEF-funded projects, toolkits, The Teacher Development Trust, The National College, staff appraisals and feedback as well as impact reports to support us in the delivery and implementation. Our CPD offer comprises of internal and external training, including accredited qualifications.

The Principal of the Trust's Sixth Form provision also leads on professional learning across this Trust with the support of three Assistant Vice Principals who work in different settings. All academies have a ring-fenced staff development budget to invest in their employees – we are seeking to maximise the effective use of this by investing in programmes across our group of schools. There has been a mixture of online, face-to-face, group and off-site training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) events utilising both in-house and external training. During 2023/24 there was a range of CPD programmes, peer networks and work groups delivered either face-to-face or via Teams. At HSAT we aim to deliver smaller, more frequent CPD sessions, which better reflect our teacher's experiences and prevents information overload. The CPD programme also allows teachers and support staff some flexibility. During 2023/24 education staff accessed three CPD days, with the other two days allocated to sessions across the academic year to complete training, so that staff can complete training at their own pace, which is also relevant to their own development needs. In some academies, short 'best practice' sessions are delivered every Friday with the aim of empowering staff to focus on small, manageable improvements to their own practice which they know is relevant and they can sustain.

HSAT staff have continued to be signposted to the full suite of National Professional Qualification (NPQ) leadership qualifications, often utilising funding through the opportunity area. There are specific achievements during 2023/2024 such as one member of staff successfully completing the National Professional Qualification for Senior Leaders (NPQSL), three members of staff completing National Professional Qualification for Leading Literacy (NPQLL) and one member of staff completing National Professional Qualification for Leading Behaviour. Other staff accessing the NPQ programmes of study will be completing their courses October 2024.

To support teachers at the early stage of their careers, HSAT delivered two training events for both a cohort of Primary and Secondary Teachers from St John's York University, Sunderland University and Campus Stockton Teaching Alliance. On site placements at Abbey Hill and Green Gates Academy were also offered.

As part of the Trust's professional learning programme, new staff have access to a bespoke induction offer referred to as “Strive and Thrive at HSAT”. The training programme is delivered by a range of HSAT Leads and includes training on GDPR, Safeguarding and Health and Safety; as well as sessions relating to outstanding pedagogy for students with SEND.

HSAT staff have access to external counselling support and Occupational Health. HR are trained in supporting staff to understand/overcome the challenges of menopause in the workplace. Staff surveys report over 90% of staff say HSAT cares about their wellbeing. National research shows increasing availability of high quality CPD can alleviate acute retention problems for early career teachers. Last year HSAT retention was 91.28% and new teachers continued onto their second year.

We strive to deliver continuous improvement and sustainable success so place a strong emphasis on staff CPD, aiming to “grow our own”. Staff have access to internal/external PL opportunities to enhance performance, resulting in improved pupil outcomes. At HSAT, we value our people's potential and identify ways to retain/utilise staff skills. E.g., The Vice Principal at Abbey Hill is also the Trust's Director for Autism and has had opportunities to work in primary/secondary settings to lead departments and undertake whole school leadership responsibilities. They have also had the opportunity to be acting Principal for a term and demonstrated necessary skills/qualities to lead a specialist provision should the need and desire arise in the future.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

As outlined in the Trust Single Equality Policy, the principles of equality of opportunity and positive action have distinctive implications for disability equality, particularly in relation to the concept of reasonable adjustment and the provision of auxiliary aids and services. This is particularly important for a Trust whose academies educate pupils and students with a wide range of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities. The Trust's initiative to develop sensory spaces in all of our schools is a vital step towards enhancing the physical environment and supporting diverse learning needs. These sensory spaces can provide calming and stimulating experiences tailored to help students with sensory processing challenges, emotional regulation, and focus. By creating areas that incorporate softer textures, sounds, lights and activities, we aim to foster an inclusive and safe environment for all our learners. An example of this, is the new sensory space at Westlands Academy installed at the end of the academic year. During 2023/24, adaptations to other existing buildings took place, such as the introduction of a fifth classroom at Fairfax as well as further developments to the outdoor learning spaces for pupils with Social Emotional and Mental Health needs at Green Gates Academy and Mo Mowlam Academy as part of the Opal Play Award Scheme.

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

Trustees are responsible for the strategic running of the Trust so do not directly interact with suppliers. Matters of importance would be brought to the Board should the need arise. Trustees support high-value procurement such as building improvements, broadband and external HR and Finance along with the appointment of auditors. It is the Trust's policy to work openly and transparently in line with ESFA regulations and the Seven Principles of Public Life. The CFO and CEO ensure the Trust submits accurate and timely ESFA returns in line with current requirements throughout the year as follows

- Annual Report & Financial Statements
- Academies Accounts Return
- Budget Forecast Return – 3 year
- Budget Forecast Return Outturn

The Trustees review the annual report, working closely with the auditors and have the opportunity to discuss any audit findings.

Feedback from the ESFA is normally conducted through annual revisions to the Academy Trust Handbook. These changes are summarised with actions required and reflected in changes to Trust policies and practices.

Ofsted continues to review the education standards within Trust academies which includes direct involvement from Trustees. At the beginning of the 2022/23 session Ofsted undertook an evaluation of our Trust and the evaluation letter received stated that, "pupils' achievements and the proportion of pupils moving into education, employment and training confirm HSAT to be a strong and improving trust." Ofsted inspections of Woodlands Academy, Scarborough in March 2024 and Archway Academy, Redcar and Cleveland in June 2024 evaluated both academies as Ofsted rated Good. These evaluations confirmed all HSAT's Academies as at least Ofsted rated Good in the year 2023/24.

HSAT has positive relationships with all the local authorities where academies are based, and the Trust works closely with them and our agency partners to meet EHCP requirements.

The Board of Trustees aims to behave responsibly and ensure that management operate the business in a responsible manner, operating within the high standards of conduct and good governance expected of a multi-academy trust.

Part of the Trust's self-evaluation is that Trustees have a broad range of knowledge, skills and qualities. There is succession planning in place for Trustees that will ensure the maintenance of skills necessary to manage the Trust efficiently and effectively.

Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

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

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Engagement with Students

At the heart of HSAT's vision is "providing infinite opportunities for all" and we welcome and nurture respect for pupils and their families, of all faiths, cultures and traditions.

HSAT serves varying communities through seven academies, an increase in diversity is likely as HSAT grows. HSAT has a strong track record of successfully including and integrating pupils of different backgrounds.

Commitment to inclusivity is central to ensuring pupils understand individuals have freedom to choose their beliefs which should be accepted by others. HSAT celebrate diversity through assemblies, external visits and visitors coming into our school, enabling pupils to learn about cultures, customs, beliefs, and ideas that are different to their own in a real-life context. This approach is adapted to the age and stage of development of pupils. Consequently, pupils are able to accept, tolerate and respect each other, and those in their community.

The pupils, students, parents and carers are given a range of opportunities to comment on how effectively the Trust is supporting the educational and care needs of the academy communities.

At academy level, each school has extensive mechanisms to ensure the student voice is heard. For example, all academies have a student council which feeds directly in to Senior Leadership Teams. All academies complete regular student and parent surveys throughout the year. All academies seek to find out what students think about key school themes such as approaches to anti-bullying, safeguarding and the curricular offer.

All academies use a range of resources to ensure that students with various levels of needs are able to communicate their thoughts and feelings: examples include the Incredible 5 Point Scale and Heat Maps. Student feedback informs all areas of academy planning.

Questionnaires indicate a high level of satisfaction from pupils, students, parents and carers. Parents report that there are positive forms of communication about their child's progress, school events and policies.

HSAT academies are recognised by the Leading Parent Partnership Award for their high levels of positive parental engagement, which supports improved pupil progress, attendance and behaviour. HSAT puts the rights of the child front and centre and for this reason, all academies have achieved, Rights Respecting Schools status.

Governors from each Academy Council have the opportunity to regularly visit the schools and talk directly to students to ensure they have their say. Planned face to face visits on-site at academies were undertaken by Governors and reports arising from these visits shared at Academy Councils confirmed evidence of positive learning environments for the pupils attending.

Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

The principal objective of the Trust is the provision of outstanding educational and learning experiences to support children and young people with special educational needs.

Horizons Specialist Academy Trust (HSAT) was established with the aim of providing the best possible education for our children and young people, thus ensuring that they can be all that they can be.

Our vision of 'Providing Infinite Opportunities, ensuring the best education for our children and young people' is a bold one – underpinned by the belief that we can do more and do it better at every level for our pupils, students and their families.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Our Trust champions the rights of students with special educational needs. During 2023/2024, we had 4 Strategic Objectives which encompassed key outcomes.

- To ensure vulnerable children and young people are protected from harm and supported to keep themselves and others safe.
- To ensure every child and young person receives a high quality and inclusive education to help them achieve their full potential.
- To provide opportunities for children and young people to become confident in their interaction with others and to fully participate in society.
- To maintain a strong MAT infrastructure and Board and Executive Leadership which supports further development.

Objectives, strategies and activities

The Trust is ambitious 'to do more and to do it better'. Building on previous achievement and making use of our strengths.

During 2023/2024, the Trust reviewed its vision, aims and values. The vision and the aim remained constant. The determination of Trustees, Leaders and Principals to achieve as a high performing specialist MAT resulted in an update of the core values of the organisation. The core values of the Trust have guided the work of the Trust in 2023/2024 and will underpin the work for the period of the Strategic Plan 2023 – 2026.

Our Values

Opportunities for all

Inclusion: We provide a caring environment where we champion all children and young people, as well as the staff that support them.

Equality: We are firm in our belief that a child's future should be defined by their talents and aspirations, not limited by the challenges they may face.

Opportunities to care

Dignity and respect: We create an environment where all people are accepted, respected, engaged and supported. We are committed to supporting others to ensure the best education and life chances.

Safety and Wellbeing: We are dedicated to our young people and staff; their physical and emotional well-being as well as their education. We understand that when people feel safe in their environment, their chance of success is greatly increased.

Opportunities together

Working in partnership: We work in collaboration and partnership with staff, stakeholders and the wider professional and local community. We are proactive and flexible, sharing best practice with others.

Supportive: We work together, as a family of schools, to achieve the best for our children and young people.

Opportunities for life

Aspirational: We have high aspirations for ourselves and others. We have a shared vision of improving the life chances of our children and young people and their families.

Personalisation: We recognise people as individuals and have developed a personalised approach to all aspects of school life so that our children and young people are fully prepared for adult life. We are committed to the training and development of our staff to ensure they are highly skilled.

These values continue to be the drivers for the Trust's activities. They are achieved through improving the quality of expert teaching, providing a range of teaching and non-teaching professionals, and creating flexible pathways which expand student opportunities to experience success and progress to the next stage in their personal lifetime journey.

Partnership working ensures our students have access to bespoke experiences tailored to their individual needs and life skills. We endeavour to work with other education and funding agencies to adapt and expand our buildings and equipment in order to better serve our student and parent community. We invest in maintaining and improving the quality of our Trust's Estate portfolio and ensure high quality IT infrastructure across our academies.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The shared core values of our Trust remain constant and relevant at all times. We pride ourselves on ensuring there are opportunities for all children and young people with Special Educational Needs and the staff that support them and we continue to aim “to do more and do it better”. The result being that 1st May 2023 The Woodlands Academy, a generic special school for pupils age 2–16 in Scarborough, joined Horizons Specialist Academy Trust.

The Trust's current Strategic Plan articulates our ambitions: that is to achieve our strategic objectives and all of us – Members, Trustees, Governors, the Chief Executive, Executive Leaders, Principals, senior managers and staff - are excited by its challenges and opportunities.

Public benefit

The Trustees have complied with their duty in Section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set. The Trust has provided a fully comprehensive education to all pupils in its care. It fully complies with all statutory guidance and seeks to support its wider educational objectives via a strong community role.

Strategic report

Achievements and performance

The following describes the most recent Ofsted evaluations of each Academy:

- Ofsted evaluated Archway Academy in June 2024 as Good in all categories – confirming it remained a good school as per the previous Good Ofsted rating.
- Ofsted evaluated Woodlands Academy in March 2024 as Good in all categories – confirming an improvement from its previous January 2020 Ofsted rating of Requires Improvement.
- Ofsted evaluated Westlands Academy in November 2021 as Good in all categories – maintaining the Good grade from the previous Ofsted inspection in December 2016.
- Ofsted evaluated Mo Mowlam Academy as Good in January 2022. This was a great achievement improving from Special Measures just prior to joining the Trust on 1st April 2019.
- Ofsted evaluated Hollis Academy as Good in June 2022, an improvement from the Ofsted Inspection in September 2019 when the academy was graded Requires Improvement.
- Ofsted evaluated Abbey Hill in January 2020 as maintaining Good in all categories. Its Sixth Form maintained its Outstanding evaluation.
- Ofsted evaluated Green Gates Primary Academy in October 2019 as overall Good. This was a welcome improvement from the previous Requires Improvement judgement in June 2017.

