

THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

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**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members	M Punt R Shorter T Reid (representing Worcester Diocesan Academies Trust) F Lawson-Hughes
Trustees	R Shorter, Chair of Trustees A James B Allbut G Roberts S Schofield T Williams, Vice Chair of Trustees K Lambert G Wigley (appointed 6 November 2024)
Company registered number	08355037
Company name	The Spire Church of England Learning Trust
Principal and registered office	Watt Close Bromsgrove Worcestershire B61 7DH
Company secretary	J Perrey
Senior management team	G Roberts, CEO and Executive Headteacher S Cox, Executive Headteacher and School Improvement Lead A Elwell, Head of School St Johns Bromsgrove V Beale, Headteacher St Matthias C Lowe, Associate Headteacher Witton (resigned 4 December 2023) S Bourne, Headteacher Witton J Perrey, PA to Executive Head (CEO) & Operations Manager S Spence, CFO and Trust Accountant P Adams, Trust Governance and Compliance Officer S Finlay, Headteacher St Johns Kidderminster (appointed 1 September 2023) J Shingler, Headteacher Catshill First School and Catshill Middle School
Independent auditors	Bishop Fleming LLP Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditors 1-3 College Yard Worcester WR1 2LB

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditors' report of the Charitable Company for the year ended 31 August 2024. The annual report serves the purpose of both a Trustees' report, and a Directors' report under company law.

The Trust operates six schools in total; two primary, one first and three middle schools. St Matthias CE Primary School Malvern, St Johns C of E Primary School Kidderminster, Catshill First School, Bromsgrove, Catshill Middle School Bromsgrove, St Johns Church of England Middle School Bromsgrove and Witton Middle School in Droitwich. The academies have a combined pupil capacity of 2,500 and had a roll of 1,608 in the school census on October 2023. (Catshill Schools joined in April 2024).

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Constitution

The Academy Trust was incorporated on 1st September 2018 and is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The Charitable Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are the primary governing documents of the Academy Trust. The Trustees of The Spire Church of England Learning Trust are also the directors of the Charitable Company for the purposes of company law. The Charitable Company operates as The Spire Church of England Learning Trust.

Details of the Trustees who served throughout the September 2023 to August 2024, and to the date the accounts are approved are included in the Reference and Administration Details on page 1.

Members' Liability

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

Trustees' Indemnities

Trustees benefit from indemnity insurance purchased at the Academy 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 Academy 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 Directors of the Academy Trust. The limit of this indemnity is £2,000,000.

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees

The Academy Trust shall have the following Trustees as set out in its Articles of Association and funding agreement:

- up to 9 Trustees who are appointed by the Members.
- up to 5 Trustees appointed or approved by Worcester Diocese

Trustees are appointed for a four year period, except that this time limit does not apply to the Headteacher. Subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of Trustee, any Trustee can be re-appointed or re-elected.

The Diocese of Worcester is empowered under the articles to appoint Trustees.

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

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

Policies and Procedures adopted for the Induction and Training of Trustees

The training and induction provided for new Trustees will depend upon their existing experience but would always include a tour of the Academies and a chance to meet staff and pupils. All Trustees are provided with copies of policies, procedures, minutes, accounts, budgets, plans and other documents that they will need to undertake their role as Trustees. As there are normally only two or three new Trustees a year, induction tends to be done informally and is tailored specifically to the individual. Advantage is taken of specific courses offered by the Local Authority and other bodies.

Organisational Structure

The Board of Trustees normally meets twice each term. The Board establishes an overall framework for the governance of the Academy and determines membership, terms of reference and procedures of Committees and other groups. It receives reports including policies from its Committees for ratification. It monitors the activities of the Committees through the minutes of their meetings. The Board may from time to time establish Working Groups to perform specific tasks over a limited timescale.

The Trustees and Board of Trustees have devolved responsibility for day to day management the Academies to the Headteachers and Heads of School and Senior Management Team (SMT). The SMT comprises the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Heads of Departments and the Business Manager. The SMT implement the policies laid down by the Trustees and report back to them on performance.

The Trust has a leadership structure which consists of the Trustees, and then local governing bodies and senior leadership teams. The aim of the leadership structure is to devolve responsibility and encourage involvement in decision making at all levels.

Each school has its own Governing Body responsible for day to day operations and management of the school's budget.

The CEO is the Accounting Officer.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The Trustees consider the Board of Trustees and the senior leadership team comprise the key management personnel of the Academy in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the Trust on a day to day basis. All Trustees give their time freely and no Trustee received remuneration in the year.

Details of Trustees' expenses and related party transactions are disclosed in the notes to the accounts.

The Trustees have approved a leadership scale commensurate for the size of each academy and the overall Trust. Incremental points are awarded following review and the successful completion of annual Performance Management process.

Trade union facility time

There were no relevant union officials for the year ended 31 August 2024.

Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

The Trust is connected to the WDAT and the Diocese of Worcester Board of Education (DBE). Neither WDAT nor the DBE receive any financial gain from the Trust.

**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

About Us

The Spire is a Church of England Multi Academy Trust which runs a diverse network of middle, primary and first schools in Worcestershire in the West Midlands. We are a values-based Christian organisation, committed to nurturing today's young people and ensuring all pupils achieve their potential. All our efforts are geared towards raising the aspirations of children and to helping them succeed at the highest levels of education, employment and the professions.

Our mission, vision and values

Our mission

To create outstanding organisations that promote educational excellence, system leadership, and cohesion. To be proud of what we stand for and our unapologetic commitment to the highest of expectations.

Our vision

All learners grow, aim high and thrive in their ambitions. Our vision is wide ranging. It encompasses aspiration, educational excellence, system leadership, social mobility and cohesion.

We aim to:

- Transform the education achievement of children, schools and academies
- Provide more choice to parents by offering them the chance to send their children to an inspirational school
- Make demonstrable impact on children from all backgrounds to help them to succeed at the highest level
- Ensure ambition and high aspirations are rewarded through all our academies
- Create a diverse network of academies, ensuring every child has access to a first-rate education that embodies opportunity for all

Our Spire values and behaviours

C Collaborate Working together for excellence	L Learn knowledge-based curriculum and teaching designed to improve school standards	A Achieve drive rigor and high expectations designed to improve school standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We learn from, with and about other people - We listen to different points of view - We take responsibility when things go wrong and learn from every mistake - We share responsibilities and tasks to achieve even better outcome - We think about others in every decision we take 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We set high expectations of ourselves and others - We relish tough challenges - We strive to learn and improve continuously in every area - We tirelessly work to ensure children develop and retain the knowledge to succeed academically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We cultivate a culture of excellence - We take pride in our work - We transform the educational achievement of children in our academies - We have the highest standards of attendance and behaviour

**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

Our Pledges of Excellence

Pledge to pupils and parents

The Trust makes a pledge to every family or carer who chooses to send their child to a Spire Academy. We pledge:

- High expectations
- A knowledge-based curriculum
- Carefully focused teaching, rigorous tracking and personalised intervention
- High quality staff that are motivated, well-trained and using cutting-edge research
- A rich and diverse leadership programme that grows character and inspires

Pledge to staff

The Trust makes a pledge to every Spire employee. We pledge:

- An inspirational career, and working environment where hard work is recognised and where there are opportunities to give something back and bring out The Spire qualities in each and every pupil
- A commitment to transformational leadership with leaders passionate about nurturing the next generation of leaders and a culture of collaboration, sharing and support
- A learning organisation committed to growing its own, encouraging fast track carer progression and supporting the transformational development of its people
- An unwavering commitment to our Spire family, filling it with Spire talent, celebrating successes and pursuing excellence in all we do

Pledge to schools

The Trust makes a pledge to every school that chooses to become a Spire academy. We pledge:

- A universal vision of nurturing today's young people and inspiring tomorrow's leaders
- A skilled team in The Spire central team that works alongside schools to deliver educational excellence, operational excellence and a strong Spire community
- High quality school improvement support
- A collaborative approach to policy and systems development
- An investment in staff well-being and continuous development
- A strong and vibrant Spire community
- An opportunity to make a social impact

Objectives, Strategies and Activities

Key priorities for the year are contained in our Trust Development Plan which is available from the Trust Office. Improvement focuses identified for this year include:

- Ensuring all schools are taking effective action to come out of a category where appropriate
- Develop clear strategies for facilitating a whole Trust CPD strategy .
- Develop the capacity to secure the growth of the Trust

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commissioner's general guidance on public benefit in exercising their powers or duties. They have referred to this guidance when reviewing the Academy's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities.

