

Company registration number 10653875 (England and Wales)

**TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

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TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members

Mr A Peaford (MBE)
Mr C Whymark
Mr K Brice
Mr G Smith
Mr S Munday

Trustees

Mrs A Ochuma
Mr K Mohammed
Mr N Woodbridge
Mr P Smith (Accounting Officer)
Mrs S Slade
Mr K Brice
Mr A Peaford (Chair)
Mr D Landy
Mr C F Morgan
Mr I Dickson

Senior management team

- CEO	Mr P Smith
- Headteacher - Treetops	Mr J Brewer
- Headteacher - Free School	Mr A Hattam
- Headteacher (free School)	Mrs B Fry
- Assistant Headteacher	Mrs L Meek
- Deputy Headteacher	Mr T Smith
- Business Manager	Mrs S Slade
- VB Manager	Mrs J Flatt
- Assistant Headteacher	Mrs S Smith

Company registration number

10653875 (England and Wales)

Registered office

Treetops School
Buxton Road
Grays
Essex
RM16 2WU
United Kingdom

Academies operated

Treetops School
Treetops Free school

Location

Thurrock
Thurrock

CEO

Mr J Brewer
Mr A Hattam

Independent auditor

Azets Audit Services
Units 7 & 8 Britannia Business Park
Comet Way
Southend-On-Sea
Essex
SS2 6GE
United Kingdom

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Bankers

Lloyds Bank PLC
34 High Street
Grays
Essex
RM17 6LX
United Kingdom

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The trustees present their annual report together with the accounts and auditor's report of the charitable company for the year 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report, and a directors' report and strategic report under company law.

The academy trust operates an academy for pupils aged 5 to 19 serving a catchment area in Thurrock. Treetops School has a pupil capacity of 318 and had a roll of 317 in the school census on 18/05/2023. Treetops Free School has a pupil capacity of 100 and had a roll of 110 in the school census on 18/05/2023.

Structure, governance and management

Constitution

The academy trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's memorandum and articles of association are the primary governing documents of the academy trust.

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

Treetops Learning Community was incorporated on 6 March 2017 and received academy status from 1 April 2017.

Members' liability

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

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of trustees

The Members of the Academy Trust shall comprise the signatories to the Memorandum and any person elected by the current members by passing a special resolution to appoint additional members provided that at any time the minimum number of members shall not be less than three. An employee of the Academy Trust cannot be a member of the Academy Trust.

The number of Trustees shall not be less than three, but shall not be subject to any maximum. The Academy Trust shall have the following Trustees:

- up to 12 Trustees appointed by ordinary resolution
- The Chief Executive Officer
- A Minimum of 2 Parent Trustees

The Academy Trust may also have any Co-opted Trustee. A Co-opted Trustee means a person who is appointed to be a Trustee by being Co-opted by Trustees who have not themselves been so appointed. The Trustees may not co-opt an employee of the Academy Trust as a Co-opted Trustee if thereby the number of Trustees who are employees of the Academy Trust would exceed one third of the total number of Trustees including the Chief Executive Officer to the extent he or she is a Trustee.

The term of office for any Trustee shall be four years, save that this time limit shall not apply to any post which is held ex officio. Subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of Trustee, any Trustee may be reappointed or re-elected.

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees

During the period under review the Trust Board of Directors held 5 full Directors meetings. The training and induction provided for new Directors will depend on their existing experience. All new Directors will be given a tour of the Academy and the chance to meet with staff and students. All relevant Directors are provided with copies of policies, procedures, minutes, accounts, budgets, plans and other documents that they will need to undertake their role as Directors.

Organisational structure

Decisions are made by the Trust in accordance to the Trust's scheme of delegation document which is reviewed annually.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

Pay and remuneration of key management personnel is determined by the CEO in consultation with the Chair of Trustees in line with national agreements and pay documents. The CEO's pay is determined using the national agreements and pay documents and from monitoring of performance management by way of appraisals with two of the Trustees.

Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

Friends of Treetops School (FOTS) is a charitable organisation set up by parents to provide additional resources to the school through their fund raising activities.

Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

The Trusts aims are:

- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum, differentiated to meet individual needs.
- To promote and enhance the self-esteem and sense of self-worth of each and every individual.
- To provide a safe, secure, positive and happy working environment.
- To develop an awareness and understanding of the needs of the whole school community (pupils, parents, staff, governors and friends).
- To prepare pupils for adult life. To equip them with the necessary skills and understanding to become responsible citizens, confident to take their place as valued members of the community.
- To enable every individual (staff and pupils) to achieve their full potential.
- To develop and maintain links with the local community (schools, colleges, business and the voluntary sector).
- To offer support, guidance and advice to special and mainstream schools and colleges.
- To provide and promote an inclusive model of education.
- To accept, value and celebrate the unique contribution each individual makes to society.
- To extend the range of educational, social and vocational opportunities available to all pupils.
- To "work together and achieve together".
- To work in partnership with parents, fellow professionals and all interested parties.
- To be at the leading edge of specialist provision through participation in local, regional, national and international initiatives.