Ongoing judgements by the Trust's senior leaders show maintained high quality and, improvement, in all schools, as confirmed by Ofsted inspections during the session 2023/2024. The broader and more relevant curriculum and positive engagement by students as a result of very good teaching is having an impact. The consequence is an improvement in the quality of education across all sites.

The Trust's vision of Providing Infinite Opportunities, ensuring the best education for our children and young people and its aim – ‘to do more and to do it better’ at every level for our pupils, students, families and staff - is articulated through the websites and printed media, including the published Strategic Plan. The Trust-wide staffing structure and range of additional supports such as Finance, Human Resources, Premises, and IT ensure the benefits of economies of scale, allow dissemination of good practice across a wide group of staff, and optimise best value. Specialised professional input from Educational Psychology, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, the Parent Support Advisers, the Safeguarding and Children in Care (CIC) Leads, the Professional Learning and Development Lead, the Quality Assurance Lead, the Executive Principal and the Deputy CEO result in better outcomes for pupils, students, staff and our parent/carer community.

Structures have been further developed during the eleventh year of operation of the Trust to add capacity to the central services as the Trust continues to grow. During 2023/2024 this included enhancing the Finance team, HR team, governance operations and establishing a permanent Head of Estates and IT post. A successful appointment was made to this post which has enhanced the Trust's effective approach to Estate management in response to an expanding and more complex Estate Portfolio.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The training and development programme for staff is recognised as robust, relevant and supportive to other schools. The Professional Development Programme Training is delivered across the Trust and to other institutions. The Trust's expertise, and training and development, ensure the continued contribution by the Trust's two Ofsted Inspectors and leads for external practices such as the Trust's assessor for the National Autism Society. In addition, the Trust's involvement as a Strategic Partner within the Campus Stockton Teaching Alliance is highly-valued - with other schools having access to, and benefitting from, the quality of professional development which can be, and is, on offer within the Trust's Academies.

Management expertise and skills have supported the development of an effective Estates Management Plan which outlines the use of School Capital Allocation (SCA) funding. The Head of Estates & IT worked with key leaders and Trustees to identify the Estates Management Plan. Effective implementation of this will ensure capital projects are prioritised, relevant, productive, impactful and completed on time.

Horizons' Executive Leadership Team continues to ensure that the self-evaluation of each Academy is effectively scrutinised and validated through internal processes, and external and independent professional scrutiny. The CEO, Deputy CEO and Executive Principal, along with key senior personnel with expertise in evaluating the quality of education, lead the Trust's School Improvement Team. This has resulted in more effective scrutiny of school performance, including more robust challenge of the Trust's Principals. Monitoring of the quality of education through lesson visits, book looks and work scrutinies as well as moderation of standards, and scrutiny of achievement and attainment are embedded within the Trust's cycle of Quality Assurance and associated reporting to Trustees. In addition, the support and challenge that was provided by the external School Development Partner - who has a recognised level of expertise in the area of Special Educational Needs and is an active Ofsted Lead Inspector - has contributed to positive Ofsted outcomes for the Trust's academies.

Confirmation of the quality of the Trust's leadership and management and, in particular its management of change and development, is reflected in awards gained: Investors in People Gold Award to the Trust, Leading Parent Partnership Award and Rights Respecting Schools status for all Academies; and Abbey Hill Academy and Abbey Hill Academy Sixth Form maintaining the standards for National Autistic Society (NAS) Accreditation, including the Vice-Principal with responsibility for the Autism provision at Abbey Hill Academy completing training as an Assessor with the National Autistic Society (NAS). Abbey Hill Academy was also recognised as a Silver organisation as part of the Move Programme which promotes activity-based practice that enables disabled young people to gain independent movement. The Academy was previously recognised by Stockton Council for the work undertaken to support Children and Young People in Care. In recognition of this, the Local Authority awarded Abbey Hill the Premium Plus Award. In addition to these achievements, and of note, is the Safeguarding Initiative Award gained by Abbey Hill Academy. This was awarded by the Global Centre for Safeguarding Excellence. To achieve this for the work undertaken to keep children safe at any time, but particularly when delivering education and care within the context of the Covid-19 (Coronavirus) global pandemic, is extremely noteworthy and commendable. Safeguarding of pupils and students remains a high priority for all staff and the Safeguarding practices continue to be recognised as effective as endorsed by the most recent Ofsted inspections, including the Ofsted Summary Evaluation of Horizons Specialist Academy Trust.

HSAT academies embrace Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed practices - committed to meeting the neurodiverse needs of children alongside their academic needs. Our Mental Health and Wellbeing Champions team, led by the Trust's Educational Psychologist, ensure support is appropriate and timely. In June 2023, Mo Mowlam Academy achieved the Bronze Attachment and Trauma Informed Schools Award and in July 2023, Abbey Hill was nominated for the Alex Timpson ARC Attachment Awards for the Special & PRU Category. All academies have a shared vision for improving the life chances of our children and their families.

HSAT is an effective MAT, with a strong infrastructure which supports further development. In discussion with the RD's office for the North, HSAT confirmed plans to expand the number of academies to a minimum of 10 by the end of 2026. Given the positive outcome of the MATSE in September 2022 and subsequent outcomes of the Trust's academies Ofsted Inspections, it is recognised that HSAT is in a strong position to grow and develop as a MAT. The successful application from the Trust to open a Specialist Free School in Middlesbrough for Primary aged children with neurodiverse conditions is further confirmation of HSAT's readiness for further expansion.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Horizons Specialist Academy Trust's (HSAT) vision is to "Provide Infinite Opportunities- ensuring the best education for our children and young people" and for that reason the Trust seeks to capitalise on opportunities to further support an increasing number of children and young people with Special Educational Needs. HSAT aims "To do more and do it better" and so we would wish to build on our success, bringing in areas of best practice from our existing special school provisions to an even wider range of special schools. In 2023/24 a special school in Spennymoor, supported by colleagues from Durham County, identified HSAT as the Specialist Multi- Academy Trust they would wish to join. The formal joining of HSAT will take place during the first half of 2024/2025. We are also an inclusive organisation, working hard to provide opportunities for all, through a caring environment where children and young people are championed, along with staff that support them. For this reason, in 2023/2024, the Trust offered support to other academies and specialist Trusts in the North East of England. In addition, HSAT continued to expand the number of pupil places available within its Mainstream Hub provisions.

The Trust is recognised as having the leadership personnel required to expand provisions and to support expansion of the Trust while maintaining the high-quality standards currently associated with the Trust. During 2023/2024, HSAT expanded to the number of places within its 7 academies from 861 to 894.

Key performance indicators

The key financial performance indicators of the Trust relate to the effectiveness of the use of funds for the benefit of the education of children. The key non-financial performance indicators of the Trust relate to the achievements and performance of its students.

The Trust's Key Performance indicators highlighted in the Strategic Plan, specifically the objectives for 2023/24 and the progress in achieving these, highlight the key areas of performance which are scrutinised and monitored by the Standards Committee of the Trust and the Trust Board. The following KPIs related to the 4 Strategic Objectives within the Strategic Plan were achieved across the Trust during the 2023/24 session:

Strategic Objective 1: to ensure vulnerable children and young people are protected from harm and supported to keep themselves and others safe (*Behaviour and Attitudes and Personal Development*)

- All Academies were effective in ensuring children feel safe in school – **KPI being rag-rated green** for the Trust.
- All children said that incidents of bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment, abuse and, violence are dealt with quickly and effectively when they occur – **KPI being rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- Safeguarding was noted as being effective in all recent Ofsted inspections of the Trust's academies during 2023/24.
- Pupil/students with high levels of attendance (above 90%) maintain this. **This new KPI for this session is rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- Severely and persistently absent pupils improve their attendance over time – KPI being rag rated amber as not all pupils in these categories are recording improvement. **However, overall attendance improved in all academies from the previous year** and all schools have prioritised pupil attendance and are making progress in this area.

Meeting the KPIs associated with the Strategic Objective 1 is key to demonstrating outcomes detailed in the Trust Quality Descriptions (TQDs) are in evidence. The TQDs identify regular attendance, keeping children safe, supported and calm and active participation and progress as essential for the Strategic Objective 1 to be met.

Strategic Objective 2: to ensure every child and young person receives a high quality of education (*Quality of Education*)

- 75% of primary pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 made progress towards expected standards in Reading, Writing and Maths combined – **KPI being rag-rated green** for the Trust.
- 75% of pupils at end of Key Stage 2 made good progress in Reading, Writing and Maths- **KPI being rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- 100% of leavers in 6 out of the 7 Academies at end of Key Stage 4 achieved accreditation in English and Maths – **KPI being rag- rated amber for the Trust.** However, the percentage of leavers achieving this improved from the previous year from 89% to 97% in English and 94% to 97% in Maths across the Trust.
- 100% of leavers at Key Stage 5 have achieved accreditation in English, Maths and Personal and Social Development – **KPI being rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- There was evidence of 90% satisfaction of pupil outcomes from student/parent/carer questionnaires – **rag-rated green for the Trust**

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The TQDs identify a motivating and ambitious learning culture, well-sequenced curriculum, high quality training and development for staff and work environments which are supportive and provide progression opportunities as essential for this objective to be met. **Evidence of KPIs being met confirm that the Trust provides the positive learning environments required to support pupils and students effectively.**

Strategic Objective 3: to provide opportunities for children and young people to become confident in their interaction with others and to fully participate in society. (Personal Development)

The TQDs identify the need to provide experiences which support our pupils in becoming confident, productive adults. Engagement in sport, music and cultural activities and being prepared for the next stage of education, employment or training are essential for this objective to be met. **The KPI outcomes evidence the Trust's success in this area as follows:**

- All Academies achieved above the national average of the Gatsby Benchmarks at the end of 2023/24 – **KPI being rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- 100% secondary students offered, and majority engaged in, at least one employer encounter-in some cases this was virtual – **KPI being rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- 90% of leavers are predicted to be engaged in learning, training or employment - **KPI is rag rated green for the Trust.**
- 100% students became more equipped for their role as British citizens resulting from developing their awareness of spiritual, social, moral, and multi-cultural understanding – **KPI being rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- All pupils are able to recognise the online and offline risks to their wellbeing and safety – **KPI rag-rated green for the Trust.**

Strategic Objective 4: to maintain a strong MAT infrastructure and leadership which supports further development (Leadership and Management)

The TQDs identifies that the Board and Executive Leadership working together to realise strategic alignment, and to implement a clearly defined and effective strategy which supports and transforms underperforming schools and enables the Trust's effective contribution to the wider system, are essential for this objective to be met.