The Academy aims to advance for the public benefit, education in Worcestershire and the surrounding area. In particular, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing by estimating, maintaining, managing and development schools, offering a broad curriculum within a Christian distinctive environment.

**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

STRATEGIC REPORT

This has been a significant year for the Trust with three of the four schools in the Trust being inspected by Ofsted and showing significant progress that is testament both to the work of the staff at each school and the overall impact the Trust has had. The Trust has also grown significantly with the addition of two further schools; Catshill First and Catshill Middle School.

- Witton Middle School, Droitwich inspected in September 2023. Previously judged to be Inadequate before joining the Trust. They have been judged to be Good in all areas.
- St John's Middle School, Bromsgrove inspected in November 2023. Previously Outstanding under the old Ofsted framework in 2012. They have been judged to be Good overall but Outstanding in three of the four areas that schools are judged on.
- St Matthias Primary School, Malvern inspected in June 2018 and judged to be Inadequate in all areas before joining the Trust. They have been judged to be Good in all areas in their most recent inspection June 2024.

The Trust levels of oversubscription vary by academy. St John's Middle School Bromsgrove is heavily oversubscribed while St John's Primary School Kidderminster, St Matthias Primary School Malvern and Witton Middle School are not and this has had a significant impact on the Trust's financial reserves. This has also necessitated a structural review in terms of staffing at each school. This is ongoing and will lead to staffing reductions in each setting. It is anticipated that numbers will increase at Witton Middle school, however the trend in falling numbers due to overcapacity in each area is likely to continue at St John's Primary school and St Matthias Primary school.

The ongoing close working relationship between the academies to share knowledge and expertise to seek out best practice and to realise the vision of the Trust continues to be realised.

SAT outcomes across the Trust have been strong with standards continuing to rise in all schools. Witton Middle School achieved the best outcomes in its history in 2024

Catshill First and Middle schools and Walkwood Church of England Middle School, went to the Regional Headteachers Board in September 2023 with approval given for them to formally join the Trust. Catshill First and Middle Schools joined in April 2024 and Walkwood Church of England Middle School is on course to join in early Spring 2025.

This is some 12 months later than anticipated and the delay has caused significant financial stress for the Trust. The Trust had strengthened its central team particularly school improvement in anticipation of the new schools joining in March/April 2023. The delay has meant:

1. The increased costs of additional staffing have been met from reserves
2. The increased revenue from the additional schools through their top slice has not been realised
3. There have been no Academy Order grants issued during this period

The Trust has tried to mitigate the risk to its finances by actively reducing costs and only sanctioning essential spending, for example the planned central office has been put on hold. It has also introduced Associate Status for schools waiting to join. This has the benefit of the schools being able to work with the Trust and bringing in additional revenue.

Parkside and Aston Field middle schools and Fininstall First School have both taken advantage of this and have Associate Status.

The Trust has also held discussions with other schools about joining and is in the process of confirming the time frame.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Key Performance Indicators

The main financial indicator is the level of reserves held at the Balance Sheet date, in particular the management of spending against General Annual Grant (GAG). In the period under review, £NIL was carried forward representing 0% of GAG. In addition, the Trust held £187,083 of unrestricted reserves.

As funding is based on pupil numbers this is also a key performance indicator. Pupil numbers for 2023/24 were 2,287, an increase of 718 over 2022/23. It is anticipated this this number will continue to rise.

Another key financial performance indicator is staffing costs as a percentage of GAG. For 2024 this was 109% compared to 111% in 2023 (as a percentage of total income (excluding conversion income) this was 74% compared to 81% in 2023).

Going Concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that the Academy Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason it continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Statement of Accounting Policies.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Most of the Academy's income is obtained from the DfE via the ESFA in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants received from the DfE during the year ended 31 August 2024 and the associated expenditure are shown as Restricted Funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The Academy also receives grants for fixed assets from the DfE which are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities as restricted income in the Fixed Asset Fund. The Restricted Fixed Asset Fund balance is reduced by annual depreciation charges over the useful life of the assets concerned, as defined in the Academy's accounting policies.

During the year ended 31 August 2024, the Academy received total income of £25,497,107 (2023: £10,198,012) and incurred total expenditure of £12,957,667 (2023: £10,923,589). The excess of income over expenditure for the year was £12,539,440 (net expenditure of £725,577). Of this excess, £11,458,374 related to income donated to the Trust as part of the conversion of the Catshill schools, leaving a net income of £1,081,066 (2023: net expenditure of £725,577). The movement on free reserves was a surplus of £128,839 (2023: deficit of £420,890).

At 31 August 2024 the net book value of fixed assets was £15,805,354 (2023: £3,886,759) and movements in tangible fixed assets are shown in note 15 to the financial statements. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the pupils of the Academy.

The land, buildings and other assets were transferred to the Academy upon conversion. The Catshill First School land and buildings were professionally valued on 31 March 2023 at £3,293,000. This valuation is considered to be the same as the fair value on the conversion date. The Catshill Middle School land and buildings were professionally valued on 31 March 2024 at £7,926,000. Other assets have been included in the financial statements at a best estimate, taking into account purchase price and remaining useful lives. £226,989 of revenue surpluses were donated to the Trust as part of the conversions.

The Academy has taken on the deficit in the Local Government Pension Scheme in respect of its non-teaching staff transferred on conversion. The deficit is incorporated within the Statement of Financial Activity with details in Note 27 to the financial statements.

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

Key financial policies adopted or reviewed during the year include the Finance Policy which lays out the framework for financial management, including financial responsibilities of the Board, Head Teacher, managers, budget holders and other staff, as well as delegated authority for spending. Other policies reviewed and updated included Charges and Lettings, Asset Management and Insurance.

Reserves Policy

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

The Trustees have determined that the appropriate level of free reserves should be approximately £150,000. The reason for this is to provide sufficient working capital to cover delays between spending and receipt of grants and to provide a cushion to deal with unexpected emergencies such as urgent maintenance. Total reserves of the academy amount to £16,179,768 (excluding the defined benefit pension liability), although £15,992,685 of this is invested in fixed assets or represents non-GAG restricted funds. The remaining £187,083 (representing £187,083 unrestricted funds and £NIL unspent GAG) is the balance that the Trustees monitor in accordance with the Board's reserves policy. This represents 0.22 months of normal recurring expenditure.