Our Vision:

Excellence through partnership.

Our Ethos:

We are a vibrant school that endeavours to secure the best outcomes for every child, family and member of staff, served within our partnership trust.

Our values:

Happiness – Respect – Listening – Cooperation – Perseverance – Individuality - Honesty – Trust – Fairness – Equality – Opportunity – Quality.

Overall Aims:

- To maintain and grow a community of outstanding schools.
- To use collaboration to promote excellence, personal achievement and enjoyment of teaching and learning.
- To equip our children with the skills and values to become valued members of society.
- To develop a cooperative and collective ethos across all our schools so that the best practice is shared in the best interests of all the pupils and staff.
- To provide inspirational leadership in every school so that each and every pupil and member of staff reach their potential.
- To raise community aspirations across our family of schools.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Public benefit

The trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers and duties.

Admissions Criteria

The Trust adopts the admission policies of the Local Education authority in which it works. For full details see the school website.

Strategic report

Achievements and performance

Please see our website for data relating to the schools achievements and performance.

Pupils enter the school from a wide range of social, cultural and economic backgrounds. The Academy prides itself on being inclusive.

See below for the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, from ethnic minority backgrounds and on the Special Educational Needs register for the school:

30% of pupils at Treetops School receive Pupil Premium grant, 32% at Treetops Free School. 11% of pupils at Treetops School are from ethnic minority backgrounds and 11% of pupils at Treetops Free School. 100% of children at both schools are on the SEN register. To ensure that standards are continually raised the Trust operates a programme of internal and external reviews of curriculum areas and the quality of teaching and learning and has three external quality assurance reviews per academic year, working with colleague Headteachers from neighbouring authorities.

Using the key performance indicators in the new Ofsted framework the Trust currently grades Treetops School as 'Outstanding'. This is supported by the latest Ofsted inspection of February 2020 and the Trust's internal monitoring systems.

KS4 Results

From our Key Stage 4 cohort of 2022/23, 16% of the 2023 cohort were on VB programmes. 97.7% of our Year 11 pupils achieved at least one accredited qualification across the curriculum. 34% of our Year 11 pupils achieved 5 or more GCSEs or equivalents, 24% of our Year 11 pupils achieved at least 5 GCSEs at Grade 1-9 or equivalent qualifications, including GCSEs in English and Mathematics.

For more details on the 2023 results summary and performance tables go to our website at: <http://www.treetopsschool.org>

Key performance indicators

The main KPI is the Ofsted Framework for Inspection. Inspectors must judge the quality of education provided in the school. This is the overarching judgement.

In order to make a judgement about the quality of education provided in the school, inspectors must first make four key judgements. These are:

- the achievement of pupils at the school
- the quality of teaching in the school
- the behaviour and safety of pupils at the school.
- the quality of leadership in and management of the school

In addition, inspectors must also consider:

- the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school
- the extent to which the education provided by the school meets the needs of the range of pupils at the school, and in particular the needs of pupils who have a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 pupils who have special educational needs.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 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, the board of trustees continues to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the accounts. 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 Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in the form of recurrent grants, some of which are restricted to particular purposes. The grants received from the ESFA during the year ended 31 August 2023 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 ESFA. In accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice, 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (SORP 2019), such grants 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 expected useful life of the assets concerned.

During the period ended 31 August 2023, total expenditure of £11,295k (2022: £10,833k) was met by recurrent grant funding from the ESFA together with other incoming resources. The excess of expenditure over income for the period (excluding pension deficit on conversion, restricted fixed asset funds and transfers to restricted fixed asset funds) was £422k (2022: £1,260k).

At 31 August 2023 the net book value of fixed assets was £21,222k (2022: £7,824k). Movements in tangible fixed assets are shown in note 12 to the financial statements. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the pupils of the Academy.

The Local Government pension scheme, in which the Academy participates, showed a deficit last year of £248k. At 31 August 2023 the FRS102 report showed an asset of £845k however this has not been recognised in the accounts as the academy is not expected to receive a benefit.

Reserves policy

The Governors 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 Governors have determined that the appropriate level of free reserves should be equivalent to 5% of the Trust's unrestricted income (2023: 5%).

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. The Academy's current level of unrestricted reserves is £601k (2022: £471k). (total funds less the amount held in fixed assets and restricted funds).

The funds exceed the policy as the school had balances transferred on conversion in April 2017. The Trust will continue to monitor its reserves level to ensure that it remain functional.

The Academy held fund balances at 31 August 2023 of £22,669k (2022: £8,424k) comprising £22,098k (2022: £7,953k) of restricted funds and £601k (2022: £471k) of unrestricted general funds. Of the restricted funds, £21,222k (2022: £7,824k) is represented by tangible fixed assets, £63k (2022: £nilk) of unspent capital grants and £813k of unspent restricted revenue grants (2022: £377k). The Pension reserve which is considered part of restricted funds was £nil (2022: £248k) in deficit.