The KPI outcomes evidence the Trust's success in this area as follows:

- Ofsted grades for all academies will be Good within 5 years of joining the Trust – **rag-rated green for the Trust.** The Ofsted inspections of Woodlands Academy and Archway Academy in 2024 confirming the Trust's performance.
- 100% of professionals are up to date with appropriate Sexual Harassment, Online Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence (SHOSASV) and online safety training – **rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- 100% of Executive and senior leaders are deployed in Quality Assurance and Support and Challenge roles – **rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- 90% of staff reported that they feel well supported in terms of their wellbeing – **rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- Retention of IIP Gold at the last interim evaluation – **rag-rated green.**
- LPPA accreditation awarded across the Trust – **rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- ASD accreditation within the Trust is being maintained – **rag-rated green.**
- 95% staff attendance across all academies – **rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- The Trust's audits confirm zero red flags regarding probity measures and positive internal and external Assurance – **rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- The Trust has maintained one months' operation costs in reserves – **rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- No more than 85% of total income of all academies to be spent on staffing - **rag-rated amber for the Trust (86%)**
- Trust Board skills coverage is maintained and evidenced in Trust skills audit- **rag-rated green for the Trust.**
- Trust expansion realised by the end of the three year Strategic Plan 2023-2026 – **rag-rated green.** The successful application for a Specialist Free school (confirmed in March 2024) will see the Trust expansion to 8 academies. The identification of a special school to join HSAT, confirmed during the 2023/2024 session will result in the expansion of the Trust to at least 9 academies within the period of the Strategic Plan 2023-2026.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Abbey Hill Academy and Sixth Form

Background

- Abbey Hill Academy and Sixth Form is a specialist secondary school based in Stockton-on-Tees for children and young people aged 11-18 with a wide range of learning difficulties and disabilities.
- Abbey Hill Academy and Sixth Form converted to academy status in August 2013 as one of the founding academies of Horizons Specialist Academy Trust.
- Number on roll: 368
- The current site has three buildings: Stephenson, Walker and the Sheraton building (Sixth Form provision). Over the past few years, demand for places has increased significantly. The Walker Building which was built in 2008 was originally created for 40 students with needs relating to a diagnosis of autism. We currently have 93 students accessing the space. To ensure that we could continue to meet the needs of this cohort, the Trustees approved an extension to the existing Walker Building with a modular building providing an additional two classrooms in 2018 and additional funding was then sourced to create a further four classrooms as part of a conversion project which was completed in September 2022.
- The Academy also works in partnership with a local mainstream Secondary School in Stockton, to provide an inclusive base for students with moderate learning difficulties. Plans were approved and funding was provided by Stockton Local Authority to expand the provision and it currently caters for 25 students.
- HSAT has worked closely with Middlesbrough LA for many years, and worked in partnership to meet the need for additional specialist places. A development of the Fairfax provision, offering a bespoke package of support for young people with autism aged 11-16 currently on the roll of Abbey Hill Academy has been further expanded. Supported by the Trust's Director for Autism, the reputation of the Fairfax Secondary provision has meant the Trust has been able to offer appropriate specialist places to 42 young people in Middlesbrough, meeting Middlesbrough's SEND strategy of ensuring that places for children with the most significant needs are met within the LA and not out of borough.
- All students on the roll of Abbey Hill Academy and Sixth Form have an Education, Health and Care plan.
- Abbey Hill Academy and Sixth Form currently has the Investors in People Gold Award, Leading Parent Partnership Award, Pupil Premium Plus Award and The Anti-Bullying Quality Mark. The Academy is also registered as a MOVE School and is recognised as a 'Silver' organisation, working towards 'Gold'. In August 2018, June 2021 and subsequently in June 2024, the Academy was recognised by the National Autism Society and retained the NAS Award. The Academy has also been recognised by UNICEF for its commitment to embedding The Rights Respecting Schools programme and received the Gold Award November 2020. In July 2023, Abbey Hill was nominated for and won the Alex Timpson ARC Attachment Awards for the Special & PRU Category.

Most recent Ofsted judgement

The Academy was last inspected by Ofsted in January 2020 and was graded as a school that continues to be a 'good' school.

"Leaders ensure that pupils' learning is not limited to academic subjects. Pupils told us about the different lunchtime and after-school clubs they belong to, such as those for music, computers, hydrotherapy, and sport. These clubs broaden their learning and support their physical development. Pupils also spoke with enthusiasm about trips and visits to the local library and the activities they take part in on a Wednesday afternoon, including judo and gardening".

"Leaders have made sure that the system to assess pupils' progress closely matches their needs. This system links with the pupil's education, health, and care (EHC) plan. Teachers use these assessments to plan work that challenges pupils to learn and develop further".

"Safeguarding has a high priority. Staff are well-trained and knowledgeable in this area. Staff spoke confidently about procedure and policies relating to keeping children safe". (January 2020).

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Headline Outcomes:

Secondary Provision

97% of Formal Curriculum students achieved a qualification in English, Maths, Science, Art, PE and vocational option subjects.

100% of Pre-Formal and Semi-Formal learners achieved the Personal Progress Certificate (EL1).

100% of Formal Curriculum students achieved an RQF recognised qualification in Preparation for Adulthood at appropriate level.

Post-16

100% of students gained an English qualification

100% students gained a Maths qualification

100% of Pathway 4 students achieved 5 GCSE/Level1-2 qualifications

100% of Pathway 4 students achieved 7 GCSE/Level 1-2 qualifications

100% of Pathway 3 students achieved 5 Entry 3 or Level 1 qualifications at their target grades

100% of Pathway 2 students achieved Entry Levels at their target grades

100% of Pathway 1 students achieved Diploma in Personal Progress, and make progress in numeracy and literacy appropriate to their levels against the milestone scale.

Specific Achievements:

Secondary

- Achieved Silver Award in the School Games Mark
- Achieved the ARC (Attachment Research Community) Silver Pathway award
- ARC Attachment Learning School Hub
- ASD accreditation continued and the provision is looking to secure advanced level by December 2024

Post 16

- Over 42 work placements took place during 2023-24
- Y12 students completed a week long partnership programme with the National Citizen Service
- Excellent moderation feedback on coursework and portfolio work
- Engaged with numerous employers - visits to Amazon, apprentice fayres, face to face 'speed dating' tasks and interviews
- A range of enrichment activities -TGIW well-being programme, Tuesday evening youth group, enrichment visits to cafés parks, museums, panathalon sporting events
- As of July 2024, 100% of students had a confirmed placement on an appropriate tertiary course, internship or an appropriate adult social care placement.
- More former students successfully moving to paid employment

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Archway Academy

Background

- Archway Academy is a Pupil Referral Unit for students in Key Stage 3 and 4 from across the Borough of Redcar and Cleveland.
- Archway Academy joined Horizons Specialist Academy Trust on 1st September 2021.
- Number on roll: 84
- Archway provides placements according to individual needs, inclusive of ability and disability. These may be time-limited where pupils are supported to return to their own or another school or longer term, where pupils require a multi-agency assessment of their needs or are unable to return to school as a result of continued anxiety.

Most recent Ofsted judgement

"The school has carefully planned an ambitious curriculum for its pupils. It matches the national curriculum expectations. It also considers what pupils should know in each subject by the end of Year 11. This helps pupils achieve success in a range of qualifications. It also ensures they can move back into mainstream education if it is appropriate to do so. In lessons, staff help pupils learn the intended curriculum well.

The academy was last inspected in June 2024 and was evaluated as continuing to be a 'good' school".

"The school's approach to pupils' wider development builds on the 'arches' framework. This sets out the qualities the school wants pupils to develop. It includes aspirations, resilience, citizenship, being healthy, employability and success. Subject leaders ensure this framework links to the curriculum areas they oversee. Staff take every opportunity to promote 'arches' in the classroom. Staff also give out weekly 'arches' awards. Pupils can choose to spend their 'arches' immediately or save them up. This helps pupils learn about budgeting. It also teaches an important lesson about prioritising long-term goals over instant reward".

"Archway Academy helps expand pupils' horizons. The trust strapline of 'providing infinite opportunities' underpins this aim. Pupils are enthusiastic about the trips the school provides. They enjoy theatre visits and trips to museums to enhance the curriculum. They also relish rewards trips, such as go-karting and white-water rafting".

Headline Outcomes:

100% of students gained an English qualification

100% of students gained a Maths qualification

100% of students achieved a qualification in English and Maths

59% of students achieved at least 5 GCSE/Level 1-2 qualifications

22% of students achieved at least 7-9 GCSE/Level 1-2 qualifications

Specific Achievements:

- Achieved Rights Respecting Schools Bronze Award
- Support for pupils through the Bungalow Project, Barnados & Inside Out

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Green Gates Academy

Background

- Green Gates Academy is a primary special school for pupils with social, emotional, and mental health difficulties and/or autism. The age range of pupils attending is 5 -11 years.
- Green Gates Academy is based in Stockton-on-Tees and most pupils reside in Stockton, with pupils also travelling from Middlesbrough, Darlington, and Redcar and Cleveland.
- Green Gates Academy was originally the primary department within Westlands Academy - one of the two founding Academies of Horizons Specialist Academy Trust. In September 2014 Westlands Academy was officially re-designated into a primary and secondary forming two separate Academies – Green Gates Primary Academy and Westlands Secondary Academy.
- Number on roll: 50
- Pupil numbers have steadily increased since September 2014 although fluctuate throughout the year.
- All the pupils attending the Academy now have an Education Health and Care plan.
- In July 2023, Green Gates Academy were asked by Stockton Local Authority to create an additional base for up to 5 pupils who had been permanently excluded from their mainstream primary provision. The creation of this 'Pathway Development Centre' will further support the learning needs of children within Stockton Borough Council.

Most recent Ofsted judgement

Green Gates Academy was inspected by Ofsted as 'good' overall in October 2020. The most recent Validated Self-Evaluation was carried out in March 2024 and judged the Academy as 'good' overall.

Headline Outcomes:

Reading

Pupils achieving national standard- 44%
Pupils meeting CAT score target – 100%
Pupils meeting DFE target – 100%

Maths

Pupils achieving national standard- 18%
Pupils meeting CAT score target - 81%

Pupils meeting DFE target – 91%

Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling (GPS)

Pupils achieving national standard- 44%
Pupils meeting CAT score target – 89%
Pupils meeting DFE target – 89%

Specific Achievements:

- Achieved Healthy Schools Status
- Two new classrooms- fully operational
- OPAL playground initiative improving physical and mental health through play
- External Moderation - positive feedback on KS2 teacher assessments
- LPPA re-accreditation July 2024
- Rights Respecting School- Gold Award

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Hollis Academy

Background

- Hollis Academy is a secondary SEMH school for children aged 11-16 years.
- Hollis Academy is based in Middlesbrough and is the only secondary SEMH school within the Borough. The majority of students reside in the Middlesbrough area - with students also travelling from Stockton, Redcar, Darlington and Hartlepool.
- The school moved into a new building in April 2011 on the original site which is shared with another special school within Middlesbrough.
- Hollis Academy became a sponsored academy and part of Horizons Specialist Academy Trust on 1st October 2016.
- Number on roll: 89.
- All the students attending the Academy have statements of SEN or have an Education Health and Care plan.

Most recent Ofsted judgement

The Academy was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2022 and was graded as 'good' overall.

"Hollis Academy is an improving school. Senior leaders have raised expectations as to how well pupils can achieve. The staff work hard to provide a good quality of education. Leaders offer a range of pathways designed to meet the needs of pupils who have not been suited to mainstream education. Over time, most pupils improve their attendance and attitude because of the care they receive."

(Ofsted 2022)

Headline Outcomes:

100% of students received a qualification

90% of students received both an English and Maths Qualification

90% of students received a Maths qualification

100% of students passed GCSE English Literature (with 75% meeting or exceeding target grade)

100% of students passed GCSE English Language

100% of students children achieved food GCSE.

Special Achievements:

- Rights Respecting Silver award in May.
- Proclaim Year 2 (Attachment and Trauma awareness)
- Hosted SEMH Teach meet.
- 100% children achieved food GCSE.
- Several children achieved Duke of Edinburgh and of that 3 achieved the Silver Award.

Mo Mowlam Academy

Background

- Mo Mowlam Academy is an all-through SEMH school for children aged 5-16 years.
- Mo Mowlam Academy became a sponsored academy and part of Horizons Specialist Academy Trust on 1st April 2019.
- Mo Mowlam Academy is based in Redcar and Cleveland and is the only SEMH school within the Borough. The majority of students reside in the Redcar and Cleveland area with students also travelling from Middlesbrough.
- The school building was previously deemed not-fit-for-purpose and the DfE agreed to fund a new building. The building was completed in February 2020.
- Number on roll: 101- 65 Secondary, 36 Primary
- All the students attending the Academy have an Education Health and Care plan.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Most recent Ofsted judgement

The Academy was last inspected by Ofsted in January 2022 and was graded as 'good' overall.

The predecessor school was judged to have serious weaknesses in March 2018.

"Pupils are valued as individuals. Staff encourage them to aim high. By the time they leave, pupils gain a good grounding in English, mathematics, science and vocational subjects. This helps them to succeed in their next steps."

"Staff are attuned to the specific learning needs of each pupil. They go the 'extra mile' to meet these needs."

"Pupils are safe in school. They feel secure around the school site...The effective careers programme enables pupils to gradually build confidence."

"The curriculum is generally strong and ambitious."

"Staff feel tremendously well supported by senior leaders and the principal. Leaders ensure that staff have the expertise they need to assist pupils with behavioural needs."

"The school is well supported by leaders from the multi-academy trust (MAT)."

