

Company registration number 07890590 (England and Wales)

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

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BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members

Bishop S Wright
Mrs C Craig (appointed 1 January 2024)
Mrs D Fox (resigned 31 December 2023)
Rev S Lerche
Rev Canon Peter Leighton
Ms F Stansfield (appointed 1 May 2024)

Trustees

Mr C Coxon (Vice Chair)
Cllr M Gannon (Chair)
Mrs A Boyle
Rev C M Hayden (Resigned 19 July 2024)
Mr D Hicks
Mr A Egdell
E G Dolphin (Appointed 12 March 2024)
P B Witte (Appointed 13 October 2023)
Father S P Purdy (Appointed 12 March 2024)
H D Keough (Appointed 1 November 2023 and
resigned 19 July 2024)
Mrs K Hutchinson (Appointed 13 October 2023
and resigned 19 July 2024)

Senior management team

- CEO/Accounting Officer
- Deputy Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Operating Officer
- Chief Technology Officer
- Senior Director of Performance & Standards
- Director of Commercial
- Director of Teaching & Learning
- Director of Safeguarding and Welfare
- Director of Ethos
- Director of Estates
- Director of Governance
- Chief Financial Officer
- Director of Operations
- Director of HR
- Director of ICT Strategy & Operations
-

Mr N Hum OBE
Mrs L Stephenson
Mrs L Levy
Mr U Chughtai
Mrs C Brown
Mrs J Collins
Miss M Murphy
Mrs A Riley
Mrs B Reilly-O'Donnell
Miss L A Hall
Mrs J Ridley
Mrs L Smith
Mrs C Barclay
Mrs P Mee
Mr A Freeman

Company secretary

Ms L Levy

Company registration number

07890590 (England and Wales)

Registered office

Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Hq
Barnston Court, Nissan Way
Turbine Business Park
Washington, Sunderland
Tyne & Wear
SR5 3NY
England

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Academies operated	Location	Executive Headteacher
St Michael's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	Sunderland	Mr N Reeson
St Bede's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	Sunderland	Mr J Anderson
Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	Sunderland	Mrs C Garbutt
St Robert of Newminster Catholic School and Sixth Form College (Sunderland)	Sunderland	Mr D Juric
St John Boste Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	Sunderland	Mrs D Cushlow
St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College (County Durham)	County Durham	Mrs C Hamill
St Leonard's Catholic School (County Durham)	County Durham	Mr C Hammill
St Thomas More Catholic School (Gateshead)	Gateshead	Mrs J Turner
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	Gateshead	Mr S Woods
St Matthew's Catholic Primary School (Northumberland)	Northumberland	Mr M Gray
St Bede's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	County Durham	Mrs S Clarke
St Godric's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	County Durham	Mrs E Bridon
Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	County Durham	Mr D Miller
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Ushaw Moor)	County Durham	Mr D Miller
St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	County Durham	Mrs A Garrity
St Joseph's Catholic Middle School (Northumberland)	Northumberland	Mr N Wood
St Mary's Catholic First School (Northumberland)	Northumberland	Mrs S Oakes
St Alban's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	Gateshead	Mrs M Robinson
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	County Durham	Mrs V Ramshaw
St Michael's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	County Durham	Mrs C Parker
St Benet's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	County Durham	Mrs C Young
St Oswald's Catholic Primary (Gateshead)	Gateshead	Mrs T Musgrove
St Joseph's Catholic Primary (County Durham - Stanley)	County Durham	Mrs M Urwin
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	County Durham	Mrs J Burgess
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	Gateshead	Mrs G Lynch
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	Gateshead	Mrs S Fraser
Cardinal Hume Catholic School (Gateshead)	Gateshead	Mr B Robson
St Anne's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	Gateshead	Mrs L Stokoe
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	Sunderland	Mrs E Maher
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Gilesgate)	County Durham	Mr D Miller
St Thomas More Primary School (County Durham - Belmont)	County Durham	Mr T Hunt
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - South Moor)	County Durham	Mr A Morris
St Pius Xth Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Consett)	County Durham	Mrs J Cruise
St Philip Neri Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Dunston)	Gateshead	Mrs S Williams
Our Lady and St Joseph Brooms Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Leadgate)	County Durham	Mrs J Cruise
St Joseph's Catholic Junior School (County Durham - Birtley)	County Durham	Mrs K Swaddle
St Joseph's Catholic Infant School (County Durham - Birtley)	County Durham	Mrs K Swaddle
St Peter's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Low Fell)	Gateshead	Mrs P McArthur
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Consett)	County Durham	Mrs J Gill
Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	Gateshead	Mrs C Maxwell
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Blaydon)	Gateshead	Mr P Naughton
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Whickham)	Gateshead	Mr J Wheatley
St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	Gateshead	Mrs C Johnson
St Mary' & St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Blaydon)	Gateshead	Mr J Craig
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Langley Moor)	County Durham	Mr D Miller
All Saints' Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Lanchester)	County Durham	Mrs F Stephenson
St Agnes' Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Crawcrook)	Gateshead	Mrs J Woods