Investment policy

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Academy has the power to invest funds not immediately required for its own purposes, in any way the Governors see fit. The organisation has a positive cash balance to cover eventualities and unforeseen expenses. The banking facilities are reviewed on a regular basis.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Principal risks and uncertainties

The principal risks to the Trust are:

1. School fails to remain OFSTED outstanding – at the present time this is considered low risk.
2. Changes to leadership – leadership is stable and the Trust has invested its development and performance management of all senior staff – low risk.
3. Demographics of pupils – increased number of children with more complex SEN is putting a financial strain on the school's finances and on the workload of staff – high risk.
4. Building maintenance costs – building built in 2008 – medium risk.
5. School funding – the Trust's finances are tight due to funding not received for pupil growth – medium risk.
6. Cyber attack on the IT infrastructure
7. Estate management - To ensure the trust's estate is safe the Site manager has a robust maintenance schedule diarised on the system that outlines when maintenance is due. As well as this we have specialist maintenance Companies that do termly visits to check on the Estate generally to see if any ad-hoc repairs are required. One of the Trustees, in charge of Health and Safety for the Trust visits termly to walk around the site to check everything complies with the Health and Safety at Work Act.

The Trust is developing its risk register that will list the key risks and discuss mitigating factors. This will enable better monitoring of the risks and our ability to deal with them.

Risk management

The Directors have assessed the major risks to which the Trust is exposed, in particular those relating to specific teaching, provision of facilities and other operational areas of the trust and its finances. The Directors have implemented a number of systems to assess risks that each school faces, especially in operational areas (e.g. in relation to teaching, health and safety, bullying and school trips) and in relation to the control of finance. They have introduced systems, including operational procedures (e.g. vetting of new staff and visitors to maintain strict safeguarding protocols and manage risk. Any prospective school joining the trust has a full due diligence review to minimise any future risk to the organisation. Where there is significant financial risk the trust has ensured there is adequate insurance cover. The Trust has an effective system of internal control as described in their Financial Procedures.

Fundraising

The academy trust does not use any external fundraisers. All fundraising undertaken during the year was monitored by the trustees

Plans for future periods

The Trust is committed to reducing longer term emissions and therefore in the next year we will be implementing energy efficiency measures. Due to the banning of the old fluorescent tubes for lighting we will be changing them all over to LED bulbs which although will be a big cost input initially will save money in the long run and will be much better for the environment.

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 trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 11 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Mr A Peaford
Chair

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Scope of responsibility

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

The board of trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the CEO, as accounting officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between Treetops Learning Community 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 five times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the board of trustees was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
Mrs A Ochuma	3	5
Mr K Mohammed	3	5
Mr N Woodbridge	3	5
Mr P Smith (Accounting Officer)	5	5
Mrs S Slade	5	5
Mr K Brice	3	5
Mr A Peaford (Chair)	5	5
Mr D Landy	0	5
Mr C F Morgan	3	5
Mr I Dickson	1	5

During the year to 31 August 2023 the Board has had no resignations and no new appointees. The board has exercised its duty in scrutinizing the work of the school and helping them raise standards.

The board has scrutinised educational performance, financial performance and regularity and effective deployment of resources.

Conflicts of interest

Any conflicts of interests or related party transactions will be identified through the annual completion of the declaration forms. This is also an agenda item on every Governor meeting allowing for dialogue and discussion. Any conflict would be debated and a solution identified inline with each situation.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Governance reviews

The board's performance has been good although it has reduced the number of staff governors and strengthened its numbers due to the opening of the Free School.

The board regularly received monitoring reports in addition to the monthly financial reports, which provide the board with added confidence.

The Trust has completed a self-review of governance in the past six months which has led to a strengthening of local governance arrangements.

The impact of the changes are that from December 2023 there will be two Local Governing Bodies, one for each school chaired by Neil Woodbridge and Kevin Brice, these will contain, the Headteacher of the relevant LGB school, a community governor, a parent governor and two staff governors.

The Trust will complete further reviews in the next twelve months to assess the effectiveness of these changes and the performance of its committees also.

As well as the five full board meetings held during the year, the academy has set up sub-committees that have also met periodically throughout the period.

The finance, premises and audit committee is a sub-committee of the main board of trustees.