Headline Outcomes:

Primary Provision

End of Key Stage 2 Results

Reading Pupils achieving national standard- 43%

Pupils meeting CAT score target – 100%

Pupils meeting DFE target – 91%

Grammar, Punctuation & Spelling (GPS)

Pupils achieving national standard- 29%

Pupils meeting CAT score target - 100%

Pupils meeting DFE target - 91%

Maths

Pupils achieving national standard- 29%

Pupils meeting CAT score target – 100%

Pupils meeting DFE target - 91%

Secondary Provision

100% of students achieved a qualification

100% of students achieved either an English or a Maths qualification

93% of students achieved both an English and a Maths qualification

100% achieved a Maths qualification

93% achieved an English qualification

13% of students received a L2 qualification

100% of students achieved a L1 qualification

33% of students achieved 6+ L1 and/or L2 qualifications

74% of students achieved 4 or more qualifications

7 students achieved the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Certificate

4 students achieved the Silver DofE

Specific Achievements:

- Achieved the Silver ATSSA award
- Achieved Gold RRS award
- Now a registered Duke of Edinburgh centre - students achieved either Bronze or Silver awards
- Y11 accreditation offer expanded to include Open Awards - equestrian studies, preparation for adult life courses.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Westlands Academy

Background

- Westlands Academy is an 11-16 Secondary SEMH school with places for 85 students +6 Pathway Development Centre (PDC) places. The Trust received £1.25m capital funding for a major refurbishment which was completed in 2015 on the original site.
- Westlands Academy converted to academy status in August 2013 as one of the two founding academies of Horizons Specialist Academy Trust and originally catered for primary and secondary-aged students over a split site. In September 2014, Westlands Academy was officially redesignated into a primary and secondary forming two separate academies – Green Gates Primary Academy and Westlands Secondary Academy.
- Westlands Academy is based in Stockton, and the majority of students reside in the Stockton area with students also travelling from Middlesbrough, Redcar, Darlington, and Hartlepool.
- Number on roll: 89.
- All the students attending Westlands Academy (other than those accessing the PDC) have an Education, Health, and Care plan with the majority identifying a specific need of Social, Emotional and Mental Health.
- In July 2023, Westlands Academy was asked by Stockton Local Authority to extend their offer and create an additional base for up to six pupils who had either been permanently excluded from their mainstream secondary provision or were considered to be at extreme risk of permanent exclusion. The Pathway Development Centre (PDC) provides a place of education for these youngsters, during which assessments can be carried out by local authority staff to support the creation of Educational Health Care plans if appropriate. Essentially, the creation of this Pathway Development Centre will further support the learning needs of secondary-aged pupils within Stockton Borough Council.

Most recent Ofsted judgement

“Leaders and teachers provide pupils with a very orderly and safe environment in which to learn. They have high expectations of pupils.”

“Leaders, including multi-academy trust (MAT) leaders, ensure that the school runs smoothly.”

“Subject leaders, supported by senior leaders, have developed the curriculum well in the subjects that they manage. Curriculum plans identify the most important knowledge within each subject that pupils need to master in order to move on.

“Pupils benefit from the range of vocational subjects offered in key stage 4.”
(Ofsted 2021)

Headline Outcomes:

100% of students gained an English qualification

100% of students gained a Maths qualification

87.5% of students achieved at least one Level 1 qualification (3-1)

81.3% of students achieved at least one Level 2 qualification (9-4)

68.8% of students received 6+ L1 and/or L2 qualifications

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Specific Achievements:

- All students have successfully completed the British Heart Foundations “Call - Push – Rescue” First Aid Course - completed the St Johns Ambulance Basic First Aid Course.
- 5 students in Y11 have completed the Civil Aviation Drone and Model Aircraft Fliers ID Qualification.
- 16 students have attended Summer Camp in Borrowdale Valley - developing skills in bush craft and wild camping and also participated in orienteering, wild swimming and ghyll scrambling.
- The football team participated in the newly formed Durham, Cleveland and Darlington Special Schools Sports Association Football League – finished in the Top 3.
- Two staff members have been awarded Authorised Internal Verifier (AIV) status by Open Awards – recognition of Quality Assurance standards at Westlands Academy.
- Two staff members successfully obtained Qualified Teaching and Learning Skills Status (QTLS)
- One member of staff successfully completed their National Professional Qualification for Leading Teaching (NPQLT)

The Woodlands Academy

- The Woodlands Academy is a special school for children and young people aged between 2-16 with a wide range of complex and often multiple needs based in Scarborough, North Yorkshire.
- All students attending The Woodlands Academy have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP). The social and economic backgrounds of students are varied with many designated as wards with acute social deprivation.
- In 2022, the Chief Medical Officer reported that Scarborough in particular has considerably higher levels of deprivation than the rest of North Yorkshire, The chief medical officer’s report states that 43 per cent of the neighbourhoods in Filey, Scarborough and Whitby “fall within the most deprived national quintile of the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019”.
- The Woodlands Academy joined Horizons Specialist Academy Trust on 1st May 2023. Since the current principal joined the academy in September 2019 Woodlands Academy has been continually growing in student numbers.
- The Trust and the Principal of Woodlands Academy are currently working in partnership with the DfE in designing and securing a new school building for Woodlands Academy which will provide an appropriate and effective learning environment for future cohorts.
- Number on roll: 135.

Most recent Ofsted judgement

The Academy was last inspected by Ofsted in March 2024 and was graded as ‘good’ having previously been graded in 2020 as a school that ‘requires improvement’ overall.

“The Woodlands Academy aims for children to develop into confident, happy and positive young people. The school has developed curriculum pathways to meet pupils’ special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum is detailed. Parts of the curriculum match the ambitions of the national curriculum”.

“Most pupils feel safe in school. Staff reassure pupils when they are worried. Adults provide sensitive support when pupils need help to manage their emotions. This ensures the school is calm. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe while working and playing online and in the community. Staff are alert to any safeguarding concerns that pupils face”.

“Pupils’ personal development is a strength of the school’s work. Pupils are well prepared for life outside of school. They learn how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy. Pupils develop their talents and interests”.

“The school has a positive culture of safeguarding. This extends to pupils who attend alternative education providers. Since the last inspection, leaders have further developed their systems to record safeguarding actions. Safeguarding logs are typically precise and timely”.

Headline Outcomes:

Primary

External examination was not appropriate for this cohort.

Woodlands Academy celebrated their students’ improved social, physical and cognitive skills in the end of Year 6 reports. All pupils demonstrated progress from their individual starting points and are well prepared for their next phase.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Secondary

Semi-formal

100% of students achieved a qualification in English

100% of students achieved a qualification in Maths

100% of students achieved Preparing for Adulthood- a Life and Living Skills qualification

Formal

80% of students achieved a qualification in English

80% of students achieved a qualification in Maths

85% of students achieved AQA Entry Level Cooking

60% of students achieved the DofE award

Specific Achievements:

- Woodlands Academy is recognised as a Thrive School, offering a whole school approach to improving the mental health and wellbeing of young people.
- In addition, Woodlands has achieved a Wellbeing Award (2022-2025) and Healthy Schools award.
- The academy is also recognised at Gold level in the School Games Mark, which recognises the school's engagement, provision and uptake in sport.

Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that the Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, it continues to adopt the going-concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found within note 1 to the Finance Statements – Accounting Policies.

There continues to be uncertainties when budget setting. The NJC April 2024 pay award is unknown at the time of budgetary approval. Trustees take a prudent position in assuming funding before it is confirmed to be available. Trustees are fully aware of all assumptions that have taken place in the production of the Trust budget. Unfunded pay rises, high levels of inflation and the impact of future changes to high-needs funding make it increasingly difficult to forward plan with certainty.

Promoting the success of the academy trust

The Trustees believe that they have acted in the way they consider, in good faith, would be most likely to promote the success of the Trust for the benefit of its members as a whole.

The Trust comprises seven special schools – six in the Regional Directorate for the North East, and one in the Yorkshire and Humber region, and delivers a high quality education provision ensuring the on-going confidence of its stakeholders to operate sustainably in the long-term. The Trust invests in its employees and the infrastructure in which it operates to ensure standards remain high for its student population. Opportunities are sought to expand and work in partnership with Local Authorities and neighbouring schools to enhance our offer and actively promote the success of the organisation. This is evident in the Fairfax Provision and Asher Annexe for Abbey Hill Academy and the creation of the 'Pathway Development Centres' for permanently excluded children at Green Gates and Westlands Academies, which are areas of expansion involving two Local Authorities.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Financial review

Upon joining Horizons Specialist Academy Trust, each Academy brought income into the Trust as a result of its school surplus balance when it converted to academy status, in addition to private school funds. This, plus additional income generated during the eleven years of operating, is shown as unrestricted funds to the Trust. As such, this is not a conditional spend on specific purposes other than those as described in the relevant governing documents.

The majority of the Trust's income for the period of account is obtained from either the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency) or Local Authorities as commissioners of pupil places, the use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants and funding received from these bodies for the year and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the statement of financial activities.

During the period 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 total expenditure of £25,035,116 was *more than* the grant funding from the ESFA and commissioned place income from Local Authorities together with other incoming resources. The *excess of expenditure over income* for the year (excluding restricted fixed asset funds and before pension transfer) was £291,015.

At 31 August 2024 the net book value of fixed assets was £26,658,906. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and associated support to the pupils in the academies within the Trust.

Under accounting standard FRS102, it is necessary to charge projected deficits on the Local Government Pension Scheme now 2 schemes, which is provided for support staff, to the restricted Fund. This resulted in the pension fund showing a deficit of £439,000 which has been carried forward to 2024/25. It should be noted that this does not present a liquidity problem for the Trust but may result in increased contributions in future years. At the request of the Secretary of State for Education, Parliament agreed to meet any outstanding Local Government Pension liabilities in the event of an academy closure.

Reserves policy

One of the main financial risks to The Trust is that of managing its short-term cash flow effectively. To mitigate this risk, the Board agreed that an appropriate minimum reserves balance would equate to 1 months' worth of expenditure, both in terms of salaries and invoices. This is subject to regular review.

The Resources and Audit & Risk Committee reviews reserve levels on a termly basis in line with the budget monitoring information and forecasts presented to Trustees. At 31 August 2024, the value of unrestricted reserves (freely available to the Trust) was £1,386,161. Restricted funds as at 31 August 2024 were £2,266,193 (excluding pension and fixed assets) - making the total reserves £3,652,354. Trustees are committed to supporting estate improvements along with investments from reserves to make use of available reserves above the agreed minimum.

Investment policy

The Trust operates a current account with Lloyds Bank as approved by the Board of Trustees. Sufficient balances are maintained to ensure there are adequate liquid funds to cover all immediate and forthcoming financial commitments, including sufficient contingency for unexpected payments. The Trust will not take out any long-term investments exceeding twelve months. 2024 marks the eleventh year for Horizons Specialist Academy Trust and as such, cash flow patterns and monitoring is well developed.

A new investment strategy was implemented in September 2022 making use of higher interest rates for 12 month deposits at a time short term interest rates were reducing. This strategy of 12 rolling deposits has continued, ensuring a guaranteed level of interest the following year. A 95-day deposit account continues to be used attracting higher rates of interest than the current account. This strategy has worked well and is due to continue into 2024/25.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Trustees have adopted the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) approach to identifying and managing the risks of the Trust. The schedule of risks is reviewed on an annual basis at meetings of the Audit Committee and mitigating actions agreed as required. The risk register is reviewed on an annual basis by the Audit Committee and an internal audit and assurance work plan agreed to review the controls in place to mitigate and manage such risks effectively.

Where significant financial risks remain, the Trust has ensured it has adequate insurance cover in place. The Trust has an effective system of internal financial controls, and this is explained in more detail in the Statement of Internal Control.

The Trust has fully implemented the requirements of the Safer Recruitment procedures and all relevant staff have received the appropriate training and guidance.

The Trust has developed a Risk Management Strategy and has a Risk Register that includes potential financial risks. As part of developing the register, key risks to which the Trust may be exposed were identified and reviewed, together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks.

Key financial policies have been reviewed throughout the year. These detail the framework for financial management, including financial responsibilities of the Board, Chief Executive, and budget holders - as well as outlining the authority for spending. The Resources and Audit & Risk Committee - evaluating performance against budgets and overall expenditure - reviews finances each term.

At the year end, the Trust had no significant liabilities arising from trade creditors or debtors where there would be a significant effect on liquidity.

The Trust recognises that the defined benefit scheme deficit (Local Government Pension Scheme), which is set out in note 21 to the financial statements, represents a significant potential liability. However, the Trust considers that, as each individual Academy is able to meet its known annual contribution commitments for the foreseeable future, the risk from this liability is minimised. Also, Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of Academy closure, the Department would meet outstanding local government pension scheme liabilities for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013.

In addition, the Trust is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for both Teesside and North Yorkshire, which results in the recognition of a significant liability on the Trust's balance sheet.

One of the principal risks and uncertainties facing the Trust is centred around the medium term financial plan, in particular the on-going changes to High Needs Funding - the processes by which the Academies receive their primary source of income from the ESFA and local commissioners of Special Educational Needs places. This is a key area that is being strictly monitored, reviewed, and managed by the Trust to understand the financial implications and take action to address this if and when this may arise. Significant uncertainty surrounds rising costs in terms of inflation and unfunded pay awards. Medium term financial forecasts remain challenging to predict certainty and continue to be revisited in light of external factors to ensure financial pressures can be managed and timely action taken.