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Independent auditor

Azets Audit Services
Wynyard Park House
Wynyard Avenue
Wynyard
TS22 5TB
United Kingdom

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc
PO Box 100
Andover
BX1 1LT
United Kingdom

Solicitors

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

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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

The trust operates 47 academies (5 Secondary academies, 1 Middle School, 1 First School and 40 Primary academies) for over 15,000 pupils aged 3 to 18 serving a catchment area across 4 different Local Authorities – Gateshead, Sunderland, Durham and Northumberland. The Trust has 1,900 staff employed in Teaching and Support staff roles. It is our Trust's mission to 'enable all to flourish'. Catholic schools were established to ensure all children and their local communities can flourish.

Structure, governance and management

Constitution

The multi 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 Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company is known as Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust. Prior to converting to a Multi Academy Trust during 2016, the company was previously known as Cardinal Hume Catholic School.

Details of the trustees who served during the year, and to the date of these accounts are approved and included in the Reference and Administrative Details on page 1.

Members' liability

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

Trustees' indemnities

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.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of trustees

The trust has a set of rules and procedures setting out how it is run and how it conducts its business and meetings. These are known as the Articles of Association and sets out the trusts charitable objects.

The Diocesan Bishop and Board of Education formally consider and appoint all Members of the Trust Board, whether they are Foundation Board Members or other applicants.

Application forms are submitted by the candidates and reviewed by the Diocesan Board of Education prior to appointment. All Foundation Members of the Board must be practising Catholics and will be interviewed by Diocesan representatives prior to appointment.

Each of the Individual Catholic academies have their own Local Governing Committees. The Chair of each Committee must be a practising Catholic and approved by the Bishop and Diocesan Board of Education.

The Trust has a set of rules and procedures setting out how it is run and how it conducts its business and meetings. These are known as the Articles of Association and set out the Trusts charitable objects. The Local Governing Committee members of each school within the Trust, must all apply in the same way, directly to the Director of Governance within the Trust, in order then to submit the appropriate application form for approval by the Bishop. Local Governing Committees may appoint Staff Trustees through an election process, provided that the total number of Trustees on each Local Governing Committee (including the Headteacher) who are employees of the Academy does not exceed one third of the total number of Trustees and Article 58A shall apply.

The term of office for any Director shall be 4 years or a shorter period if specified at the time of appointment.

Additional Governors/Trustees:

The Trustees may appoint no more than 1 other Trustee, and the number of Foundation Trustees must outnumber the non-Foundation Governors by at least 2.

The Headteacher within each academy shall be treated for all purposes as being an ex officio Trustee.

Subject to Article 57, the Parent Trustees shall be elected by parents of registered pupils at the Academy. A Parent Trustee must be a parent of a pupil at the Academy at the time when they are elected. The Trustees shall make all necessary arrangements for, and determine all other matters relating to, an election of Parent Trustees, including any question of whether a person is a parent of a registered pupil at the Academy. Any election of Parent Trustees which is contested shall be held by secret ballot, via the Clerk to the Local Governing Committee.