The purpose of the finance, premises and audit committee is:

Ensure that accurate and complete financial records are maintained

- Monitor income and expenditures against projections
- Review and recommend financial policies to the board, including ensuring adequate internal controls and maintaining financial records in accordance with standard accounting practices

Ensure that accurate, timely, and meaningful financial statements are prepared and presented to the board

- Present monthly financial statements to the board

Safeguard the Organisation's asset's

- Review proposed new funding for ongoing financial implications, recommending approval or disapproval to the board
- Ensure that the Organisation has the proper risk-management provisions in place

Help the full board understand the Organisation's financial affairs

- Ensure that the board as a whole is well informed about the Organisation's finances
- Educate the board about financial matters

Ensure that premises matters are monitored and dealt with in a timely fashion

Monitor premises management and health & safety matters to ensure compliance

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
Mr K Mohammed	4	5
Mr N Woodbridge	5	5
Mr P Smith (Accounting Officer)	5	5
Mrs S Slade	5	5
Mr K Brice	4	5
Mr C F Morgan	5	5

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Review of value for money

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

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

- Monitoring procedures and financial reports and ensuring regular benchmarking is undertaken.

The accounting officer has ensured the Trust has effectively used funding to ensure that the site is well maintained and safe. The Trust employs specialised Companies to check that the site has no on-going problems and that the maintenance is all up to date. The Trust buys in to Essex County Council safety advisors who are always on hand should the Site Manager need extra advice on Health and Safety issues and the Trustees, one in particular, is proactive in visiting site to check on any Health and Safety problems.

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of academy trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Treetops Learning Community for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts.

Capacity to handle risk

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

The risk and control framework

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

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the board of trustees;
- regular reviews by the finance, premises and audit 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 Governing Body has considered the need for a specific internal audit function and has decided not to appoint a Responsible Officer. However, the Governors have appointed SBM Services to complete the internal audit function. SBM Services role includes giving advice on financial matters and performing a range of checks on the Academy Trust's financial systems. In particular the checks carried out in the current period include:

- Payroll
- Banking, Investment management
- Cash Flow & Reconciliations

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

SBM services report to the Governing body on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Governing Body's financial responsibilities.

The Trustees' confirm the internal auditor has delivered their schedule of work as planned, and no material control issues arose as a result of the internal auditor's work.

During the year the following reviews have also been carried out:

Internal checks on Safeguarding
Internal review of Health and Safety

Review of effectiveness

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

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

The accounting officer has been advised of the implications of the result of 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.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 11 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Mr P Smith
Accounting Officer

Mr A Peaford
Chair

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

STATEMENT OF REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE *FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023*

As accounting officer of Treetops Learning Community, I have considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust board of trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management, under the funding agreement in place between the academy trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2022, including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

I confirm that I and the academy trust's board of trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds by the academy trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the academy trust's funding agreement and the Academy Trust Handbook 2022.

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

Mr P Smith
Accounting Officer

11 December 2023

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The trustees (who are also the directors of Treetops Learning Community for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the accounts in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

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

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

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

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

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 11 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Mr A Peaford
Chair

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of Treetops Learning Community for the year ended 31 August 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the accounts, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the accounts:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of trustees

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

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

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above and on the Financial Reporting Council's website, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

We obtain and update our understanding of the entity, its activities, its control environment, and likely future developments, including in relation to the legal and regulatory framework applicable and how the entity is complying with that framework. Based on this understanding, we identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. This includes consideration of the risk of acts by the entity that were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, we designed procedures which included:

- Enquiry of senior leadership, Governors/Trustees and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims as well as actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Assessing the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the company through enquiry and inspection;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations including compliance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency;
- Performing audit work over the recognition of grant income and the allocation of expenditure to funds;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management bias and override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for indicators of potential bias.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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

Use of our report

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

Catherine Cooper FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Azets Audit Services

11 December 2023

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

Units 7 & 8 Britannia Business Park
Comet Way
Southend-On-Sea
Essex
United Kingdom
SS2 6GE

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 26 June 2023 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Treetops Learning Community during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Respective responsibilities of Treetops Learning Community's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Treetops Learning Community's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 29 March 2017 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2022, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Approach

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

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

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

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

Our work included identification and assessment of the design and operational effectiveness of the controls, policies and procedures that have been implemented to ensure compliance with the framework of authorities including high level financial control areas and areas assessed of presenting a higher risk of impropriety. We undertook detailed testing, based on our assessment of risk of material irregularity, where such controls, policies and procedures apply to classes of transactions. This work was integrated with our audit on the financial statements to the extent evidence from the conduct of that audit supports the regularity conclusion as well as additional testing based on our assessment of risk of material irregularity.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Conclusion

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

Reporting Accountant

Azets Audit Services
Units 7 & 8 Britannia Business Park
Comet Way
Southend-On-Sea
Essex
SS2 6GE
United Kingdom

Dated: 11 December 2023

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds: General Fixed asset £'000 £'000		Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and capital grants	3	62	-	14,043	14,105	276
Charitable activities:						
- Funding for educational operations	4	50	11,165	-	11,215	9,186
Other trading activities	5	43	-	-	43	200
Total		<u>155</u>	<u>11,165</u>	<u>14,043</u>	<u>25,363</u>	<u>9,662</u>
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities:						
- Educational operations	8	25	10,873	397	11,295	10,833
Total	6	<u>25</u>	<u>10,873</u>	<u>397</u>	<u>11,295</u>	<u>10,833</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		130	292	13,646	14,068	(1,171)
Transfers between funds	16	-	185	(185)	-	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)						
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	18	-	207	-	207	9,543
Net movement in funds		<u>130</u>	<u>684</u>	<u>13,461</u>	<u>14,275</u>	<u>8,372</u>
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward		471	129	7,824	8,424	52
Total funds carried forward		<u>601</u>	<u>813</u>	<u>21,285</u>	<u>22,699</u>	<u>8,424</u>