With planned Trust growth comes the need to carefully plan and review key staff roles, ensuring sufficient capacity remains to ensure standards remain high across all academies. Capacity grants will be explored and additional posts reviewed as and when required.

The Trust's Estates Management Plan and Risk Register are in place to ensure the Trust meets its responsibilities in respect of its buildings and overall estates being safe and well maintained. Regular review of the Risk Register and detailed activities within the Estates Management Plan ensures compliance with all relevant regulations.

Fundraising

Limited fundraising events took place during the year. Where possible, the Trust seek opportunities to raise funds from recognised charities for the benefit of its students.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting

	2024	2023
	kWh	kWh
<i>Energy consumption</i>		
Aggregate of energy consumption in the year		
- Gas combustion	2,287,165	1,839,537
- Fuel consumed for transport	182,082	167,707
- Electricity purchased	868,167	889,790
	<u>3,337,414</u>	<u>2,897,034</u>

	2024	2023
	metric tonnes	metric tonnes
<i>Emissions of CO2 equivalent</i>		
Scope 1 - direct emissions		
- Gas combustion	473.55	331.08
- Fuel consumed for owned transport	9.15	8.72
	<u>482.70</u>	<u>339.80</u>
Scope 2 - indirect emissions		
- Electricity purchased	175.93	184.25
Scope 3 - other indirect emissions		
- Fuel consumed for transport not owned by the academy trust	6.33	5.58
	<u>664.96</u>	<u>529.63</u>
Total gross emissions		
	<u>664.96</u>	<u>529.63</u>
<i>Intensity ratio</i>		
Tonnes CO2e per pupil	0.73	0.66
	<u>0.73</u>	<u>0.66</u>

Quantification and reporting methodology

We have followed the HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines. We have also used the GHG Reporting Protocol – Corporate Standard and have used the 2024 UK Government's Conversion Factors for Company Reporting.

Intensity measurement

The chosen intensity measurement ratio is total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO2e per pupil, the recommended ratio for the sector.

Measures taken to improve energy efficiency

Measures taken to improve energy efficiency:

- De-Carbonisation survey across the Trust in the process of being concluded.
- Significant investment in replacing lighting with LED has been undertaken which has resulted in a reduction in electricity consumption.
- Program of external lighting upgrades to include seasonal timers and LED lights has been undertaken at two sites.
- Upgraded BMS system costed to future proof all sites with a program of upgrading HVAC systems to link into the new BMS.
- Program of replacing suspended ceilings with new system that includes improved insulation.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Plans for future periods

HSAT has a three-year strategic plan covering 2023-2026, with specific aims and objectives for the session 2023/24. There are 4 Key Objectives which fulfil the DfE's Trust Quality Descriptions which have been set and should be achieved. The objectives, quality descriptions and specific key performance indicators are detailed below:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1 –

To ensure vulnerable children and young people are protected from harm and supported to keep themselves and others safe.

DfE's Trust Quality Descriptions - We will do this by ensuring our academies are places where all students:

- attend regularly
- are kept safe
- feel calm and supported
- are able to actively participate and progress

Key Performance indicators

Safeguarding

- Systems are fully in place, compliant with statutory requirements and are effective.

Behaviour and Attitudes

All academies are effective in ensuring children feel safe in school

- Incidents of bullying, discrimination, sexual-harassment, abuse and violence, are dealt with quickly and effectively
- Severely and persistently absent pupils improve their attendance over time
- Leaders ensure the pupils with high levels of attendance (above 90%) maintain this
- Suspensions are effective in reducing extremely poor or unsafe behaviour

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2 –

To ensure every child and young person receives a high quality and inclusive education to help them achieve their full potential.

DfE's Trust Quality Descriptions - We will do this by ensuring we:

- grow a motivating and ambitious culture – anchored by the Board and Executive Leadership Team
- design ambitious, well sequenced and broad curricula to realise achievement of good outcomes
- retain great staff by providing progression opportunities – based on effective performance management
- deliver high quality training and development to build and share staff expertise
- create work environments supportive of workloads, wellbeing, welfare and happy staff

Key Performance indicators

Quality of Education

- More than 75% of pupils at end of KS1 make progress from their individual starting points towards expected standards in Reading, Writing and mathematics combined
- More than 75% of pupils at end of KS2 make progress from their individual starting points towards expected standards in Reading, Writing and mathematics combined
- KS3 pupils know more, remember more and are able to do more in English (RAG rated 90% and above = green)
- KS3 pupils know more, remember more and are able to do more in mathematics RAG rated 90% and above = green)
- 100% of Y11 leavers at end of KS4 have achieved, or are on track to achieve accreditation in English and mathematics
- 100% of Y11 leavers at end of KS5 have achieved, or are on track to achieve accreditation in English, mathematics and Personal & Social Development
- In Reading, all pupils make progress from their individual starting points. Where and when appropriate, phonics is taught.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3 – To provide opportunities for children and young people to become confident in their interaction with others and to fully participate in society.

DfE's Trust Quality Descriptions - We will do this by ensuring we:

- offer all pupils opportunities to participate in sport, music and cultural activities as part of the curriculum.
- prepare every child for the next stage of education, employment or training – better preparing them to become confident, productive adults.

Key Performance indicators

Personal Development

All academies will be at or above the national average of the Gatsby Benchmarks

- >90% of Y11 leavers are predicted to be engaged in education, employment or training
- >80% of Y11 pupils who left up to a year ago remain engaged in education, employment or training
- All pupils are able to recognise the online and offline risks to their wellbeing and safety
- 100% of pupils have access to a curriculum designed to equip them for their role as British citizens by developing an awareness of spiritual, social, moral and multi-cultural understanding
- 100% of students will access opportunities to develop and improve their speaking and listening skills, enabling them to communicate effectively, confidently, and appropriately in various contexts.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4 – To maintain a strong MAT infrastructure and Board and Executive leadership which supports further development.

DfE's Trust Quality Descriptions - We will do this for the Trust by ensuring we:

- have a clearly defined and effective strategy to improve and maintain the performance of our academies.
- support and transform underperforming schools by delivering broad and sustainable improvement
- contribute to the wider system by sharing best practice.
- work together - Board and Executive leadership - to review progress of strategic alignment and effective implementation.
- work together - Board and Executive leadership – to build a leadership pipeline which supports effective succession planning.
- work together - Board and Executive leadership - to involve and include parents and carers, academies and communities so that decision-making is supported by meaningful engagement.

Key Performance indicators

- A Strong MAT Infrastructure - Leadership and Management
- Leaders align CPD for all staff with the curriculum so that teachers deliver better teaching for pupils.
- Leaders engage parents and the community in a way that supports pupils' education.
- Staff are content, have manageable workloads and feel well supported in their wellbeing (90%) & 95% staff attendance.
- Ofsted grades for all academies will be Good within 5 years of joining the Trust.
- 100% of professionals up to date with appropriate SHOSASV and online safety training
- 100% senior and executive leaders deployed in Quality Assurance and Support and Challenge roles.
- Retain IIP Gold Award, LPPA and NAS accreditation.
- >90% satisfaction rates from pupil and parent questionnaires.
- Annual VSEs confirm Trust's academies good quality of education.
- All academies to achieve attachment aware, trauma informed accreditation.
- Trust Estates Management Plan (EMP) developed, agreed and effectively implemented.
- Financial probity measure:- 0 red flags.
- One month of operating costs is maintained in reserves.
- No more than 85% total income of all academies spent on staffing.
- Trust Board skills coverage maintained and evidenced.
- Trust expansion realised – minimum 10 academies by the end of the three-year strategic plan 2023-2026.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Expansion of the Trust continues to be an ambition. The Trust was successful in their application for the Middlesbrough Borough Council special free school for 100 primary pupils with ASD and neurodiversity needs. The Trust will be engaging with the DfE and MBC to ensure plans are in place for the Special Free School to operate effectively from September 2026. In addition, the Trust will continue conversations with maintained special schools who are exploring options for joining a specialist multi-academy trust. One maintained special school is in the pipeline to join the Trust by February 2025. The overall ambition is for HSAT to have at least 10 academies by the end of the strategic period 2023-2026.

Outstanding Leadership and Governance will continue to build capacity for growth and support our academies. Key leaders will continue to engage at a local and national level. In particular, will contribute to SEND Reference Group which informs and supports the work of the DfE in implementing developments for Special Educational Needs provision across England. In addition, the CEO will continue to contribute to the work of the North Yorkshire Priority Area Partnership Board. The DCEO will contribute at Regional level to the Stockton Strategic Board. The Executive Principal has been invited to be a member of the IEB for a special school in County Durham which will realise further Trust engagement within another regional area.

At the request of the DfE Regional Director, one Trustee is a Member of another MAT and is Interim Chair of a single academy multi academy trust providing support for their development journey. The Trustee was also asked by the Regional Director to Chair a newly established forum for Chairs of Trusts that was established in February 2023.

Past experience has demonstrated that external confidence in the Trust's ability 'to do more and to do it better' arises when there is firm evidence of success and high standards of performance within the Trust. In successfully implementing the strategic plan, the Trust will continue to prudently invest its finances and work to achieve the best return for future developments.

Auditor

In so far as the trustees are aware:

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

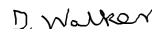
A resolution proposing that Azets Audit Services be reappointed as auditor of the charitable company will be put to the members.

The trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 17/12/2024..... and signed on its behalf by:



Elizabeth Horne 17 Dec 2024 13:59:00 GMT (UTC +0)

E Horne CBE
CEO



David Walker 17 Dec 2024 13:13:04 GMT (UTC +0)

D Walker MBE
Chair of the board

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Scope of responsibility

As trustees, we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that Horizons Specialist 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.

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Trust's Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, for ensuring financial controls conform to 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 the Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' Report and in the Statement of Trustees' responsibilities. The Board of Trustees has formally met seven times during the year and attendance was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
J Bromiley (Resigned 31 August 2024)	3	7
E Horne CBE (CEO)	7	7
M Jones	6	7
D New	7	7
R Nicholls (Resigned 7 February 2024)	5	5
Dr B Sinha	5	7
D Walker MBE (Chair of the board)	6	7
A Ward	5	7
C Whittaker	7	7
A Thompson (Appointed 1 October 2024)	0	0

There is a whole host of data utilised by the Board, its Committees, and the Academy Councils throughout the course of its business. As requested by the Board, the way in which information is presented to Trustees has been further developed, ie Estates Management Plan and Health & Safety compliance reporting. Trustees agree that the information provides robust evidence to support their review of, and challenge to Trust leaders and academies. Robust reporting at local governance level also supports Academy Councils fulfil their role. With regard to the provision of financial information, monthly management accounts and cash flow reports are provided to all Trustees in addition to detailed termly reports to the Resources & Audit & Risk Committee.

The Board's succession planning model is firmly embedded and opportunities to chair the Board, Committees and Academy Councils continue to be reviewed on an annual basis in the autumn term. Committee membership is also reviewed annually, and Trustees ensure their skills are utilised to bring challenge and support. Trustees may choose to attend any Academy Council meeting, but this is not part of the Trust's governance structure.

Conflicts of interest

Declaration of interests are obtained from Members, Trustees and Governors on an annual basis and published on the Trust website. Declarations are requested at every Trustee or Governor meeting and reminders given that any mid-year changes need to be logged and updated on the register accordingly. As part of the Staff Code of Conduct, all staff are required to declare any other paid employment outside of the Trust. Declarations are also requested from budget holders to ensure a comprehensive register is kept of all potential related parties. To date, no related party transactions have taken place and none are planned for the future.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The Resources & Audit & Risk Committee is a sub-committee of the main board of Trustees. Its purpose is to assist the decision-making of the Trust by enabling more detailed consideration be given, and to ensure the sound management of the Trust's finances, staffing and resources, as well as to advise on the adequacy and effectiveness of the systems of internal control and the arrangements for risk management, control, and governance processes. The Committee continued to monitor finances, estates and staff absence/wellbeing throughout the course of the year and also robustly carried out its role to scrutinise risk and internal/ external audit reporting.

Attendance during the year at meetings of the Resources & Audit & Risk Committee was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
J Bromiley (Resigned 31 August 2024)	0	1
E Horne CBE (CEO)	5	5
M Jones	5	5
D New	5	5
Dr B Sinha	3	5
D Walker MBE (Chair of the board)	5	5
C Whittaker	4	5

The Standards Committee is a sub-committee of the main board of trustees.

Its purpose is to scrutinise and monitor the performance and achievement of pupils across the Trust.