The defined benefit pension scheme reserve has a negative balance. The effect of the deficit position of the pension scheme is that the Academy Trust is paying higher employers' pension contributions over a period of years. The higher employers' pension contributions will be met from the Academy Trust's budgeted annual income. Whilst the deficit will not be immediately eliminated, there should be no actual cash flow deficit on the fund, nor any direct impact on the free reserves of the Academy Trust.

The Reserves policy is currently being reviewed to reflect the latest guidance from the ESFA.

Investment Policy

Due to the nature and timing of receipt of funding, the Academy may at times hold cash balances surplus to its short-term requirements. The Trustees have authorised the opening of additional short term bank investment accounts to take advantage of higher interest rates. No other form of investment is authorised.

PRINCIPAL RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

The principal risks and uncertainties facing the Academy are as follows:

Financial - the Academy has considerable reliance on continued Government funding through the ESFA. In the last year 88% of the Academy's incoming resources were ultimately Government funded and whilst this level is expected to continue, there is no assurance that Government policy or practice will remain the same or that public funding will continue at the same levels or on the same terms.

Failures in governance and/or management - the risk in this area arises from potential failure to effectively manage the Academy's finances, internal controls, compliance with regulations and legislation, statutory returns, etc. The Trustees continue to review and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate these risks.

Reputational - the continuing success of the Academy is dependent on continuing to attract applicants in sufficient numbers by maintaining the highest educational standards. To mitigate this risk Trustees ensure that student success and achievement are closely monitored and reviewed.

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

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

Staffing - the success of the Academy is reliant upon the quality of its staff and so the Trustees monitor and review policies and procedures to ensure continued development and training of staff as well as ensuring there is clear succession planning.

Fraud and mismanagement of funds - The Academy has appointed a Responsible Officer/internal audit to carry out checks on financial systems and records as required by the Academy Financial Handbook. All finance staff receive training to keep them up to date with financial practice requirements and develop their skills in this area.

The Academy has continued to strengthen its risk management process throughout the year by improving the process and ensuring staff awareness. A risk register is maintained and reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

The Academy has agreed a Risk Management Strategy, a Risk Register and a Risk Management Plan. These have been discussed by Trustees and include the financial risks to the Academy. The register and plan are regularly reviewed in light of any new information and formally reviewed annually.

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Academy is exposed, in particular those relating to its finances, teaching, facilities and other operational areas. The Trustees have implemented a number of systems to assess and minimise those risks, including internal controls described elsewhere. Where significant financial risk still remains they have ensured they have adequate insurance cover.

The Trustees examine the financial health formally every term. They review performance against budgets and overall expenditure by means of regular update reports at all Board and Finance Committee meetings.

At the year end, the Academy had no significant liabilities arising from trade creditors or debtors that would have a significant effect on liquidity.

The Board of Trustees recognises that the defined benefit pension scheme deficit (Local Government Pension Scheme), which is set out in Note 27 to the financial statements, represents a significant potential liability. However as the Trustees consider that the Academy is able to meet its known annual contribution commitments for the foreseeable future, this risk from this liability is minimised.

The Trust has completed all necessary RAAC surveys across the estate in line with DfE guidance and is satisfied that RAAC does not present a risk to the existing estate.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is relatively low level and exists predominantly for supporting charities chosen by pupils. No fundraising occurs to supplement the Academy GAG from ESFA. There have been no complaints received in 2023-2024. All fundraising involving pupils is overseen by a responsible staff member and only occurs with parental consent.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

The Trust will continue to strive to provide outstanding education and improve the levels of performance of its pupils at all levels. The Trust will continue to aim to attract high quality teachers and support staff in order to deliver its objectives.

The Trust will develop its partnership with The Church of England to extend the range of NPQs being offered.

The Trust will continue in its strategic growth to achieve an overall capacity of over 3,000 pupils across the Trust.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

FUNDS HELD AS CUSTODIAN TRUSTEE ON BEHALF OF OTHERS

The Academy and its Trustees do not act as the Custodian Trustees of any other Charity.

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.

The auditors, Bishop Fleming LLP, are willing to continue in office and a resolution to appoint them will be proposed at the annual general meeting.

The Trustees' Report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 23 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



R Shorter
Chair of Trustees

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**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

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

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

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Chief Executive, as accounting officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between The Spire Church of England Learning 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 7 times during the year.

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

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
R Shorter, Chair of Trustees	7	7
A James	5	7
B Allbut	4	7
S Schofield	6	7
T Williams, Vice Chair of Trustees	4	7
K Lambert	7	7

REVIEW OF VALUE FOR MONEY

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

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

- Robust financial governance and budget management
- Value for money purchasing
- Reviewing controls and mitigating risk
- Considering allocation/targeting/use of resources
- Not allocating time/resources to areas where few improvements can be achieved
- Challenging proposals and examining their effectiveness and efficiency
- Deploying staff effectively
- Reviewing quality of curriculum provision and quality of teaching
- Reviewing quality of children's learning to enable children to achieve notionally expected progress
- Outlining procedures for accepting best value quotes, noting that this is not necessarily the cheapest quote.

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**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

The Accounting Officer ensures that all funds allocated for capital purposes are prioritised by condition, suitability, and compliance with current regulations, as a minimum. This is tracked via the use of asset management plans, which also provided a cyclical maintenance programme fully costed for budget planning purposes. Value for money is assured through maximizing economies of scale for all project and maintenance programmes.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Academy 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 Spire Church of England Learning Trust for the year 1 September 2023 to 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 is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Academy's significant risks that has been in place for the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

THE RISK AND CONTROL FRAMEWORK

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

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

The Board of Trustees has decided to employ Anne Salasano as internal auditor.

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

- Testing of payroll systems
- Testing of control account/bank account reconciliations
- Testing of procurement
- Testing of HR
- Testing of Budgeting
- Testing of Compliance

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**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

On a quarterly basis, the reviewer reports to the Board of Trustees through the finance and general purposes committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Trustees financial responsibilities and annually prepares a short annual summary report to the committee outlining the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions to help the committee consider actions and assess year on year progress.

The internal reviewer has delivered their schedule of work as planned and control points identified have been actioned and addressed.

REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

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

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

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

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

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



R Shorter
Chair of Trustees



G Roberts
Accounting Officer

Date: 23 December 2024

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

STATEMENT ON REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

As accounting officer of The Spire Church of England Learning Trust I have considered my responsibility to notify the Academy 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 and management under the funding agreement in place between the Academy 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 Board of Trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of all funds by the Academy, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the Academy'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.



G Roberts
Accounting Officer
Date: 23 December 2024

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction published by the Education 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 financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 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 financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that in its conduct and operation the charitable company applies financial and other controls, which conform with the requirements both of propriety and of good financial management. They are also responsible for ensuring grants received from 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 financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

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



R Shorter
Chair of Trustees
Date: 23 December 2024

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST**

OPINION

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

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Academy'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; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

BASIS FOR OPINION

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

EMPHASIS OF MATTER

We draw attention to Note 1.2 in the financial statements, which indicates that the Trust achieved a net surplus on free reserves movement of £128,839 during the year ended 31 August 2024, and as of that date, the Trust's free reserves are £187,083. The cash position as at the year end stands at £1,085,695 (2023: £605,711).

As stated in Note 1.2, the Trustees are of the opinion that the Trust has sufficient funds to continue for the foreseeable future and have detailed the key assumptions they have relied upon to make this assessment.

Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

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'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.