The Staff Trustees shall be elected by a secret ballot of all staff employed under a contract of employment or a contract for services or otherwise engaged to provide services to the Academy (excluding the Headteacher of an Academy). All arrangements for the calling and the conduct of the election will be administered by the Clerk to the Local Governing Committee and resolution of questions as to whether any person is an eligible candidate shall be determined by the Trustees.

If a Staff Trustee ceases to work at an Academy then they shall be deemed to have resigned and shall cease to be a Governor automatically on termination of their work at the Academy. Any election of a Staff Trustee which is contested shall be held by Secret ballot, arranged by the Clerk to the Local Governing Committee.

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees

All Trust Board Directors will meet with the CEO for an induction meeting. This could cover educational elements, legal and financial matters. New Local Governing Committee members of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust will have an introductory discussion with their Headteachers and with either the Director of Governance or their Local Governing Clerk. They can access induction and on-going training via the Governor Hub portal administered by the Trust and which they will be given access to on appointment as a Governor. The sessions offered will usually be internal delivered by the Trust, from the Catholic Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, Local Authorities or Schools North East. Individual Local Authorities produce an annual Course Directory which is reviewed each year to reflect any changes in practice and legislation. Trustees can also access information directly from the Company Secretary at Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust, to assist with their development. A number of sessions will also be arranged by the Clerk to the Trustees to assist Trustees in their pursuit of the highest standards of governance. Training for individual Board Members and Governors will be provided by the Governance team at Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Organisational structure

The trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee. The Trust Board has a strategic role in running the academies within the trust and is responsible for appointing trustees. It has control over the land and other assets and delegates management of each academy to the trustees.

Subject to the provisions of the Companies Act 2006, the Articles and to any directions given by special resolution, the business of the trust shall be managed by the trustees who may exercise all the powers of the trust. No alteration of the article shall be limited by any special power given to the trustees by the articles and a meeting of trustees at which a quorum is present may exercise all the powers exercisable by the trustees.

The Trust's Management Structure consists of:

- The Directors
- The CEO and Trust Executive Leadership Team
- The Local Governing Committees for each individual school
- Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team of each individual school

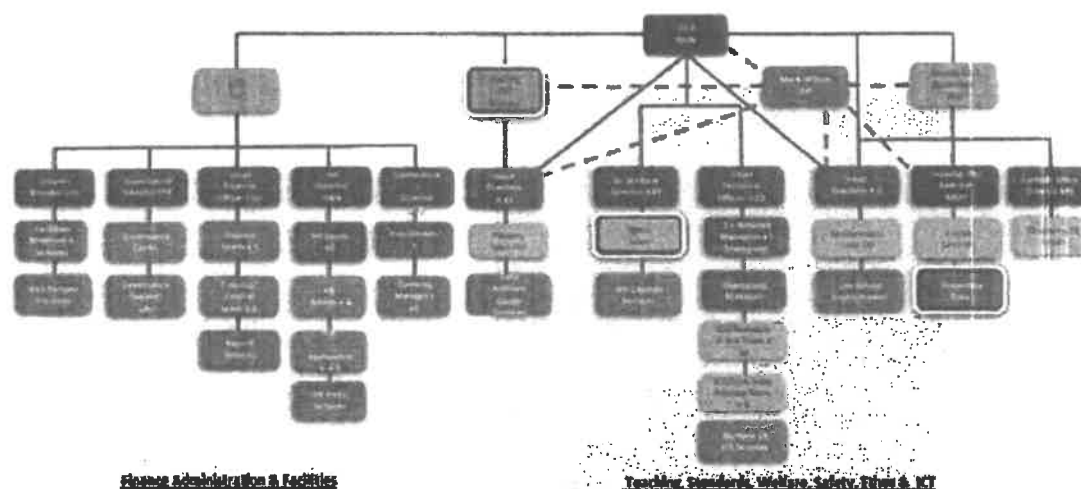
This structure allows sufficient segregation of duties and delegation of authority responsibly. The Diocesan Scheme of Delegation, together with Trust Academy Handbook ensure that transparency in the processes linked to decision-making can take place.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as accounting officer, has personal responsibility to the trustees for financial and administrative matters including:

- Ensuring regularity and propriety
- Prudent and economical administration
- Avoidance of waste and extravagance
- Efficient and effective use of available resources
- Day to day organisation, majority of staffing and financial decisions and management of the academy has been delegated to the Headteacher in each school



BWCET Staff Structure
Executive Team Accountability Plan



BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

Arrangements for setting and reviewing pay and remuneration are reviewed annually and the pay policy is approved by the Board, following appropriate consultation with Union colleagues via the JCC.

The trustees and key management personnel including the CEO, Executive team and Headteachers review and challenge the academy staffing structures regularly to ensure the most appropriate and robust structures are in place to meet the needs of the Trust Essential Services Team and individual schools, whilst maintaining financial integrity. Executive Team and Senior Leaders pay is tightly correlated to strong educational outcomes and sound financial management.

The trust benchmarks the size of their senior leadership teams for example against that of similar schools/academies.

The BWCET Pay Policy for accounting year 2023-24 for all staff, including key leaders within the Trust, was approved and is governed by the Trust Board. The policy includes that all teachers are employed in accordance with the School Teachers Pay & Conditions document and the undertaking of the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle that it will abide by the National Terms & Conditions. The Pay Policy was also reviewed by Union Colleagues when issued for consultation by the Trust, via the JCC.

The CEO is Accounting Officer. An independent review of the CEO and Senior Executive Team salaries within the Trust was completed by the HR Director and an external HR Consultant to benchmark salaries of existing roles of the same responsibilities in other Trusts during 2023-24. The CEO salary was originally set and agreed by the Board following a review/benchmarking exercise carried out by an HR company AVEC (now EPM Ltd.) of comparable national roles. Annual pay awards for the Chief Executive are agreed by a separate Performance Management Committee (membership from the Trust Board).

There is a robust staff appraisal process, which the trust reviews annually and in turn supports with strong performance management. Pay progression recommendations are reviewed by the Local Governing Committee of each academy for their own individual staff, alongside appropriate evidence. The summary of which is then considered by the trust Board of Directors for approval.

The trustees do not receive any remuneration.

The Chief Executive may delegate responsibility for all other staff appraisals but remains responsible for recommendations regarding pay progression. Headteachers are employed in accordance with the provisions of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STP& CD). Senior support staff pay and conditions are in accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

Trade union facility time

The Trust Leadership team has effective working relationships with Union colleagues. The Trust pays into Local Authority schemes who provide this service from both Durham, Sunderland, Northumberland and Gateshead Local Authorities.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)

Worthwhile consultation was undertaken before the TUPE of staff to Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust via whole-staff meetings, one-to-one meetings, either face to face or virtually.

In order to retain meaningful relationships with both our employees and Trade Union colleagues, the Trust has established a Joint Consultative Committee with Union colleagues (JCC) to provide a forum for discussion, consultation and negotiation, prior to large-scale rollout to all staff. The JCC meets on a termly basis. It considers:

- Employment relations matters
- Policy development
- Working arrangements
- Training and development
- Welfare
- Terms & Conditions of employment
- Pay & Pensions
- Equality
- Health & Safety
- Pending Trust developments

The Trust Executive Leadership Team hosts fortnightly, group, virtual meetings for all Headteachers to attend. There is the opportunity for Trust updates and discussion/feedback from Heads is welcomed. This regular communication is important to ensure any issues can be channeled to the appropriate Directors for attention. The Heads are responsible for sharing the information provided to their staff in schools.

The policy of the Trust is to support recruitment and retention of both employees and pupils with disabilities. All schools have an Equality Impact Statement published on their individual websites which is updated biannually or when necessary if earlier.

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

Directors and Local Governors have a crucial role to play in connecting Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust and its schools with wider stakeholders in the communities and businesses across all our local areas. Professional links will enhance the education and aspirations of our pupils.