Attendance during the year at meetings of the Standards Committee was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
E Horne CBE (CEO)	3	3
M Jones	3	3
R Nicholls (Resigned 7 February 2024)	1	1
D Walker MBE (Chair of the board)	1	3
A Ward	3	3
C Whittaker	2	3

Review of value for money

As accounting officer, the Chief Executive had responsibility for ensuring that the Trust delivered good value in the use of public resources during the period. The accounting officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes, achieved in return for the tax payers' resources received. The appointment of the Head of Estates & IT for the Trust to manage the overall Estates Portfolio, including all aspects of estates safety and management, is improving the learning environment for the HSAT community. This strategic approach to managing all capital aspects across the Trust's estate is enabling best value to be secured in relation to contracts, capital projects and overall developments.

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

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Improving Educational Outcomes

During the year, the Trust ensured educational outcomes improved for students by achieving the following:

- Offering a diverse curriculum ensuring all students have had the opportunity to raise their individual levels of attainment as well as accessing a greater range of qualifications.
- Positive feedback from external awarding bodies with regards to student work and teacher assessment. Grades awarded reflected predicted grades.
- Providing regular and robust training and development which underpinned the appraisal process and whereby staff continued to be encouraged and supported in their personal professional development. The Professional Learning Lead for the Trust planned programmes across all academies, ensuring best value in terms of economies of scale in relation to the cost of professional development opportunities.
- Use of external benchmarks such as the National Autistic Society quality mark, MOVE programme and Rights Respecting Schools Award ensures that each school offer is pertinent to the needs of the students and demonstrates high standards for student achievement with an effective curriculum, good use of resources, successful staff teams and strong partnerships.
- Enabling two members of staff to continue to access training as OFSTED inspectors – increasing future income-generation alongside improved knowledge.
- Supporting the Chief Executive's continued involvement in the Regional Director's Advisory Board for the North East - until end of March 2024 - generating additional income for the Trust as well as providing a valuable contribution to the Regional Director.
- Engaging the Trust's Executive leadership in supporting other Trusts and Headteachers as part of the DfE's Trust and School Improvement offer (TSI) which generated further income for the Trust, as well as supporting the improvement of the wider education system.

Financial Performance

With increasing budget pressures, the Trust strives to focus on value for money – appreciating the value of assets and how they can increase our students' rate of progress. During the year, the following was achieved:

- Existing Trust and academy staff were utilised in supporting individual academies in key areas during the year. Certain roles are shared with staff employed to work across multiple sites. This has been a particular success - providing cost savings and opportunities for staff development.
- A new Premises role was created to increase capacity for the Facilities Team to meet additional workload.
- Significant amounts of capital grants have been spent, resulting in an improved environment for students and staff across the Trust estate.
- A joint procurement exercise (collaborative working) was carried out for Grounds Maintenance at Hollis Academy with the neighbouring school.
- Energy efficiency measures have been taken, improving facilities and reducing energy costs. Significant investment has been made in LED internal and external lighting and a boiler replacement which will realise revenue savings in future years.
- Grants opportunities continue to be explored and a 'Connect the Classroom' grant was awarded to fully fund improved internet coverage at Hollis Academy (only eligible academy).
- A Salix grant was also secured to carry out de-carbonisation surveys across the Trust estate.
- The Trust has continued to employ a team of specialist staff such as Speech & Language Therapists, Educational Psychologist and Safeguarding experts - ensuring qualified, enthusiastic professionals are in place to benefit all academies within the Trust.
- A centralised accounts function continues to provide a cost-effective service and caters for six academies from its base on-site at the registered office within the Tees Valley. The Woodlands Academy (Scarborough) joined HSAT in May 2023 and is also supported from the Trust central team along with school based staff.
- Sharing assets across the Trust has ensured more efficient use of resources, resulting in saving money and giving maximum returns for the Trust. Over the year, in addition to staffing, this has included sharing resources and vehicles.
- All staff with budget responsibility, regardless of the amounts involved, were supported and encouraged to achieve value-for-money from the Finance team. The Finance Policy continues to be regularly reviewed and clearly outlines ways to ensure the integrity of public funds and how they can be maintained by following the principles of probity, accountability, and fairness.
- The Trust continues to benchmark its costs against similar organisations to identify potential areas for savings. High-level information from published annual accounts for other Trusts has been reviewed and compared with our data, along with data extracted from the DfE 'View My Financial Insights' tool, to aid us in this process. This will be further explored during 2024/25 to ensure maximum benefit can be made from the limited pool of comparable data.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Accounting officers should consider demonstrating how they have effectively used relevant funding to ensure the trust's estate is safe, well-maintained, and complies with regulations. This has been achieved by the development of the Trust's Estate Management Plan, a new development for HSAT which will enable efficiencies in spending and effectiveness in improvement of the overall quality of the Trust's estate portfolio. Recent engagement with the RPA in relation to flooding at Mo Mowlam Academy realised extensive restoration. The associated costs being covered by the insurance and the programme of works efficiently overseen by the Head of Estates & IT is an example of efficiencies in allocation of funds and effectiveness of the deployment of senior posts within the Trust. In addition, ensuring the minimal effect on the operation of the academy during the restoration works is an excellent example of how well the Trust manages its estate for the benefit of the children, staff and Trust community in very demanding circumstances.

The purpose of the system of internal control

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

Capacity to handle risk

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the Academy Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal, on-going, process for identifying, evaluating, and managing the Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period commencing with trading on 1 September 2023 and ending 31 August 2024, and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. The Board of Trustees regularly reviews this process.

The risk and control framework

The Trust's system of internal 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 - an annual budget and three-year plan, monthly management accounts emailed to the Board, and detailed termly financial reports reviewed and agreed by the Board of Trustees.
- regular reviews by the Resources and Audit & Risk Committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes.
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance (KPIs).
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines.
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties; and
- identification and management of risks.

The Board of Trustee's has decided:

- to employ Clive Owen LLP as internal auditor

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

- testing of payroll systems
- testing of purchase systems (including procurement)
- testing of accounting systems
- testing of regularity and compliance
- testing of VAT
- testing of fixed assets

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Twice a year, the appointed internal auditors report to the Board of Trustees, through the Resources and Audit & Risk Committee via formal reports, on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Trustees' financial responsibilities. In addition, a summary report is also taken to the Committee outlining the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions to help the Committee consider actions and assess year-on-year progress.

Review of effectiveness

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

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

The accounting officer has been advised of the implications of the result of its review of the system of internal control by the Resources and Audit & Risk Committee and a plan to ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Conclusion

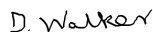
Based on the advice of the audit and risk committee and the accounting officer, the board of trustees is of the opinion that the academy trust has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 17/12/2024..... and signed on its behalf by:



Elizabeth Horne 17 Dec 2024 13:59:00 GMT (UTC +0)

E Horne CBE
CEO



David Walker 17 Dec 2024 13:13:04 GMT (UTC +0)

D Walker MBE
Chair of the board

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

STATEMENT OF REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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

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

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



Elizabeth Horne 17 Dec 2024 13:59:00 GMT (UTC +0)

E Horne CBE

Accounting Officer

17 December 2024
.....

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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

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

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

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

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

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

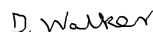
The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of accounts may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 17/12/2024..... and signed on its behalf by:



Elizabeth Horne 17 Dec 2024 13:59:00 GMT (UTC +0)

**E Horne CBE
CEO**



David Walker 17 Dec 2024 13:13:04 GMT (UTC +0)

**D Walker MBE
Chair of the board**

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Opinion

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

In our opinion the accounts:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024.

Basis for opinion

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

Emphasis of matter

We draw your attention to the key judgements made in relation to the accounting treatment and assumptions regarding the Local Government Pension Scheme ('LGPS'). The key judgements are disclosed in note 2 and the pension note includes the relevant pension scheme disclosures. It should be noted that for sector-wide comparability users of these financial statements should take into consideration differing sector judgements relating to asset ceiling calculations, where appropriate. Our Auditor's Report is unmodified in this respect.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of trustees

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

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

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:

- enquiries of management about any actual or potential litigation and claims;
- enquiries of management about any known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations and fraud;
- challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their significant accounting estimates;
- auditing the risk of management override of controls, including through testing journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for bias;
- reading correspondence with regulators including the OFSTED;
- reviewing minutes of those charged with governance;
- reviewing internal assurance reports; and
- reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing support documentation.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

We identified the following areas as those most likely to have a material impact on the financial statements: Health and Safety; employment law (including the Working Time Directive); and compliance with the Charities Act 2011 and UK Companies Act.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that some material misstatements in the financial statements may not be detected, even though the audit is properly planned and performed in accordance with the ISAs (UK). For instance, the further removed non-compliance is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the auditor is to become aware of it or to recognise the non-compliance.

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

Use of our report

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

Azets Audit Services

Brian Laidlaw 17 Dec 2024 14:57:26 GMT (UTC +0)

Brian Laidlaw BA CA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Azets Audit Services

17 December 2024

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

Bulman House
Regent Centre
Gosforth
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 3LS

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 22 June 2022 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Horizons Specialist Academy Trust during the period 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Respective responsibilities of Horizons Specialist Academy Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Horizons Specialist Academy Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 1 August 2013 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2023, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Our responsibilities for this engagement are established in the United Kingdom by our profession's ethical guidance, and are to obtain limited assurance and report in accordance with our engagement letter and the requirements of the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 have not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Approach

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

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

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

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

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- Review of Board of Trustees and committee minutes;
- Review of available internal assurance reports;
- Completion of self assessment questionnaire by the Accounting Officer;
- Discussions with the Accounting Officer and finance team;
- Review documentation provided to Trustees and Accounting Officer setting our responsibilities;
- Obtained a formal letter of representation detailing the responsibilities of Trustees;
- Review of payroll, purchases and expense claims on a sample basis;
- Confirmation that the lines of delegation and limits set have been adhered to;
- Evaluation of internal control procedures and reporting lines;
- Review of cash payments for unusual transactions;
- Review of purchasing card transactions;
- Review of register of interests;
- Review of related party transactions;
- Review of borrowing arrangements;
- Review of land and building transactions;
- Review of potential and actual bad debts;
- Review of gifts and hospitality on a sample basis to ensure in line with policy; and
- Consideration of governance issues.

Conclusion

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

Azets Audit Services

Brian Laidlaw 17 Dec 2024 14:57:26 GMT (UTC +0)

Reporting Accountant

Azets Audit Services
Bulman House
Regent Centre
Gosforth
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 3LS

Dated: 17 December 2024
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HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds: General £	Fixed asset £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and capital grants	3	26,348	-	1,023,889	1,050,237	821,726
Donations - transfer of existing academy into the trust		-	-	-	-	3,590,737
Charitable activities:						
- Funding for educational operations	4	26,141	23,470,719	-	23,496,860	19,740,833
Other trading activities	5	135,806	111,873	-	247,679	241,503
Investments	6	107,366	-	-	107,366	35,627
Total		<u>295,661</u>	<u>23,582,592</u>	<u>1,023,889</u>	<u>24,902,142</u>	<u>24,430,426</u>
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	7	-	19,127	-	19,127	15,737
Charitable activities:						
- Educational operations	9	286,534	23,497,453	1,232,002	25,015,989	21,326,368
Total	7	<u>286,534</u>	<u>23,516,580</u>	<u>1,232,002</u>	<u>25,035,116</u>	<u>21,342,105</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		9,127	66,012	(208,113)	(132,974)	3,088,321
Transfers between funds	19	-	(234,154)	234,154	-	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	21	-	1,517,000	-	1,517,000	3,645,000
Adjustment for restriction on pension assets	21	-	(4,244,000)	-	(4,244,000)	-
Net movement in funds		9,127	(2,895,142)	26,041	(2,859,974)	6,733,321
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward		1,377,034	4,722,335	27,186,997	33,286,366	26,553,045
Total funds carried forward		<u>1,386,161</u>	<u>1,827,193</u>	<u>27,213,038</u>	<u>30,426,392</u>	<u>33,286,366</u>

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Comparative year information Year ended 31 August 2023	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted funds:		Total
		funds	General	Fixed asset	2023
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and capital grants	3	2,816	-	818,910	821,726
Donations - transfer of existing academy into the trust		49,896	567,207	2,973,634	3,590,737
Charitable activities:					
- Funding for educational operations	4	10,370	19,730,463	-	19,740,833
Other trading activities	5	125,007	116,496	-	241,503
Investments	6	35,627	-	-	35,627
Total		<u>223,716</u>	<u>20,414,166</u>	<u>3,792,544</u>	<u>24,430,426</u>
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	-	15,737	-	15,737
Charitable activities:					
- Educational operations	9	240,555	20,270,375	815,438	21,326,368
Total	7	<u>240,555</u>	<u>20,286,112</u>	<u>815,438</u>	<u>21,342,105</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		(16,839)	128,054	2,977,106	3,088,321
Transfers between funds	19	-	(119,667)	119,667	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	21	-	3,645,000	-	3,645,000
Net movement in funds		(16,839)	3,653,387	3,096,773	6,733,321
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		1,393,873	1,068,948	24,090,224	26,553,045
Total funds carried forward		<u>1,377,034</u>	<u>4,722,335</u>	<u>27,186,997</u>	<u>33,286,366</u>