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST (CONTINUED)**

OTHER INFORMATION

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

OPINION ON OTHER MATTERS PRESCRIBED BY THE COMPANIES ACT 2006

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

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

MATTERS ON WHICH WE ARE REQUIRED TO REPORT BY EXCEPTION

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the Academy and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' report including the Strategic report.

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

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

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

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

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

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST (CONTINUED)**

AUDITORS' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE AUDIT OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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

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

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

- the nature of the Academy sector, control environment and the Academy's performance;
- results of our enquiries of management and the Trustee board, including the committees charged with governance over the Academy's finance and control, about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the Academy's documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
 - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
 - the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or noncompliance with laws and regulations;
 - and assessment of the impact of schools joining the Academy Trust in relation to these areas.
- how the Academy ensured it met its obligations arising from it being financed by the ESFA and other funders, and as such material compliance with these obligations is required to ensure the Academy will continue to receive its public funding and be authorised to operate, including around ensuring there is no material unauthorised use of funds and expenditure;
- how the Academy ensured it met its obligations to its principal regulator, the Secretary of State for Education; and
- these matters discussed among the audit engagement team who also considered any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud, which included incorrect recognition of revenue, management override of controls using manual journal entries, procurement and payroll. We identified the greatest potential for fraud as incorrect recognition of revenue and management override using manual journal entries.

In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override. We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that the Academy operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the Academies Accounts Direction, Academy Trust Handbook, UK Companies Act and tax legislation.

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST (CONTINUED)**

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the Academy's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. These included safeguarding regulations, data protection regulations, occupational health and safety regulations, education and inspections legislation, building legislation and employment legislation.

Our procedures to respond to risks identified included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess the recognition of revenue;
- enquiring of Trustees and management and those charged with governance concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing procedures to confirm material compliance with the requirements of its regulators;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing internal control reports; and
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; and assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias.

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

Our audit procedures were designed to respond to risks of material misstatement in the financial statements, recognising that the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from an error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery, misrepresentations or through collusion. There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures performed and the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we would become aware of it.

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

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST (CONTINUED)**

USE OF OUR REPORT

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



Andrew Wood FCCA (Senior statutory auditor)

for and on behalf of

Bishop Fleming LLP

Chartered Accountants

Statutory Auditors

1-3 College Yard

Worcester

WR1 2LB

23 December 2024

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 25 October 2023 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by The Spire Church of England Learning Trust during the year 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST'S ACCOUNTING OFFICER AND THE REPORTING ACCOUNTANT

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of The Spire Church of England Learning Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 18th August 2021 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 year 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's income and expenditure.

The work undertaken to draw our conclusion includes:

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

In line with the Framework and guide for external auditors and reporting accountants of academy trusts issued March 2024, we have not performed any additional procedures regarding the Trust's compliance with safeguarding, health and safety and estates management.

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO THE SPIRE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY
(CONTINUED)**

CONCLUSION

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



Reporting Accountant
Bishop Fleming LLP
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditors
1-3 College Yard
Worcester
WR1 2LB

Date: 23 December 2024

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
INCOME FROM:						
Donations and capital grants:	3					
Transferred in from Local Authority on conversion		-	226,989	11,231,385	11,458,374	-
Other donations and capital grants		-	144,397	1,296,727	1,441,124	506,795
Other trading activities	5	357,510	-	-	357,510	188,998
Investments	6	105	12,000	-	12,105	443
Charitable activities		477,118	11,750,876	-	12,227,994	9,501,776
TOTAL INCOME		834,733	12,134,262	12,528,112	25,497,107	10,198,012
EXPENDITURE ON:						
Raising funds		1,168	-	-	1,168	1,547
Charitable activities	8	133,652	12,550,336	280,955	12,964,943	10,922,042
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		134,820	12,550,336	280,955	12,966,111	10,923,589
NET (EXPENDITURE)/ INCOME		699,913	(416,074)	12,247,157	12,530,996	(725,577)
Transfers between funds	19	(571,074)	571,074	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS/(LOSSES)		128,839	155,000	12,247,157	12,530,996	(725,577)
OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS/(LOSSES):						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	28	-	554,000	-	554,000	1,823,000
Pension surplus not recognised	28	-	(452,000)	-	(452,000)	(293,000)
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		128,839	257,000	12,247,157	12,632,996	804,423
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:						
Total funds brought forward		58,244	(408,000)	3,737,084	3,387,328	2,582,905
Net movement in funds		128,839	257,000	12,247,157	12,632,996	804,423
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		187,083	(151,000)	15,984,241	16,020,324	3,387,328

The Statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 26 to 58 form part of these financial statements.

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
REGISTERED NUMBER:08355037**

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024**

	Note	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	15		15,796,910		3,886,759
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	16	595,713		458,967	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,085,695		605,711	
		1,681,408		1,064,678	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(1,142,269)		(976,246)	
NET CURRENT ASSETS					
			539,139		88,432
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES					
			16,336,049		3,975,191
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		(164,725)		(179,863)
NET ASSETS EXCLUDING PENSION LIABILITY					
			16,171,324		3,795,328
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	28		(151,000)		(408,000)
TOTAL NET ASSETS					
			16,020,324		3,387,328
FUNDS OF THE ACADEMY					
RESTRICTED FUNDS:					
Fixed asset funds	19	15,984,241		3,737,084	
Restricted funds excluding pension asset	19	15,984,241		3,737,084	
Pension reserve	19	(151,000)		(408,000)	
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS					
	19		15,833,241		3,329,084
UNRESTRICTED INCOME FUNDS					
	19		187,083		58,244
TOTAL FUNDS					
			16,020,324		3,387,328

The financial statements on pages 23 to 58 were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and are signed on their behalf, by:



R Shorter
Chair of Trustees
Date: 23 December 2024

The notes on pages 26 to 58 form part of these financial statements.

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities	21	(84,291)	211,385
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
	23	579,413	(30,612)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
	22	(15,138)	-
CHANGE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS IN THE YEAR			
		479,984	180,773
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		605,711	424,938
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF THE YEAR	24, 25	1,085,695	605,711

The notes on pages 26 to 58 form part of these financial statements

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

A summary of the principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty, is set out below.

1.1 BASIS OF PREPARATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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

The Spire Church of England Learning Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.2 GOING CONCERN

The Trustees have reviewed the budgets and cash flow forecasts for a period of at least 12 months from approval of the financial statements. These cash flow forecasts include all expected income and expenditure, as well as inflows from further funding expected to be obtained. The cash flow forecast prepared indicates that the Trust has sufficient cash to meet its liabilities as they fall due for a period of at least 12 months from approval of the financial statements.

During the year end 31 August 2024, the Trust achieved a surplus on free reserves of £128,839 (2023: deficit of £420,890). At the year end, the Trust had free reserves of £187,083 (2023: £58,244).

The latest management accounts prepared to 31 October 2024 show a deficit of £161,047. The cash held as at 30 November 2024 was £1,113,693.

The Trustees are of the opinion that the Trust has sufficient funds to continue for the foreseeable future and continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. This opinion is based on the Trust's expected performance.

The Trustees regularly review open risks to the Trust as part of their board meetings. We see the key risks to be as follow:

- The failure to meet budget through actual costs being in excess of budgeted costs, resulting in depletion of cash held.
- Another school is due to join the Trust in Spring 2025 which could cause additional financial pressures.