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Comparative year information Year ended 31 August 2022	Notes	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds: General £'000	Fixed asset £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and capital grants	3	33	-	243	276
Charitable activities:					
- Funding for educational operations	4	46	9,140	-	9,186
Other trading activities	5	200	-	-	200
Total		<u>279</u>	<u>9,140</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>9,662</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities:					
- Educational operations	8	-	10,679	154	10,833
Total	6	<u>-</u>	<u>10,679</u>	<u>154</u>	<u>10,833</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		279	(1,539)	89	(1,171)
Transfers between funds	16	-	225	(225)	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	18	-	9,543	-	9,543
Net movement in funds		279	8,229	(136)	8,372
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		192	(8,100)	7,960	52
Total funds carried forward		<u>471</u>	<u>129</u>	<u>7,824</u>	<u>8,424</u>

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2023

		2023		2022	
	Notes	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	12		21,222		7,824
Current assets					
Debtors	13	57		86	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,528		998	
		<u>1,585</u>		<u>1,084</u>	
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(108)		(236)	
Net current assets			<u>1,477</u>		<u>848</u>
Net assets excluding pension liability			22,699		8,672
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	18		-		(248)
Total net assets			<u>22,699</u>		<u>8,424</u>
Funds of the academy trust:					
Restricted funds	16				
- Fixed asset funds			21,285		7,824
- Restricted income funds			813		377
- Pension reserve			-		(248)
Total restricted funds			<u>22,098</u>		<u>7,953</u>
Unrestricted income funds	16		<u>601</u>		<u>471</u>
Total funds			<u>22,699</u>		<u>8,424</u>

The accounts on pages 20 to 42 were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 11 December 2023 and are signed on their behalf by:

Mr A Peaford
Chair

Company registration number 10653875 (England and Wales)

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	Notes	2023 £'000	£'000	2022 £'000	£'000
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net cash provided by operating activities	19		282		432
Cash flows from investing activities					
Capital grants from DfE Group		185		243	
Capital funding received from sponsors and others		63		-	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-		(18)	
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
Net cash provided by investing activities			248		225
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period			530		657
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year			998		341
			<hr/>		<hr/>
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year			1,528		998
			<hr/> <hr/>		<hr/> <hr/>

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies

Treetops Learning Community is a charitable company. The address of its principal place of business is given on page 1 and the nature of its operations are set out in the trustees' report.

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

1.1 Basis of preparation

The accounts of the academy trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

1.2 Going concern

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

1.3 Income

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

Grants

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

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

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

Sponsorship income

Sponsorship income provided to the academy trust which amounts to a donation is recognised in the statement of financial activities in the period in which it is receivable (where there are no performance-related conditions), where the receipt is probable and it can be measured reliably.

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.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Other income

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

Donated goods, facilities and services

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

Donated fixed assets

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

Agency arrangements

The academy trusts acts as an agent in distributing 16-19 bursary funds from ESFA. Payments received from the ESFA and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the statement of financial activities as the trust not not have control over the charitable application of the funds. The funds received and paid and any balances held are disclosed in note 24.

1.4 Expenditure

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

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Expenditure on raising funds

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

Charitable activities

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

Governance costs

These include the costs attributable to the academy trust's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including audit, strategic management, trustees' meetings and reimbursed expenses.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.5 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets costing £3,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

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

The properties have been included at the valuation provided by the ESFA when completing their desktop valuation.

The academy has a 125 year lease from the date of conversion or transfer from the DfE on the land and buildings with the local authority.

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

Leasehold buildings	2% straight line
Leasehold land	over period of the lease
Computer equipment	Over 3 years
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	Over 5 years
Motor vehicles	20% straight line

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

1.6 Liabilities

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

1.7 Leased assets

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

1.8 Financial instruments

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

Financial assets

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

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

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Financial liabilities

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

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

1.9 Taxation

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

1.10 Pensions benefits

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

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

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

1.11 Fund accounting

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

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

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

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

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

Useful economic lives of tangible assets

The annual depreciation charge for tangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are reassessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets. See note 12 for the carrying amount of the property and note 1.5 for the useful economic lives for each class of assets.

LGPS

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 18, 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 2019 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2023. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

The pension value also includes an asset ceiling adjustment and the assumptions used to calculate this are:

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

Critical areas of judgement

There are no critical areas of judgement.