The Trust recognises the responsibility it, and each school, has in playing its part in engaging with customers, business and suppliers. This has a direct positive impact on our pupils and the communities we serve in many ways.

We have developed formal and mutually beneficial relationships with all of our strategic suppliers and have implemented a unique social value model to ensure contractual obligations are focused on enhancing the quality of education and outcomes for our pupils.

For example, we have in recent years had fantastic engagement with our suppliers :

- Established a financial support fund, St Nicholas Fund, to provide specific financial support to our most vulnerable pupils and families facing particularly challenging circumstances.
- Utilised our commercial relationships to create specific apprenticeship opportunities enhancing our social value proposition.
- Secured contractual commitment to support T Level placements over a four-year period.
- Achieved contractual commitment to the development of educational programmes to support environmental practice and reducing waste, improving cyber security, enhancing ICT skills and infrastructure support.

We continue to utilise a consistent commercial model and 7-step approach to ensure consistency across all activity and involving all relevant staff. Our commercial approach supports our scheme of delegation and public contract regulations. The Commercial Strategy and Vision covers how we ensure Compliance, Make effective Savings for our schools which can be used to benefit the pupil experiences and to improve outcomes directly.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Commercial activity throughout the financial year has been focused on a number of areas:

- Launching additional modules across our Trust-wide single Management Information System, covering all schools
- ICT Partnership covering multiple ICT lots for all requirements from devices through to infrastructure development, audio visual needs and specialist consultancy
- Mobile phone coordination across the Trust to secure value for money and reduce costs due to economies of scale
- Site remedial minor works and enhancement across a large number of schools
- Consistent approach to Asbestos Management for all schools
- Staff Absence Protection for all schools that provides wellbeing services for Trust staff
- Supply Staff, including a tier 1, 2 & 3 provider for all temporary supply needs
- Catering Equipment & Maintenance
- Outsourcing additional school cleaning to a single provider across Durham and Gateshead
- Bishop Wilkinson Commercial Services Ltd continued development supporting other Trusts and schools

Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust is now a Trust with 47 academies. The Trust is part of the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle but is not part of any wider network, other than being the Lead School in the Centre for Teaching. This has no impact on the operating policies of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust.

The CEO and COO are also involved with Education Mutual Limited, a not for profit staff sickness absence cover provider. The CEO and COO of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust receive no financial incentive for being part of the Education Mutual Board of Directors, Company Secretary nor a Member school. Approval was provided by the Chair and Board of The Trust for their involvement at the outset of the Mutual's development in 2018 and on an annual basis since. The required Related Party Transaction approval is sought and granted by the Education Skills & Funding agency. The CEO and COO are also Board members of Schools Mutual Ltd, again a not for profit Recruitment and staff Supply Company. The CEO and COO of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust receive no financial incentive for being part of the Schools Mutual Board of Directors, Company Secretary nor a Member school.

The ESFA have provided approval for both the Related Party Transactions shown in the Accounts and the CEO and COO involvement in Education Mutual and Schools Mutual Services is well known throughout the Education sector.

Once the schools are formally incorporated into the Trust, an assessment of services provided by external companies is then determined by the internal Finance team. At that point, an assessment of providers is issued to the Commercial Department within the Trust. The Commercial Team then assess which services must be procured centrally and determine which providers are approaching/over the Trust Handbook thresholds. Schools Mutual is widely used by the Schools within the Trust, due to the ethical nature of the Mutual company and the cost of Supply staff which provides best value for money. An independent process and formal tender was then undertaken via the Constellia Framework and most suitable company was awarded the Contract. SMS were the successful tenderers. The Trust has also established our own trading subsidiary Bishop Wilkinson Commercial Services Limited (BWCS) trading as Education Commercial Services (ECS), which allows the Trust to provide services to other schools outside of the parameters of teaching, in order to generate additional income.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

The principal object and activity of the charitable trust is the operation of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust to provide education for pupils between the ages of 3 and 18, based on an inclusive, balanced and broad curriculum. The Academy's admissions code has Trustee approval and is published on our website www.bwcet.com.