The Trustees have mitigated the risks through the following actions:

- The Trustees actively monitor the Trust's financial position and are in regular dialogue with the ESFA.
- The Trust has implemented an essential spend programme and all large items of expenditure have to be approved by the CFO.
- Cost savings in relation to the new school joining in Spring 2025 are already being implemented within this school to ensure a smooth transition into the Trust. Further cost savings will also be looked at in relation to SLA's to ensure that all savings that can be made, are being made.

The Trustees believe that the key risks faced by the Trust have been mitigated to an acceptable level and will continue to be reduced, through the actions noted above.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

1.3 INCOME

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

• **Grants**

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

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

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

Certain capital grants that the Trust receive are conditional on expenditure being incurred in order for the grant to become receivable, and for the Trust to therefore achieve entitlement. In these cases, income is recognised as expenditure is incurred. No income can be received in advance of expenditure being incurred, but where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

• **Donations**

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

• **Other income**

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

• **Transfer on conversion**

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

1.4 EXPENDITURE

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

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

1.4 EXPENDITURE (CONTINUED)

• **Expenditure on raising funds**

This includes all expenditure incurred by the Academy 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's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the Academy apportioned to charitable activities.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

1.5 INTEREST RECEIVABLE

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

1.6 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS AND DEPRECIATION

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

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

On conversion the Academy Trust was granted a 125 year lease from the Local Authority for the land and buildings previously occupied by the local authority school. On conversion the long term leasehold property was recognised as a donation from the Local Authority and was valued using the depreciated replacement cost method.

Where the Academy Trust has been granted use of school buildings from the The Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance Limited under Supplemental Agreements, the Academies Accounts Direction prescribes that under this agreement the risks and rewards of ownership remain with the Diocese. A notional donation from the Diocese has been recognised equal to the deemed rental expense, based on the rateable value of the buildings.

The Supplemental Agreement includes the right for The Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance Limited Trustees to give not less than 2 years written notice to the Academy Trust and Secretary of State for Education to terminate the agreement. No such written notice has been received as at the date of the approval of the financial statements.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

1.6 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS AND DEPRECIATION (CONTINUED)

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

The estimated useful lives are as follows:

Long-term leasehold land	- 125 years
Long-term leasehold building	- 50 years (2 years for improvements to Diocese-owned estates)
Motor vehicles	- 4 years
Fixtures and fittings	- 5 - 10 years
Computer equipment	- 3 years

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.

1.7 DEBTORS

Trade and other debtors with no stated interest rate and due within one year are recorded at the amount of the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

1.8 CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account and cash on deposit that has a notice period of less than 30 days.

1.9 LIABILITIES

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

1.10 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Academy only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the Academy and their measurement bases are as follows:

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

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

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

1.11 OPERATING LEASES

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

1.12 PENSIONS

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

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

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

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

1.13 FUND ACCOUNTING

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

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

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

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

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

2. CRITICAL ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND AREAS OF JUDGEMENT

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions:

The Academy 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 28, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 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.

Going concern - assumptions considered by the Trustees are set out in Note 1.2.

Critical areas of judgement:

When new schools convert to academy status and join the Academy Trust, the Academy Trust makes an initial estimate in respect of the valuation of the land and buildings. These estimates are calculated using available valuation information from previous conversions of similar locations and calculated on a depreciated replacement cost basis. Subsequently, formal ESFA valuations are obtained and the asset valuations are updated accordingly.

A plan surplus can be recognised only to the extent an entity is able to recover the surplus, either through reduced contributions in the future, or through refunds from the scheme. The Academy Trust has made an assessment to restrict the LGPS surplus in total.

3. INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND CAPITAL GRANTS

	Restricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	As restated Total funds 2023 £
Transferred in from local authority on conversion	226,989	11,231,385	11,458,374	-
Other donations	144,397	-	144,397	144,397
Capital grants	-	1,296,727	1,296,727	362,398
TOTAL 2024	371,386	12,528,112	12,899,498	506,795
TOTAL 2023 AS RESTATED	144,397	362,398	506,795	

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

4. FUNDING FOR THE ACADEMY'S CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	As restated Total funds 2023 £
DFE/ESFA GRANTS				
General Annual Grant	-	9,596,711	9,596,711	7,467,134
OTHER DFE/ESFA GRANTS				
Pupil Premium	-	753,707	753,707	600,185
Universal Infant Free School Meals	-	59,265	59,265	32,006
Teachers Pension Grant	-	102,425	102,425	1,395
Teachers Pay Grant	-	168,524	168,524	494
PE & Sports Grant	-	90,075	90,075	74,740
School Supplementary Grant	-	-	-	222,788
Mainstream Schools Additional Grant	-	282,780	282,780	117,825
Others	-	50,000	50,000	39,813
	-	11,103,487	11,103,487	8,556,380
OTHER GOVERNMENT GRANTS				
High Needs	-	446,209	446,209	273,399
Other Local Authority grants	-	2,800	2,800	2,857
Nursery income	-	99,124	99,124	127,262
	-	548,133	548,133	403,518
COVID-19 ADDITIONAL FUNDING (DFE/ESFA)				
Recovery Premium	-	88,118	88,118	72,627
National Tutoring Programme	-	11,138	11,138	66,345
	-	99,256	99,256	138,972
OTHER FUNDING				
Other	3,323	-	3,323	16,270
Trip Income	166,656	-	166,656	159,325
Catering Income	307,139	-	307,139	227,311
	477,118	-	477,118	402,906
TOTAL 2024	477,118	11,750,876	12,227,994	9,501,776
TOTAL 2023	435,290	9,066,486	9,501,776	

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

5. INCOME FROM OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	As restated Total funds 2023 £
Hire of facilities	28,149	28,149	17,760
Sales to students	99,263	99,263	102,447
Other	230,098	230,098	68,791
TOTAL 2024	<u>357,510</u>	<u>357,510</u>	<u>188,998</u>
TOTAL 2023	<u>188,998</u>	<u>188,998</u>	

6. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Bank interest	105	-	105	443
Pension income	-	12,000	12,000	-
	<u>105</u>	<u>12,000</u>	<u>12,105</u>	<u>443</u>
TOTAL 2023	<u>443</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>443</u>	

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

7. EXPENDITURE

	Staff Costs 2024 £	Premises 2024 £	Other 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
EXPENDITURE ON FUNDRAISING TRADING ACTIVITIES:					
Direct costs	-	-	1,168	1,168	1,547
EDUCATION:					
Direct costs	8,645,232	144,397	398,707	9,188,336	7,209,205
Support costs	1,769,999	1,131,771	874,837	3,776,607	3,712,837
TOTAL 2024	<u>10,415,231</u>	<u>1,276,168</u>	<u>1,274,712</u>	<u>12,966,111</u>	<u>10,923,589</u>
TOTAL 2023 (AS RESTATED)	<u>8,280,532</u>	<u>1,422,648</u>	<u>1,220,409</u>	<u>10,923,589</u>	

8. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Summary by fund type

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Education	133,652	12,831,291	12,964,943	10,922,042
TOTAL 2023	<u>138,936</u>	<u>10,783,106</u>	<u>10,922,042</u>	

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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9. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES

	Activities undertaken directly 2024 £	Support costs 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Education	9,188,336	3,776,607	12,964,943	10,922,042
TOTAL 2023	7,209,205	3,712,837	10,922,042	

ANALYSIS OF DIRECT COSTS

	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Pension finance costs	-	36,000
Staff costs	8,598,075	6,558,589
Educational supplies	170,807	179,624
Staff development	17,383	16,439
Other costs	137,254	153,898
Supply teachers	47,157	88,058
Notional rent	144,397	144,397
Technology costs	73,263	32,200
	9,188,336	7,209,205