3 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Donated fixed assets	-	13,795	13,795	-
Capital grants	-	185	185	243
Other donations	62	63	125	33
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	62	14,043	14,105	276
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

4 Funding for the academy trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
DfE/ESFA grants				
General annual grant (GAG)	-	4,245	4,245	3,798
Other DfE/ESFA grants:				
- Pupil premium	-	157	157	159
- Sport grant	-	33	33	33
- Recovery premium	-	146	146	40
- Others	-	16	16	6
	-	4,597	4,597	4,036
Other government grants				
Local authority grants	-	6,568	6,568	5,102
COVID-19 additional funding				
Non-DfE/ESFA				
Other COVID-19 funding	-	-	-	2
Other incoming resources	50	-	50	46
Total funding	50	11,165	11,215	9,186

In the prior year, the academy received £2k vaccination funding. This was fully spent in the prior year.

5 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Premises income	12	-	12	21
Catering income	3	-	3	4
Other income	28	-	28	175
	43	-	43	200

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

6 Expenditure

	Staff costs	Non-pay expenditure		Total 2023	Total 2022 restated
	£'000	Premises £'000	Other £'000	£'000	£'000
Academy's educational operations					
- Direct costs	8,886	382	287	9,555	7,769
- Allocated support costs	648	776	316	1,740	3,064
	<u>9,534</u>	<u>1,158</u>	<u>603</u>	<u>11,295</u>	<u>10,833</u>

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2023 £'000	2022 restated £'000
Fees payable to auditor for:		
- Audit	12	9
- Other services	2	2
Operating lease rentals	13	22
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	397	154
Net interest on defined benefit pension liability	(14)	131
	<u></u>	<u></u>

7 Central services

No central services were provided by the academy trust to its academies during the year and no central charges arose.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

8 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Direct costs				
Educational operations	25	9,530	9,555	7,769
Support costs				
Educational operations	-	1,740	1,740	3,064
	25	11,270	11,295	10,833
			2023	2022
			£'000	£'000
Analysis of support costs				
Support staff costs			648	2,163
Depreciation			15	15
Technology costs			25	-
Premises costs			761	489
Other support costs			271	388
Governance costs			20	9
			1,740	3,064

9 Staff

Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Wages and salaries	7,187	6,143
Social security costs	604	507
Pension costs	1,729	2,896
Staff costs - employees	9,520	9,546
Agency staff costs	9	7
Staff restructuring costs	5	-
	9,534	9,553
Staff development and other staff costs	25	63
Total staff expenditure	9,559	9,616
Staff restructuring costs comprise:		
Redundancy payments	5	-

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

9 Staff

(Continued)

Staff numbers

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

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Teachers	54	44
Administration and support	260	226
Management	9	10
	<u>323</u>	<u>280</u>

The number of persons employed, expressed as a full time equivalent, was as follows:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Teachers	53	43
Administration and support	228	160
Management	9	9
	<u>290</u>	<u>212</u>

Higher paid staff

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

	2023 Number	2022 Number
£60,000 to £70,000	1	3
£70,001 to £80,000	2	2
£80,001 to £90,000	1	-
£90,001 to £100,000	-	1
£100,001 to £110,001	1	-
	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the academy trust comprise the trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £819k (2022: £861k).

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

10 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

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

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

P Smith (CEO)

- Remuneration £45,000 - £50,000 (2022 : £45,000 - £50,000)
- Employers Pension Contributions £0 (2022 : £0).

S Slade (Business Manager)

- Remuneration £70,000 - £75,000 (2022: £65,000 - £70,000)
- Employers Pension Contributions £15,000 - £20,000 (2022 : £15,000 - £20,000).

J Brewer (Headteacher) (resigned as Trustee 1st December 2021)

- Remuneration £nil (2022: £20,000 - £25,000)
- Employers Pension Contributions £nil (2022 : £5,000 - £10,000).

During the year no reimbursed expenses were paid to Trustee's (2022: £nil).

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

11 Trustees' and officers' insurance

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

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold buildings	Computer equipment	Fixtures, fittings & equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost					
At 1 September 2022	8,453	65	45	58	8,621
Additions	13,795	-	-	-	13,795
At 31 August 2023	22,248	65	45	58	22,416
Depreciation					
At 1 September 2022	674	64	25	34	797
Charge for the year	382	-	4	11	397
At 31 August 2023	1,056	64	29	45	1,194
Net book value					
At 31 August 2023	21,192	1	16	13	21,222
At 31 August 2022	7,779	1	20	24	7,824

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

12 Tangible fixed assets

(Continued)

Included in leaseholding buildings is the Treetops Free School land and buildings donated by Dfe.