The Academy's object ("The Object") is specifically restricted to the following: to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing by establishing, managing, carrying on, and developing Catholic schools. This can be either by the offering of a broad and balanced curriculum and shall be conducted in accordance with the principles, practices and tenets of the Catholic Church and all Catholic canon law applying thereto, including any trust deed governing the use of land used by the Trust both generally and in particular in relation to arranging for religious education and daily acts of worship and having regard to any advice and following directives issued by the Diocesan Bishop.

The Trust shall ensure that all Academies within the Trust comply with any guidance issued by the Secretary of State from time to time, and will ensure that pupils take part in statutory and teacher assessments and in teacher assessments of pupils' performance as they apply to maintained schools.

Objectives, strategies and activities

The Trust schools are situated within four Local Authorities – Gateshead, Sunderland Durham and Northumberland. Predominantly the area has a White-British intake, but has an increasing proportion of EAL/EM pupils. The Trust's mix of pupils is genuinely comprehensive with a larger than average proportion coming from areas of deprivation, and broadly average numbers of disadvantaged pupils. The Trust's stability falls into the upper quintile.

The staff teams within the academies are committed to the children, and provide a stable, happy and highly effective education for the pupils, and were supportive of joining the MAT with the best interests of the pupils and their catholic education in mind. Staff turnover is healthy.

The Trust Development Plan covers the following main areas with specific Aims and Objectives linked to each one:

Curriculum Impact
Curriculum Implementation
Behaviour and Attitudes
Catholic Ethos, Personal Development & SMSC

The areas above are then split down into specific actions and Success Criteria targets. They are allocated to specific members of Working Groups within the Trust Leadership Team and the Headteachers manage and monitor progress throughout the year. In May of each year, the outcomes are reviewed and progress measured accordingly against the pre-determined success criteria.

Public benefit

The trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our Aims and Objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular the Board consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set. The Trust has provided a fully comprehensive education to all students in its care. It fully complies with all statutory guidance, The National Curriculum and seeks to support its wider educational objectives via a strong community role. The schools within the Trust comply with their duty to teach the National Curriculum and meet the standards set by Ofsted. The Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charities Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Strategic report

Achievements and performance

STATUTORY OUTCOMES 2024

Quality of Education

In the past academic year 2023-24, we have seen a continuing improvement in the quality of education in both core and foundation subjects across the Trust's schools. The outcomes achieved by schools within the Trust continue to compare very favourably to national averages. Our monitoring also supports the view that our schools continue to perform well, with Ofsted inspection and Catholic Schools Inspection reflecting this.

Statutory Outcomes 2024

Early Years

- 77% of children achieved the **Good Level of Development** at the end of the Reception Year which indicates their readiness for KS1.
- This is a **+3% improvement on the Trust's 2023 position and a 6% rise over two years.**
- 60% of disadvantaged pupils, attained the GLD (69% boys, 84% girls). This is an improvement of 1% on 2023 and 3% since 2022.

Phonics

- 87% of children achieved the **vitaly important phonics check standard** at the end of Year 1, which indicates their reading security.
- This is a **+2% improvement on the Trust's 2023 position and a 7% improvement over the past two years.**
- 73% of disadvantaged pupils, met the phonics standard. It is above the national average for similar pupils (68%).

Multiplication Tables Check (Year 4)

- The average score achieved by pupils was 22.3/25. This is a **significant improvement of 1.3 points** on the Trust score in 2023, well above national average and a 2.3 point increase in the past two years.
- 52% of pupils achieved full marks in the test – a **significant improvement of 17% compared to 2023, and a 24% gain since 2022.** This is well above the national average.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieved an APS of 20.4, almost in line with all pupils nationally and improved performance over time in the Trust. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils gaining full marks increased to 40% and is above the national average for all pupils – a **significantly positive outcome.**
- While we still have a slight gap between boys and girls, this has narrowed, with girls improving at a faster rate.