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9. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS

	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Pension finance costs	-	40,000
Staff costs	1,769,999	1,633,885
Depreciation	265,972	212,415
Other costs	368,538	435,642
Recruitment and support	3,673	3,066
Maintenance of premises and equipment	135,813	374,961
Cleaning	152,640	156,827
Rent and rates	257,831	206,538
Insurance	51,978	33,107
Security and transport	16,729	13,855
Catering	372,029	258,299
Technology costs	71,416	34,070
Bank interest and charges	340	360
Legal costs - other	2,638	3,005
Temporary classroom costs	235,825	257,980
Capital donations	14,983	22,568
Governance costs	31,898	26,259
Legal costs - conversion	24,305	-
	<u>3,776,607</u>	<u>3,712,837</u>

10. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2024 £	2023 £
Operating lease rentals	27,762	40,260
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	188,891	212,416
Fees paid to auditors for:		
- audit	21,375	17,975
- other services	2,200	1,925
	<u>21,375</u>	<u>17,975</u>
	<u>2,200</u>	<u>1,925</u>

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

11. STAFF

a. STAFF COSTS AND EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	7,885,034	6,229,103
Social security costs	747,719	600,684
Pension costs	1,717,852	1,352,686
	10,350,605	8,182,473
Agency staff costs	47,157	88,058
Staff restructuring costs	17,469	10,001
	10,415,231	8,280,532

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Payments in lieu of notice	12,969	10,000
Other restructuring costs	4,500	1
	17,469	10,001

b. SEVERANCE PAYMENTS

The Academy paid 1 severance payments in the year (2023 - 1), disclosed in the following bands:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
£0 - £25,000	1	1

c. SPECIAL STAFF SEVERANCE PAYMENTS

Included in staff restructuring costs is a special severance payment totalling £4,500 (2023: £1).

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

11. STAFF (CONTINUED)

d. STAFF NUMBERS

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

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Teachers	124	95
Administration and support	190	141
Management	10	8
	324	244

e. HIGHER PAID STAFF

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

	2024 No.	2023 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	5	4
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	1	1
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	1	-
In the band £110,001 - £120,000	1	-
In the band £120,001 - £130,000	-	1
In the band £130,001 - £140,000	1	-

f. KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

The key management personnel of the Academy comprise the Trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the Academy was £1,025,424 (2023: £688,703).

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

12. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

The Headteacher and other staff Trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of Headteacher and staff under their contracts of employment, and not in respect of their services as Trustees. Other Trustees did not receive any payments, in respect of their role as Trustees. The value of trustees' remuneration and other benefits was as follows: G Roberts (MAT CEO and Trustee): Remuneration £130,000 - £135,000 (2023: £120,000 - £125,000), employer's pension contributions £30,000 - £35,000 (2023: £25,000 - £30,000).

During the year ended 31 August 2024, travel and subsistence expenses totalling £161 were reimbursed to 1 Trustees (2023: £19 to 1 trustees).

13. CENTRAL SERVICES

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

- The services of the Chief Executive
- Human resources and finance support
- Legal and professional charges
- Insurance
- Other services arising

The Academy charges for these services on the following basis:

Central services are recharges based on the allocation of time spend on providing the above mentioned support services.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
St Johns Church of England Primary School	62,092	90,237
St John's Church of England Middle School	135,270	190,384
St Matthias Church of England Primary School	36,440	48,521
Witton Middle School	87,111	119,143
Catshill First School	24,687	-
Catshill Middle School	36,857	-
TOTAL	382,457	448,285

14. TRUSTEES' AND OFFICERS' INSURANCE

In accordance with normal commercial practice, the Academy has purchased insurance to protect Trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy business. The insurance provides cover up to £5,000,000 on any one claim. The cost of this insurance is included in the total insurance cost.

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

15. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Long-term leasehold property £	Assets under construction £	Furniture and equipment £	Computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
COST OR VALUATION						
At 1 September 2023	3,644,417	-	746,526	307,206	14,488	4,712,637
Additions	-	781,330	151,402	26,061	-	958,793
Acquired on conversion	11,217,000	-	-	-	-	11,217,000
At 31 August 2024	<u>14,861,417</u>	<u>781,330</u>	<u>897,928</u>	<u>333,267</u>	<u>14,488</u>	<u>16,888,430</u>
DEPRECIATION						
At 1 September 2023	156,093	-	364,629	297,912	7,244	825,878
Charge for the year	115,255	-	112,996	33,769	3,622	265,642
At 31 August 2024	<u>271,348</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>477,625</u>	<u>331,681</u>	<u>10,866</u>	<u>1,091,520</u>
NET BOOK VALUE						
At 31 August 2024	<u><u>14,590,069</u></u>	<u><u>781,330</u></u>	<u><u>420,303</u></u>	<u><u>1,586</u></u>	<u><u>3,622</u></u>	<u><u>15,796,910</u></u>
At 31 August 2023	<u><u>3,488,324</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>381,897</u></u>	<u><u>9,294</u></u>	<u><u>7,244</u></u>	<u><u>3,886,759</u></u>

16. DEBTORS

	2024 £	2023 £
DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR		
Trade debtors	21,366	17,251
Other debtors	5,324	3,198
Prepayments and accrued income	446,552	374,726
VAT recoverable	122,471	63,792
	<u><u>595,713</u></u>	<u><u>458,967</u></u>

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

17. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Other loans	21,975	21,975
Trade creditors	434,944	353,755
Other taxation and social security	193,396	140,593
Other creditors	28,342	177
Accruals and deferred income	463,612	459,746
	<u>1,142,269</u>	<u>976,246</u>
	2024 £	2023 £
Deferred income at 1 September 2023	59,391	50,009
Resources deferred during the year	107,422	59,391
Amounts released from previous periods	(59,391)	(50,009)
	<u>107,422</u>	<u>59,391</u>

Deferred income at the year end relates to UIFSM income and other grants that were funded in advance.

Other loans relates to CIF loans.

18. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR

	2024 £	2023 £
Other loans	<u>164,725</u>	<u>179,863</u>
Included within the above are amounts falling due as follows:		
	2024 £	2023 £
BETWEEN ONE AND TWO YEARS		
Other loans	<u>18,185</u>	<u>18,185</u>
BETWEEN TWO AND FIVE YEARS		
Other loans	<u>54,554</u>	<u>54,554</u>
OVER FIVE YEARS		
Other loans	<u>91,986</u>	<u>107,124</u>

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
General funds	58,244	834,733	(134,820)	(571,074)	-	187,083
RESTRICTED GENERAL FUNDS						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	9,596,711	(10,167,785)	571,074	-	-
Pupil Premium	-	753,707	(753,707)	-	-	-
Mainstream Schools Additional Grant	-	282,780	(282,780)	-	-	-
High Needs	-	446,209	(446,209)	-	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	569,545	(569,545)	-	-	-
Other government grants	-	2,800	(2,800)	-	-	-
Other income	-	111,124	(111,124)	-	-	-
Notional rent	-	144,397	(144,397)	-	-	-
Transferred in on conversion	-	226,989	(226,989)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	(408,000)	-	155,000	-	102,000	(151,000)
	(408,000)	12,134,262	(12,550,336)	571,074	102,000	(151,000)

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
RESTRICTED FIXED ASSET FUNDS						
Donations	3,252,437	11,231,385	(244,519)	-	-	14,239,303
Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)	238,851	53,791	(17,957)	-	-	274,685
Condition Improvement Fund (CIF)	198,456	-	(14,920)	-	-	183,536
Assets purchased from GAG	47,340	-	(3,559)	-	-	43,781
Other Capital Grants	-	1,242,936	-	-	-	1,242,936
	<u>3,737,084</u>	<u>12,528,112</u>	<u>(280,955)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,984,241</u>
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS	<u>3,329,084</u>	<u>24,662,374</u>	<u>(12,831,291)</u>	<u>571,074</u>	<u>102,000</u>	<u>15,833,241</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>3,387,328</u></u>	<u><u>25,497,107</u></u>	<u><u>(12,966,111)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>102,000</u></u>	<u><u>16,020,324</u></u>

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

RESTRICTED FUNDS:

General Annual Grant (GAG) - income from the ESFA which is to be used for the normal running costs of the Academy, including education and support costs. The Academy has a deficit on GAG reserves. It has a plan in place to remedy this in the medium to long term.