13 Debtors

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
VAT recoverable	12	11
Prepayments and accrued income	45	75
	<u>57</u>	<u>86</u>

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Other creditors	55	62
Accruals and deferred income	53	174
	<u>108</u>	<u>236</u>

15 Deferred income

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Deferred income is included within:		
Creditors due within one year	20	12
	<u>20</u>	<u>12</u>
Deferred income at 1 September 2022	12	-
Released from previous years	(12)	-
Resources deferred in the year	20	12
	<u>20</u>	<u>12</u>
Deferred income at 31 August 2023	20	12

At the balance sheet date the academy was holding funds received in advance for UIFSM, LA funding and trips relating to 2023/24.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

16 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains, losses and transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2023 £'000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	377	4,245	(3,994)	185	813
Pupil premium	-	157	(157)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	195	(195)	-	-
Other government grants	-	6,568	(6,568)	-	-
Pension reserve	(248)	-	41	207	-
	<u>129</u>	<u>11,165</u>	<u>(10,873)</u>	<u>392</u>	<u>813</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
DfE group capital grants	-	185	-	(185)	-
Fixed asset donation	-	63	-	-	63
General fixed assets	7,824	13,795	(397)	-	21,222
	<u>7,824</u>	<u>14,043</u>	<u>(397)</u>	<u>(185)</u>	<u>21,285</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>7,953</u>	<u>25,208</u>	<u>(11,270)</u>	<u>207</u>	<u>22,098</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	471	155	(25)	-	601
Total funds	<u>8,424</u>	<u>25,363</u>	<u>(11,295)</u>	<u>207</u>	<u>22,699</u>

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

General Annual Grant: Income received from the ESFA to cover the normal running costs of the Academy.

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

Pupil premium: Income received from the ESFA as described.

Other DfE/ESFA grants: This includes UIFSM, PE & sports premium, recovery premium the phonics, mental health and NPQ grants received in the year.

Other government grants: This includes SEN funding, additional pupil premium and other funding received from the Local Authority.

DfE/ESFA capital grants: This includes the devolved formula capital grant and other capital grants from the DfE, as well as for the donation of the new Free School land and buildings.

The transfer of funds relate to the use of "capital" funding for revenue projects

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

16 Funds

(Continued)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains, losses and transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2022 £'000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	3,798	(3,646)	225	377
Start up grants	79	-	(79)	-	-
Pupil premium	-	159	(159)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	9	-	(9)	-	-
Other Coronavirus funding	-	2	(2)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	79	(79)	-	-
Other government grants	-	5,102	(5,102)	-	-
Pension reserve	(8,188)	-	(1,603)	9,543	(248)
	<u>(8,100)</u>	<u>9,140</u>	<u>(10,679)</u>	<u>9,768</u>	<u>129</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
DfE group capital grants	-	243	-	(243)	-
General fixed assets	7,960	-	(154)	18	7,824
	<u>7,960</u>	<u>243</u>	<u>(154)</u>	<u>(225)</u>	<u>7,824</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>(140)</u>	<u>9,383</u>	<u>(10,833)</u>	<u>9,543</u>	<u>7,953</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	<u>192</u>	<u>279</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>471</u>
Total funds	<u>52</u>	<u>9,662</u>	<u>(10,833)</u>	<u>9,543</u>	<u>8,424</u>

Total funds analysis by academy

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Fund balances at 31 August 2023 were allocated as follows:		
Treetops School	1	1
Treetops Free school	1	1
Central services	1,412	846
Total before fixed assets fund and pension reserve	<u>1,414</u>	<u>848</u>
Restricted fixed asset fund	21,285	7,824
Pension reserve	-	(248)
Total funds	<u>22,699</u>	<u>8,424</u>

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

16 Funds

(Continued)

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching and educational support staff £'000	Other support staff costs £'000	Educational supplies £'000	Other costs excluding depreciation £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Treetops School	6,604	421	77	833	7,935	9,296
Treetops Free school	2,281	254	65	403	3,003	1,383
	<u>8,885</u>	<u>675</u>	<u>142</u>	<u>1,236</u>	<u>10,938</u>	<u>10,679</u>

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted funds: General £'000	Fixed asset £'000	Total Funds £'000
Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	21,222	21,222
Current assets	601	921	63	1,585
Current liabilities	-	(108)	-	(108)
Total net assets	<u>601</u>	<u>813</u>	<u>21,285</u>	<u>22,699</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted funds: General £'000	Fixed asset £'000	Total Funds restated £'000
Fund balances at 31 August 2022 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	7,824	7,824
Current assets	471	613	-	1,084
Current liabilities	-	(236)	-	(236)
Pension scheme liability	-	(248)	-	(248)
Total net assets	<u>471</u>	<u>129</u>	<u>7,824</u>	<u>8,424</u>

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

18 Pension and similar obligations

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

The pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of independent qualified actuaries. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2016, and that of the LGPS related to the period ended 31 March 2019.

There were no outstanding or prepaid contributions at either the beginning or the end of the financial year.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Introduction

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

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

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 specify the level of future contributions. Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2016. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 5 March 2019.