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13		26,658,906		26,378,745
Current assets					
Stock	14		4,389		2,809
Debtors	15		811,030		807,161
Investments	16		1,500,000		1,500,000
Cash at bank and in hand			4,116,659		3,579,585
			<u>6,432,078</u>		<u>5,889,555</u>
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17		(2,225,592)		(1,137,934)
Net current assets			<u>4,206,486</u>		<u>4,751,621</u>
Net assets excluding pension (liability)/asset			30,865,392		31,130,366
Defined benefit pension scheme (liability)/asset	21		(439,000)		2,156,000
Total net assets			<u>30,426,392</u>		<u>33,286,366</u>
Funds of the academy trust:					
Restricted funds	19				
- Fixed asset funds			27,213,038		27,186,997
- Restricted income funds			2,266,193		2,566,335
- Pension reserve			(439,000)		2,156,000
Total restricted funds			<u>29,040,231</u>		<u>31,909,332</u>
Unrestricted income funds	19		<u>1,386,161</u>		<u>1,377,034</u>
Total funds			<u>30,426,392</u>		<u>33,286,366</u>

The accounts on pages 42 to 68 were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 17/12/2024 and are signed on their behalf by:

Elizabeth Horne

Elizabeth Horne 17 Dec 2024 13:59:00 GMT (UTC +0)

E Horne CBE
CEO

D. Walker

David Walker 17 Dec 2024 13:13:04 GMT (UTC +0)

D Walker MBE
Chair of the board

Company registration number 08608287 (England and Wales)

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net cash provided by operating activities	22		917,981		369,040
Cash funds transferred on conversion			-		1,494,720
			<u>917,981</u>		<u>1,863,760</u>
Cash flows from investing activities					
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		107,366		35,627	
Capital grants from DfE Group		955,911		805,079	
Capital funding received from sponsors and others		67,978		13,831	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,512,162)		(935,325)	
Purchase of investments		-		(500,000)	
		<u></u>	<u>(380,907)</u>	<u></u>	<u>(580,788)</u>
Net cash used in investing activities			<u>(380,907)</u>		<u>(580,788)</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period			537,074		1,282,972
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year			<u>3,579,585</u>		<u>2,296,613</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year			<u><u>4,116,659</u></u>		<u><u>3,579,585</u></u>

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

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

1.1 Basis of preparation

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

These financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the entity,

1.2 Going concern

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

1.3 Income

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

Grants

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

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

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

Donations

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

Other income

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

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Donated goods, facilities and services

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

Donated fixed assets

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

Transfer of assets from existing academies

Where assets and liabilities are received on the transfer of an existing academy into the academy trust, the transferred net assets are measured at fair value and recognised in the balance sheet at the point when the risks and rewards of ownership pass to the academy trust. An equal amount of income is recognised for the transfer of an existing academy into the academy trust within donations and capital grant income to the net assets acquired.

1.4 Expenditure

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

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Expenditure on raising funds

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

Charitable activities

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

1.5 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

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

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

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

Leasehold land and buildings	50 years straight line
Leasehold improvements	up to 20 years straight line
Assets under construction	No depreciation provided
Plant and machinery	7 years straight line
Computer equipment	3 years straight line
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	7 years straight line
Motor vehicles	7 years straight line

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

1.6 Liabilities

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

1.7 Leased assets

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

1.8 Investments

Cash deposits in excess three months represent current, savings and call deposit account balances, which past experience has shown to be stable and of a long term nature.

1.9 Financial instruments

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

Financial assets

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

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

Financial liabilities

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

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

1.10 Stock

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Net realisable value is based on estimated selling price less further costs to completion and disposal. Provision is made for obsolete and slow moving stock.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.11 Taxation

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

1.12 Pensions benefits

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

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

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

1.13 Fund accounting

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

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

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

2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

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

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

(Continued)

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 or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 21, will impact on 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 2024. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

The UK corporate bond yields at 31 August 2023 were at their highest levels for many years, and remain at a similar level at 31 August 2024, resulting in higher accounting discount rates at the year end. This places a significantly lower value on the pension obligations compared to last year and will be one of the main reasons a net asset has been reported. We have ensured that our assumptions are appropriate for the Trust and the valuation has been based on the following estimates:

- There is a minimum funding requirement in relation to LGPS
- There is the ability to recover a surplus through the ability to reduce future contributions (not refund)
- In calculating the surplus, the present value of current and past service costs is offset against the future contributions over the future period
- The present values in the above calculations are calculated using an annuity representing participation into perpetuity.

There is no known intention to exit the LGPS and therefore the economic benefit of a refund would be highly unlikely and on that basis recognition of an asset is considered inappropriate. We have however considered the economic benefit available to the Trust as a future contribution reduction and whether it is appropriate to recognise the net asset in full. Under FRS 102, a net asset restriction may apply as the prevailing view is that a minimum funding requirement for future service exists in the LGPS. We requested our actuaries consider the impact of the minimum funding requirement on the asset ceiling and as a result we have restricted the asset based upon an asset restriction calculation. We consider this to be appropriate and a more accurate reflection of the pension positions as at the 31 August 2024.

Critical areas of judgement

Accounting estimates and assumptions are made concerning the future and, by their nature, will rarely equal the related actual outcome. The key assumptions and other sources of estimation uncertainty that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are as follows:

Assessing indicator of impairment.

In assessing whether there have been any indicators of impairment of assets the trustees have considered both external and internal sources of information such as market conditions, counterparty credit ratings and experience of recoverability. There have been no indicators of impairment identified during the current financial year.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

3 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Capital grants	-	1,023,889	1,023,889	818,910
Other donations	26,348	-	26,348	2,816
	<u>26,348</u>	<u>1,023,889</u>	<u>1,050,237</u>	<u>821,726</u>

4 Funding for the academy trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
DfE/ESFA grants				
General annual grant (GAG)	-	8,940,000	8,940,000	7,810,000
Other DfE/ESFA grants:				
- Pupil premium	-	569,158	569,158	468,429
- PE & sports grants	-	49,230	49,230	38,193
- Others	-	1,304,268	1,304,268	951,271
	<u>-</u>	<u>10,862,656</u>	<u>10,862,656</u>	<u>9,267,893</u>
Other government grants				
Local authority grants	-	12,176,145	12,176,145	10,079,338
	<u>-</u>	<u>12,176,145</u>	<u>12,176,145</u>	<u>10,079,338</u>
COVID-19 additional funding				
DfE/ESFA				
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	399,926	399,926	351,036
	<u>-</u>	<u>399,926</u>	<u>399,926</u>	<u>351,036</u>
Other incoming resources	26,141	31,992	58,133	42,566
	<u>26,141</u>	<u>31,992</u>	<u>58,133</u>	<u>42,566</u>
Total funding	<u>26,141</u>	<u>23,470,719</u>	<u>23,496,860</u>	<u>19,740,833</u>

5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Hire of facilities	-	37,645	37,645	36,066
Catering income	58,554	-	58,554	52,600
Parental contributions	22,063	-	22,063	22,784
Other income	55,189	74,228	129,417	130,053
	<u>135,806</u>	<u>111,873</u>	<u>247,679</u>	<u>241,503</u>

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

6 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Short term deposits	107,366	-	107,366	35,627

7 Expenditure

	Staff costs £	Non-pay expenditure		Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
		Premises £	Other £		
Expenditure on raising funds					
- Direct costs	-	-	19,127	19,127	15,737
Academy's educational operations					
- Direct costs	17,478,472	-	1,030,721	18,509,193	15,229,727
- Allocated support costs	3,156,767	2,335,019	1,015,010	6,506,796	6,096,641
	<u>20,635,239</u>	<u>2,335,019</u>	<u>2,064,858</u>	<u>25,035,116</u>	<u>21,342,105</u>

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2024 £	2023 £
Operating lease rentals	27,195	26,507
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	1,232,002	815,438
Fees payable to auditor for:		
- Audit	15,000	11,250
- Other services	3,500	3,125
Net interest on defined benefit pension liability	(118,000)	29,000

8 Central services

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

- human resources;
- financial services;
- legal services;
- health & safety;
- safeguarding; and
- governance.

Each academy also receives support from the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Principal and Head of Finance.

The academy trust charges for these services on the following basis:

- 6% top-slice. As all academies reserves are held centrally by the trust, discretion can be applied to reduce this percentage on an exceptional basis.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

8 Central services

(Continued)

The amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Abbey Hill Academy	467,109	445,959
Archway Academy	98,302	89,470
Green Gates Academy	76,651	68,805
Hollis Academy	137,527	140,721
Mo Mowlam Academy	16,427	-
Westlands Academy	126,084	107,280
Woodlands Academy	187,963	65,786
	<u>1,110,063</u>	<u>918,021</u>

9 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Direct costs				
Educational operations	-	18,509,193	18,509,193	15,229,727
Support costs				
Educational operations	286,534	6,220,262	6,506,796	6,096,641
	<u>286,534</u>	<u>24,729,455</u>	<u>25,015,989</u>	<u>21,326,368</u>

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

9 Charitable activities (Continued)

	2024	2023
	£	£
Analysis of support costs		
Support staff costs	3,178,547	2,958,589
Depreciation	1,232,002	815,438
Technology costs	82,542	412,345
Premises costs	1,103,017	958,384
Legal costs	50,510	4,366
Other support costs	774,054	843,306
Governance costs	86,124	104,213
	<u>6,506,796</u>	<u>6,096,641</u>

10 Staff

Staff costs and employee benefits

Staff costs during the year were:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	14,835,776	12,049,935
Social security costs	1,414,265	1,158,089
Pension costs	3,145,392	2,807,907
	<u>19,395,433</u>	<u>16,015,931</u>
Staff costs - employees	19,395,433	16,015,931
Agency staff costs	1,226,028	1,449,809
Staff restructuring costs	13,778	25,343
	<u>20,635,239</u>	<u>17,491,083</u>
Staff development and other staff costs	95,464	98,115
	<u>20,730,703</u>	<u>17,589,198</u>

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

Redundancy payments	13,778	19,007
Severance payments	-	6,336
	<u>13,778</u>	<u>25,343</u>

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

10 Staff

(Continued)

Staff numbers

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

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Teachers and teaching assistants	363	296
Administration and support	142	134
Management	12	11
	<u>517</u>	<u>441</u>

Higher paid staff

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

	2024 Number	2023 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	14	10
£70,001 - £80,000	5	4
£80,001 - £90,000	4	3
£90,001 - £100,000	2	1
£100,001 - £110,000	1	1
£110,001 - £120,000	1	-
£120,001 - £130,000	1	-
£130,001 - £140,000	-	1
	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>

Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the academy trust comprise the trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of key management personnel benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £1,524,487(2023: £1,197,866).

11 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

One or more of the trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the academy trust. The principal only receives remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the role of principal under their contracts of employment, and not in respect of their services as trustees.

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

E Horne CBE (Chief Executive and trustee):

- Remuneration £120,000 - £125,000 (2023: £130,000-£135,000)
- Employer's pension contributions £20,000 - £25,000 (2023: £10,000 - £15,000)

During the year, travel and subsistence payments totalling £216 (2023: £612) were reimbursed or paid directly to 1 trustee (2023: 2 trustees).

Other related party transactions involving the trustees are set out within the related parties note.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

12 Trustees' and officers' insurance

In accordance with normal commercial practice, the academy trust has purchased insurance to protect trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £10,000,000 on any one claim. It is not possible to quantify the trustees and officers indemnity element from the overall cost of the RPA scheme.