Pupil Premium - represents funding received from the ESFA for children that qualify for free school meals to enable the Academy to address the current underlying inequalities between those children and their wealthier peers.

Schools Supplementary Grant - funding provided by the ESFA to provide support for the costs of the Health and Social Care Levy and wider costs.

High Needs - funding provided by Local Authorities for the Academy Trust to fund further support for students with additional needs.

Other DfE/ESFA grants - income from the DfE/ESFA which has been received for specific purposes.

Other government grants - funding provided by Local Authorities for the academy trust to fund specific needs or projects.

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

Pension reserve - this represents the Academy's share of the assets and liabilities in the Local Government Pension Scheme. As with most pension schemes this is currently in deficit due to an excess of scheme liabilities over scheme assets which was inherited on conversion to an Academy.

RESTRICTED FIXED ASSET FUNDS:

Donations - this represents the buildings and equipment donated to the Academy from the Local Authority on conversion to an Academy.

DFC/CIF capital grants - restricted capital funding received from the DfE/ESFA to be spent on specific capital projects.

Assets purchased from GAG - this represents assets purchased from unspent General Annual Grant and other non-capital restricted income.

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the Academy was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG it could carry forward at 31 August 2024.

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19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2023 £
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS						
General funds	479,134	624,731	(140,483)	(905,138)	-	58,244
RESTRICTED GENERAL FUNDS						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	7,467,134	(8,372,272)	905,138	-	-
Pupil Premium	-	600,185	(600,185)	-	-	-
Mainstream Schools Additional Grant	-	222,788	(222,788)	-	-	-
High Needs	-	273,399	(273,399)	-	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	372,861	(372,861)	-	-	-
Other government grants	-	260,837	(260,837)	-	-	-
Other income	-	127,262	(127,262)	-	-	-
Notional rent	-	144,397	(144,397)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	(1,893,000)	-	(45,000)	-	1,530,000	(408,000)
	(1,893,000)	9,468,863	(10,419,001)	905,138	1,530,000	(408,000)

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2023 £
RESTRICTED FIXED ASSET FUNDS						
Donations	3,406,110	-	(153,673)	-	-	3,252,437
Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)	132,025	112,783	(5,957)	-	-	238,851
Condition Improvement Fund (CIF)	409,333	(8,365)	(202,512)	-	-	198,456
Assets purchased from GAG	49,303	-	(1,963)	-	-	47,340
	<u>3,996,771</u>	<u>104,418</u>	<u>(364,105)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,737,084</u>
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS	<u>2,103,771</u>	<u>9,573,281</u>	<u>(10,783,106)</u>	<u>905,138</u>	<u>1,530,000</u>	<u>3,329,084</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>2,582,905</u></u>	<u><u>10,198,012</u></u>	<u><u>(10,923,589)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>1,530,000</u></u>	<u><u>3,387,328</u></u>

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2024 were allocated as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
St John's Church of England Middle School	236,378	(31,370)
St John's Church of England Primary School	515,015	300,131
St Matthias Church of England Primary School	(128,069)	(141,521)
Witton Middle School	307,498	134,731
Catshill Middle School	166,496	-
Catshill First School	(43,505)	-
Central services	(866,730)	(203,727)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total before fixed asset funds and pension reserve	187,083	58,244
Restricted fixed asset fund	15,984,241	3,737,084
Pension reserve	(151,000)	(408,000)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	16,020,324	3,387,328
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

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

	Deficit
	£
St Matthias Church of England Primary School	128,069
Catshill First School	43,505
Central services	866,730
	<hr/> <hr/>

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

The Central services was in a deficit position reflecting the investment the Trust has made both in anticipation of further growth and to provide the support for schools in their journey out of Special Measures. All schools in the Trust are now Good or better and the Board has implemented a restructuring process that will see the post of School Improvement Lead redundant from April 2025 reducing central costs.

Catshill First joined the Trust in April 2024. The Trust is aware of the deficit position and is working closely with leaders at the school to bring the budget into a balanced budget for the year 2024/2025 and beyond.

St Matthias was in a deficit position when it joined the Trust. A staff restructure has happened during the year which has ensured that a small surplus in 2024 has been achieved. The number of children requiring support is above national average so the Trust is balancing financial position with educational need.

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

19. STATEMENT OF FUNDS (CONTINUED)

TOTAL COST ANALYSIS BY ACADEMY

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

	Teaching and educational support staff costs £	Other support staff costs £	Educational supplies £	Other costs excluding depreciation £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
St John's Church of England Middle School	2,958,523	392,553	31,234	451,169	3,833,479	4,235,273
St John's Church of England Primary School	1,254,479	171,061	38,394	256,127	1,720,061	1,775,763
St Matthias Church of England Primary School	862,874	205,452	38,577	200,733	1,307,636	1,238,586
Witton Middle School	1,779,742	308,248	33,793	261,583	2,383,366	2,446,770
Catshill Middle School	750,126	180,999	14,286	151,519	1,096,930	-
Catshill First School	609,984	93,355	14,489	80,786	798,614	-
Central services	489,504	501,331	35	697,200	1,688,070	1,014,782
ACADEMY	8,705,232	1,852,999	170,808	2,099,117	12,828,156	10,711,174

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

20. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS - CURRENT PERIOD

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	15,796,910	15,796,910
Current assets	187,083	890,496	603,829	1,681,408
Creditors due within one year	-	(890,496)	(251,773)	(1,142,269)
Creditors due in more than one year	-	-	(164,725)	(164,725)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	-	(151,000)	-	(151,000)
TOTAL	187,083	(151,000)	15,984,241	16,020,324

ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS - PRIOR PERIOD

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	3,886,759	3,886,759
Current assets	58,244	927,604	78,830	1,064,678
Creditors due within one year	-	(927,604)	(48,642)	(976,246)
Creditors due in more than one year	-	-	(179,863)	(179,863)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	-	(408,000)	-	(408,000)
TOTAL	58,244	(408,000)	3,737,084	3,387,328

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

21. RECONCILIATION OF NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2024 £	2023 £
Net income/(expenditure) for the period (as per Statement of financial activities)	12,530,996	(725,577)
ADJUSTMENTS FOR:		
Depreciation	265,642	212,416
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(1,296,727)	(112,783)
Interest receivable	(105)	(443)
Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable	(143,000)	(31,000)
Defined benefit pension scheme finance (income)/cost	(12,000)	76,000
Decrease in debtors	63,147	532,313
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(33,870)	260,459
Fixed assets inherited on conversion	(11,217,000)	-
Cash inherited on conversion	(241,374)	-
NET CASH (USED IN)/PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES	(84,291)	211,385

22. CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES

	2024 £	2023 £
Repayments of borrowing	(15,138)	-
NET CASH (USED IN)/PROVIDED BY FINANCING ACTIVITIES	(15,138)	-

23. CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES

	2024 £	2023 £
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(758,900)	(143,838)
Capital grants from DfE/ESFA and other capital income	1,096,834	112,783
Interest receivable	105	443
Cash inherited on conversion	241,374	-
NET CASH PROVIDED BY/(USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES	579,413	(30,612)

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

24. ANALYSIS OF CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Cash in hand and at bank	1,085,695	605,711
TOTAL CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	1,085,695	605,711

25. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET DEBT

	At 1 September 2023 £	Cash flows £	Repayment of ESFA loan £	At 31 August 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	605,711	479,984	-	1,085,695
Debt due within 1 year	(21,975)	-	-	(21,975)
Debt due after 1 year	(179,863)	-	15,138	(164,725)
	403,873	479,984	15,138	898,995

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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26. CONVERSION TO AN ACADEMY TRUST

On 1 April 2024 Catshill First School converted to academy trust status under the Academies Act 2010 and all the operations and assets and liabilities were transferred to The Spire Church of England Learning Trust from Worcestershire County Council for £NIL consideration.

The transfer has been accounted for as a combination that is in substance a gift. The assets and liabilities transferred were valued at their fair value and recognised in the Balance sheet under the appropriate heading with a corresponding net amount recognised as a net gain in the Statement of financial activities as Income from Donations and Capital Grants - transfer from local authority on conversion.

The following table sets out the fair values of the identifiable assets and liabilities transferred and an analysis of their recognition in the Statement of financial activities.

	Restricted funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total funds £
TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS			
Leasehold land and buildings	-	3,293,000	3,293,000
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash - representing budget surplus on LA funds	43,462	11,857	55,319
NET ASSETS	<u>43,462</u>	<u>3,304,857</u>	<u>3,348,319</u>

At the conversion date, Catshill First School's LGPS was in a net surplus position of £144,000. As detailed in Note 2, plan surpluses are restricted and so no amounts were recognised in relation to the LGPS at the date of conversion.

**THE SPIRE CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEARNING TRUST
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

26. CONVERSION TO AN ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)

On 1 April 2024 Catshill Middle School converted to academy trust status under the Academies Act 2010 and all the operations and assets and liabilities were transferred to The Spire Church of England Learning Trust from Worcestershire County Council for £NIL consideration.

The transfer has been accounted for as a combination that is in substance a gift. The assets and liabilities transferred were valued at their fair value and recognised in the Balance sheet under the appropriate heading with a corresponding net amount recognised as a net gain in the Statement of financial activities as Income from Donations and Capital Grants - transfer from local authority on conversion.

The following table sets out the fair values of the identifiable assets and liabilities transferred and an analysis of their recognition in the Statement of financial activities.

	Restricted funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total funds £
TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS			
Leasehold land and buildings	-	7,924,000	7,924,000
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash - representing budget surplus on LA funds	183,526	2,528	186,054
NET ASSETS	<u>183,526</u>	<u>7,926,528</u>	<u>8,110,054</u>

At the conversion date, Catshill Middle School's LGPS was in a net surplus position £160,000. As detailed in Note 2, plan surpluses are restricted and so no amounts were recognised in relation to the LGPS at the date of conversion.

27. CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

	2024 £	2023 £
CONTRACTED FOR BUT NOT PROVIDED IN THESE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS		
Acquisition of tangible fixed assets	93,631	-

28. PENSION COMMITMENTS

The Academy'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 Worcestershire County Council. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

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

28. PENSION COMMITMENTS (CONTINUED)

Contributions amounting to £Nil were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2024 (2023 - £Nil) and are included within creditors.

TEACHERS' PENSION SCHEME

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

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

VALUATION OF THE TEACHERS' PENSION SCHEME

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

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

- employer contribution rates set at 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 was 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 TPS in the year amounted to £978,852 (2023 - £888,417).

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 has set out above the information available on the scheme.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

28. PENSION COMMITMENTS (CONTINUED)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contribution made for the year ended 31 August 2024 was £739,000 (2023 - £610,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £587,000 (2023 - £494,000) and employees' contributions totalled £ 152,000 (2023 - £116,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 15 per cent for employers and 5.5 - 12.5 per cent for employees.

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

PRINCIPAL ACTUARIAL ASSUMPTIONS

	2024	2023
	%	%
Rate of increase in salaries	4.0	4.3
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.7	2.9
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.0	5.3
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.7	2.8

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

	2024	2023
	Years	Years
Retiring today		
Males	21.2	21.5
Females	23.6	23.8
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	22.5	22.8
Females	25.4	25.6

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28. PENSION COMMITMENTS (CONTINUED)

SHARE OF SCHEME ASSETS

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

	At 31 August 2024	As restated At 31 August 2023
	£	£
Equities	5,522,000	3,913,000
Bonds	659,000	124,000
Property	1,978,000	439,000
Cash	83,000	49,000
Other	-	823,000
TOTAL MARKET VALUE OF ASSETS	8,242,000	5,348,000

The actual return on scheme assets was £752,000 (2023 - £92,000).

The amounts recognised in the Statement of financial activities are as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Current service cost	(444,000)	(463,000)
Interest income less admin expenses	349,000	176,000
Interest costs	(337,000)	(252,000)
TOTAL AMOUNT RECOGNISED IN THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	(432,000)	(539,000)

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

	2024	2023
	£	£
AT 1 SEPTEMBER	5,456,000	5,897,000
Transferred in from local authority on conversion	2,219,000	-
Current service cost	444,000	463,000
Interest cost	337,000	252,000
Employee contributions	152,000	116,000
Actuarial losses/(gains)	(104,000)	(1,190,000)
Benefits paid	(111,000)	(82,000)
AT 31 AUGUST	8,393,000	5,456,000

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

28. PENSION COMMITMENTS (CONTINUED)

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

	2024 £	2023 £
AT 1 SEPTEMBER	5,048,000	4,004,000
Transferred in from local authority on conversion	2,219,000	-
Interest income	349,000	184,000
Actuarial gains	450,000	633,000
Employer contributions	587,000	494,000
Employee contributions	152,000	116,000
Benefits paid	(111,000)	(82,000)
Derecognition of surplus	(452,000)	(293,000)
Administration expenses	-	(8,000)
AT 31 AUGUST	8,242,000	5,048,000

29. OPERATING LEASE COMMITMENTS

At 31 August 2024 the Academy had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Not later than 1 year	44,206	27,762
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	97,709	26,690
Later than 5 years	5,851	45,335
	147,766	99,787

30. MEMBERS' LIABILITY

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

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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31. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

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

During the year, the Academy Trust occupied premises owned by The Worcester Diocesan Board of Finance Limited, of which B Allbut is a director, under a supplemental rental agreement. The transaction occurred on an arm's length basis, and in entering the transaction, the Academy Trust has complied with the requirements of the ESFA's Academy Trust Handbook.

32. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Spire Church of England Learning Trust is a company limited by guarantee, incorporated in the UK and registered in England & Wales. The registered office is St John's Church of England Middle School Academy, Watt Close, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 7DH.