The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- employer contribution rates set at 23.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% employer administration charge)
- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £218,100 million, and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £196,100 million giving a notional past service deficit of £22,000 million
- the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, is used to determine the notional investment return. The current SCAPE rate is 2.4% above the rate of CPI. The assumed real rate of return is 2.4% in excess of prices and 2% in excess of earnings. The rate of real earnings growth is assumed to be 2.2%. The assumed nominal rate of return including earnings growth is 4.45%.

The next valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2024.

The employer's pension costs paid to the TPS in the period amounted to £610k (2022: £493k)

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 has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. The academy trust has set out above the information available on the scheme.

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

18 Pension and similar obligations

(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 contributions are as noted below. The agreed contribution rates for future years are 23.68% for employers and 5.5 to 12.5% for employees.

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

Total contributions made	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Employer's contributions	1,181	931
Employees' contributions	278	220
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total contributions	1,459	1,151
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Principal actuarial assumptions	2023 %	2022 %
Rate of increase in salaries	3.9	3.9
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.9	2.9
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.3	4.2
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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

	2023 Years	2022 Years
Retiring today		
- Males	20.7	21
- Females	23.2	23.5
Retiring in 20 years		
- Males	22	22.3
- Females	24.6	24.9
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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

	2023	2022
Discount rate + 0.1%	-227	-239
Discount rate - 0.1%	235	247
Mortality assumption + 1 year	228	204
Mortality assumption - 1 year	-123	-198
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

18 Pension and similar obligations	(Continued)	
Defined benefit pension scheme net asset/(liability)	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Scheme assets	8,706	7,202
Scheme obligations	(8,706)	(7,450)
Net asset/(liability)	-	(248)
The academy trust's share of the assets in the scheme	2023	2022
	Fair value	Fair value
	£'000	£'000
Equities	5,557	4,052
Gilts and bonds	280	458
Cash	122	216
Asset ceiling adjustment	(845)	-
Property	748	681
Other assets	2,844	1,795
Total market value of assets	8,706	7,202
The actual return on scheme assets was £42,000 (2022: £15,000).		
Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
Current service cost	1,154	2,400
Interest income	(333)	(113)
Interest cost	319	244
Benefit changes, curtailments and settlements gains or losses	-	3
Total operating charge	1,140	2,534
Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations	2023	2022
	£'000	£'000
At 1 September 2022	7,450	14,270
Current service cost	1,154	2,400
Interest cost	319	244
Employee contributions	278	220
Actuarial gain	(498)	(9,638)
Benefits paid	3	(46)
At 31 August 2023	8,706	7,450

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

18 Pension and similar obligations (Continued)

Changes in the fair value of the academy trust's share of scheme assets

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
At 1 September 2022	7,202	6,082
Interest income	333	110
Actuarial (gain)/loss	554	(95)
Employer contributions	1,181	931
Employee contributions	278	220
Benefits paid	3	(46)
Asset ceiling adjustment	(845)	-
	<u>8,706</u>	<u>7,202</u>
At 31 August 2023	<u>8,706</u>	<u>7,202</u>

Included within the pension assets above is an "asset ceiling adjustment". The asset ceiling is the present value of the economic benefits that the employer can recover from the plan, such as reduced contributions or cash refunds. It is deemed for the Trust that the future costs expected for the employers contributions will outweigh the future service costs and therefore there is no economic benefit to the Trust and therefore the asset value is reduced to zero.

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

	Notes	2023 £'000	2022 restated £'000
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		14,068	(1,171)
Adjusted for:			
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income		(14,043)	(243)
Defined benefit pension costs less contributions payable	18	(27)	1,472
Defined benefit pension scheme finance (income)/cost	18	(14)	131
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets		397	154
Decrease/(increase) in debtors		29	(19)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors		(128)	108
		<u>282</u>	<u>432</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities		<u>282</u>	<u>432</u>

20 Analysis of changes in net funds

	1 September 2022 £'000	Cash flows £'000	31 August 2023 £'000
Cash	998	530	1,528
	<u>998</u>	<u>530</u>	<u>1,528</u>

TREETOPS LEARNING COMMUNITY

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

21 Long-term commitments

Operating leases

At 31 August 2023 the total of the academy trust's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases was:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Amounts due within one year	13	22
Amounts due in two and five years	40	83
Amounts due after five years	40	9
	<u>93</u>	<u>114</u>

22 Related party transactions

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

Mr P Smith's son is employed by the Trust as a Deputy Headteacher. Mr Peaford's daughter is employed as a Assistant Headteacher. All appointments were made in open competition and neither director was involved in the decision-making process regarding the appointments. The staff are paid within the normal salary scale for the roles they carry out and receive no special treatment as a result of their relationship to a Trustee.

23 Members' liability

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

24 Agency arrangements

The academy trust distributes 16-19 bursary funds to students as an agent for ESFA. In the accounting period ending 31 August 2023, the trust received £4,567 (2022 - £3,499) from the ESFA of which £400 was spent, leaving £5,574 in creditors at the year end (2022 - £1,407).