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

13 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold land and buildings	Assets under construction	Plant and machinery	Computer equipment	Fixtures, fittings & equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cost							
At 1 September 2023	28,389,102	119,088	334,180	833,497	747,167	173,067	30,596,101
Transfers	14,305	(119,088)	104,783	-	-	-	-
Additions	195,167	784,440	69,975	265,656	153,626	43,298	1,512,162
At 31 August 2024	28,598,574	784,440	508,938	1,099,153	900,793	216,365	32,108,263
Depreciation							
At 1 September 2023	2,975,163	-	157,455	607,951	352,091	124,696	4,217,356
Charge for the year	919,838	-	39,978	170,532	90,146	11,507	1,232,001
At 31 August 2024	3,895,001	-	197,433	778,483	442,237	136,203	5,449,357
Net book value							
At 31 August 2024	24,703,573	784,440	311,505	320,670	458,556	80,162	26,658,906
At 31 August 2023	25,413,939	119,088	176,725	225,546	395,076	48,371	26,378,745

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024****14 Stock**

2024	2023
£	£

Other stock	4,389	2,809
	<u>4,389</u>	<u>2,809</u>

15 Debtors

2024	2023
£	£

Trade debtors	14,149	168,459
VAT recoverable	108,394	155,684
Other debtors	252	-
Prepayments and accrued income	688,235	483,018
	<u>811,030</u>	<u>807,161</u>

16 Current asset investments

2024	2023
£	£

Fixed term deposits	1,500,000	1,500,000
	<u>1,500,000</u>	<u>1,500,000</u>

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

2024	2023
£	£

Trade creditors	413,693	275,967
Other taxation and social security	322,928	295,583
Other creditors	378,533	119,609
Accruals and deferred income	1,110,438	446,775
	<u>2,225,592</u>	<u>1,137,934</u>

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

18 Deferred income

	2024 £	2023 £
Deferred income is included within:		
Creditors due within one year	475,850	39,949
Deferred income at 1 September 2023	39,949	35,381
Released from previous years	(39,949)	(35,381)
Resources deferred in the year	475,850	39,949
Deferred income at 31 August 2024	475,850	39,949

Deferred income was held in respect of Recovery Fund, Tutor Fund Income, catering income, trip income and DfE grants.

19 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	2,566,335	8,940,000	(9,005,988)	(234,154)	2,266,193
Pupil premium	-	569,158	(569,158)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	399,926	(399,926)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	1,353,498	(1,353,498)	-	-
Other government grants	-	12,176,145	(12,176,145)	-	-
Other restricted funds	-	143,865	(143,865)	-	-
Pension reserve	2,156,000	-	132,000	(2,727,000)	(439,000)
	<u>4,722,335</u>	<u>23,582,592</u>	<u>(23,516,580)</u>	<u>(2,961,154)</u>	<u>1,827,193</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
DfE group capital grants	<u>27,186,997</u>	<u>1,023,889</u>	<u>(1,232,002)</u>	<u>234,154</u>	<u>27,213,038</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>31,909,332</u>	<u>24,606,481</u>	<u>(24,748,582)</u>	<u>(2,727,000)</u>	<u>29,040,231</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	<u>1,377,034</u>	<u>295,661</u>	<u>(286,534)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,386,161</u>
Total funds	<u>33,286,366</u>	<u>24,902,142</u>	<u>(25,035,116)</u>	<u>(2,727,000)</u>	<u>30,426,392</u>

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

19 Funds

(Continued)

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

The General Annual Grant (GAG) must be used for the normal running costs of the Trust. Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the academy trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at the balance sheet date.

A start up grant was received from the ESFA as a result of the conversion to academy status. The full grant was allocated.

Other DfE/ESFA grants include teachers pay and pension grants, pupil premium, PE and sports grant and other DfE/ESFA grants.

Other government grants comprise funding received from the Local Authority.

The costs and income associated with the defined benefit pension scheme have been recorded in the restricted fund. Staff costs are paid from this fund, including contributions to Local Government Pension Scheme ('LGPS') and the pension liability has therefore been aligned with these funds. The restricted funds are in deficit as a result of the deficit on the LGPS pension scheme alone.

The inherited fixed asset fund reflects the fixed assets acquired from the Local Authority on conversion to academy status. Depreciation on these assets is charged against this fund.

DfE/ESFA capital grants received in year consist of capital grants received in the year which have been received for expenditure on acquisition and maintenance of fixed assets.

The transfer from the Local Authority reflects the fixed assets, the pension deficit, the surplus GAG and any surplus school funds acquired on conversion.

Unrestricted funds can be used for any purpose at the discretion of the academy trust.

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

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

19 Funds

(Continued)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2023 £
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	1,255,948	9,235,568	(7,805,514)	(119,667)	2,566,335
Pupil premium	-	468,429	(468,429)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	351,036	(351,036)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	992,103	(992,103)	-	-
Other government grants	-	10,079,338	(10,079,338)	-	-
Other restricted funds	-	148,692	(148,692)	-	-
Pension reserve	(187,000)	(861,000)	(441,000)	3,645,000	2,156,000
	<u>1,068,948</u>	<u>20,414,166</u>	<u>(20,286,112)</u>	<u>3,525,333</u>	<u>4,722,335</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Inherited on conversion	-	2,973,634	-	-	2,973,634
DfE group capital grants	24,090,224	818,910	(815,438)	119,667	24,213,363
	<u>24,090,224</u>	<u>3,792,544</u>	<u>(815,438)</u>	<u>119,667</u>	<u>27,186,997</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>25,159,172</u>	<u>24,206,710</u>	<u>(21,101,550)</u>	<u>3,645,000</u>	<u>31,909,332</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	1,393,873	223,716	(240,555)	-	1,377,034
	<u>1,393,873</u>	<u>223,716</u>	<u>(240,555)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,377,034</u>
Total funds	<u>26,553,045</u>	<u>24,430,426</u>	<u>(21,342,105)</u>	<u>3,645,000</u>	<u>33,286,366</u>

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

19 Funds

(Continued)

Total funds analysis by academy

	2024	2023
	£	£
Fund balances at 31 August 2024 were allocated as follows:		
Abbey Hill Academy	-	-
Archway Academy	-	-
Green Gates Academy	-	-
Hollis Academy	-	-
Mo Mowlam Academy	-	-
Westlands Academy	-	-
Woodlands Academy	-	-
Central services	3,652,354	3,943,369
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total before fixed assets fund and pension reserve	3,652,354	3,943,369
Restricted fixed asset fund	27,213,038	27,186,997
Pension reserve	(439,000)	2,156,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total funds	<u>30,426,392</u>	<u>33,286,366</u>

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching and educational support staff	Other support staff costs	Educational supplies	Other costs excluding depreciation	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Abbey Hill Academy	6,460,455	1,090,212	578,717	267,125	8,396,509	7,782,614
Archway Academy	1,358,349	218,637	238,478	85,205	1,900,669	1,727,377
Green Gates Academy	1,052,362	112,695	107,179	66,689	1,338,925	1,208,306
Hollis Academy	1,811,019	208,860	303,323	205,722	2,528,924	2,383,585
Mo Mowlam Academy	2,417,670	212,350	350,488	101,846	3,082,354	3,031,945
Westlands Academy	1,707,203	214,608	214,387	92,802	2,229,000	1,918,991
Woodlands Academy	2,391,617	347,826	293,685	129,415	3,162,543	1,016,316
Central services	353,482	746,841	152,944	3,986	1,257,253	1,016,450
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	<u>17,552,157</u>	<u>3,152,029</u>	<u>2,239,201</u>	<u>952,790</u>	<u>23,896,177</u>	<u>20,085,584</u>

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds: General Fixed asset £ £		Endowment Funds £	Total Funds £
Fund balances at 31 August 2024 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	26,658,906	-	26,658,906
Current assets	1,386,161	4,491,785	554,132	-	6,432,078
Current liabilities	-	(2,225,592)	-	-	(2,225,592)
Pension scheme liability	-	(439,000)	-	-	(439,000)
Total net assets	1,386,161	1,827,193	27,213,038	-	30,426,392

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds: General Fixed asset £ £		Endowment Funds £	Total Funds £
Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:					
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	26,378,745	-	26,378,745
Current assets	1,377,034	3,704,269	808,252	-	5,889,555
Current liabilities	-	(1,137,934)	-	-	(1,137,934)
Pension scheme asset	-	2,156,000	-	-	2,156,000
Total net assets	1,377,034	4,722,335	27,186,997	-	33,286,366

21 Pension and similar obligations

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

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

Contributions amounting to £295,583 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2024 (2023: £233,687) and are included within creditors.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Introduction

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

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

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

21 Pension and similar obligations

(Continued)

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2020. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 27 October 2023, with the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, applying a notional investment return based on 1.7% above the rate of CPI. The key elements of the valuation outcome are:

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

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

The employer's pension costs paid to the TPS in the period amounted to £1,956,070 (2023: £1,446,615).

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

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

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contributions are as noted below. The agreed contribution rates for future years are 17.50 - 18.80% for employers and 5.50 - 12.50% for employees.

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

Total contributions made	2024	2023
	£	£
Employer's contributions	1,223,000	931,000
Employees' contributions	399,000	311,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total contributions	<u>1,622,000</u>	<u>1,242,000</u>

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

21 Pension and similar obligations

(Continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions	2024	2023
	%	%
Teeside Pension Fund		
Rate of increase in salaries	3.65	4.00
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.65	3.00
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.00	5.20
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
North Yorkshire Pension Fund		
Rate of increase in salaries	3.75	3.85
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.50	2.60
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	4.90	5.00
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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

	2024	2023
	Years	Years
Teeside Pension Fund		
Retiring today		
- Males	20.4	20.5
- Females	23.4	23.5
Retiring in 20 years		
- Males	21.2	21.3
- Females	24.9	25.0
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
North Yorkshire Pension Fund		
Retiring today		
- Males	21.8	22.0
- Females	24.4	24.5
Retiring in 20 years		
- Males	22.4	22.9
- Females	25.2	25.5
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Scheme liabilities would have been affected by changes in assumptions as follows:

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

21 Pension and similar obligations

(Continued)

The academy trust's share of the assets in the scheme	2024 Fair value £	2023 Fair value £
Equities	18,161,000	16,259,000
Bonds	491,000	368,000
Multi Asset Credit	139,000	111,000
Cash	785,000	831,000
Property	6,364,000	4,904,000
Other assets	474,000	351,000
Total market value of assets	26,414,000	22,824,000
Restriction on scheme assets	(4,244,000)	-
Net assets recognised	22,170,000	22,824,000

The actual return on scheme assets was £2,512,000 (2023: £1,970,000).

Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities	2024 £	2023 £
Current service cost	1,209,000	1,343,000
Interest income	(1,211,000)	(815,000)
Interest cost	1,093,000	844,000
Total operating charge	1,091,000	1,372,000

Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations

2024
£

At 1 September 2023	20,668,000
Current service cost	1,209,000
Interest cost	1,093,000
Employee contributions	399,000
Actuarial gain	(216,000)
Benefits paid	(544,000)
At 31 August 2024	22,609,000

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

21 Pension and similar obligations		(Continued)	
Changes in the fair value of the academy trust's share of scheme assets			
		2024	
		£	
At 1 September 2023		22,824,000	
Interest income		1,211,000	
Actuarial gain		1,301,000	
Employer contributions		1,223,000	
Employee contributions		399,000	
Benefits paid		(544,000)	
At 31 August 2024		26,414,000	
Restriction on scheme assets		(4,244,000)	
Net assets recognised		22,170,000	
22 Reconciliation of net (expenditure)/income to net cash flow from operating activities			
		2024	2023
	Notes	£	£
Net (expenditure)/income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		(132,974)	3,088,321
Adjusted for:			
Net surplus on transfer of academy in the trust		-	(3,590,737)
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income		(1,023,889)	(818,910)
Investment income receivable	6	(107,366)	(35,627)
Defined benefit pension costs less contributions payable	21	(14,000)	412,000
Defined benefit pension scheme finance (income)/cost	21	(118,000)	29,000
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets		1,232,002	815,438
(Increase)/decrease in stocks		(1,580)	2,191
(Increase)/decrease in debtors		(3,869)	423,935
Increase in creditors		1,087,657	60,046
Stocks, debtors and creditors transferred on conversion		-	(16,617)
Net cash provided by operating activities		917,981	369,040
23 Analysis of changes in net funds			
	1 September 2023	Cash flows	31 August 2024
	£	£	£
Cash	3,579,585	537,074	4,116,659

HORIZONS SPECIALIST ACADEMY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

24 Long-term commitments

Operating leases

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

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts due within one year	19,041	27,195
Amounts due in two and five years	-	19,041
	<u>19,041</u>	<u>46,236</u>

25 Related party transactions

No related party transactions took place in the period of account, other than certain trustees' remuneration and expenses already disclosed in note 11.

26 Members' liability

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

27 Agency arrangements

The academy trust distributes 16-19 bursary funds to students as an agent for ESFA. In the accounting period ending 31 August 2024 the academy trust received £20,477 and disbursed £19,127 from the fund. An amount of £nil is included in other creditors relating to undistributed funds that is repayable to ESFA.

Comparatives for the accounting period ending 31 August 2023 are £18,369 received, £15,737 disbursed and £nil included in other creditors.