Key Stage 2 SATS (Year 6)

Reading

- 79% of children achieved the **expected standard in reading.** This is a gain of 1% on 2023 Trust figures. The Trust sits **5% above the national average.**
- 32% of pupils achieved the **greater depth standard.** This is a dip of 1%, but the national average also dipped by 1%, so we remain **4% above the national average.**
- Only **64% of disadvantaged pupils** achieved the expected standard. This declined by 1% from 2023. However, 18% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the higher standard, which is a **gain of 5% compared to 2023.**

Writing (teacher assessment)

- 78% of children achieved the **expected standard.** This is an **improvement of 2% on 2023 Trust figures and a gain of 6% over two years.** The Trust sits **6% above the national average.**
- 61% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard. This is static from 2023, but had improved by 9% from 2022.
- 16% of pupils achieved the **greater depth standard.** This is an improvement of 3% on last year and is **3% above the national average.**
- Girls improved their performance at GDS significantly (+5%) compared to boys. There is an increasing gap at GDS for boys.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Grammar, punctuation and spelling

- 76% of children achieved the **expected standard in GPS**. This is in line with 2023 Trust figures. The Trust is **4% above the national average**.
- 34% of pupils achieved the **greater depth standard**. This has improved by 6% compared to last year and has improved from **below the national average and we are now 2% above the national average**.
- 59% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard - a dip of -3% from 2023. 18% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the GDS. This improved by 2%.

Maths

- 74% of children achieved the **expected standard**. This is a decline of 2% on 2023 Trust figures. The Trust still sits 1% above the national average.
- 24% of pupils achieved the **greater depth standard**. This improved by 2% from 2023 and is now in line with the national average.
- Only 57% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard. 10% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the GDS – a marginal gain on 2023.
- Girls improved their attainment significantly at the higher standard, with a gain of 4%.

RWM combined – measure of 'secondary readiness'

- 64% of children achieved the **expected standard in all three subjects**. This is an improvement of 1% on 2023 Trust figures and an improvement of 2% over the past two years. The Trust sits **3% above the national average**.
- 9% of pupils achieved the **greater depth standard**. This is an improvement of 1% compared to last year and is now **just above the national average**.
- 44% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard in RWM. This is an **improvement of 4% on 2023**.
- 3% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the GDS in RWM – a 3% increase on 2023.

Pupils with SEND

We saw gains for pupils with SEND in a number of key areas in 2024.

- +1% phonics Y1
- +1.3 points Y4 MTC
- +13% 25/25 MTC
- +3% reading EXS
- +5% maths EXS
- +3% GPS EXS
- +2% RWM combined at EXS
- Improvements in attendance

Primary Priorities

Despite strong outcomes in the primary phase, we are not complacent and have the highest aspirations for our most vulnerable pupils. Our Trust priorities in the primary phase are:

Getting the foundations right for our vulnerable pupils:

- Reducing the absence of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND.
- Increasing proportion of disadvantaged pupils meeting GLD
- Increasing proportion of disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND meeting the phonics check standard in Y1
- Raising the attainment of disadvantaged pupils by the end of KS2 so that more meet the secondary-readiness measure.
- Improving mathematical attainment at the end of KS2, particularly focusing on disadvantaged pupils and girls.
- Improving attainment in writing across KS1 and 2, both at expected standard and greater depth standard particularly focusing on accuracy in grammar, punctuation and transcription and the attainment of boys, pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils.
- Developing our programme of meaningful and reliable assessment.
- Embed and assuring the quality of implementation of the revised Trust curriculums in English, History/Geography, MFL, Science.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Key Stage 4 outcomes 2024

- Progress 8 estimate for the Trust is +0.37, up on the +0.33 score in 2023. This is an excellent position. All schools have positive indicative P8 scores for 2024.
- The attainment 8 estimate for the Trust is 52.62 which is a slight decrease from 53.79 in 2023 (-1.17). Nationally, there has been a slight decrease in estimated A8 – 46.47 to 46.15 (-0.32). Our attainment remains well above indicative national averages.
- Strong Pass (5+) in English and Maths is 56.6%. This is above indicative national averages.
- Standard Pass (4+) in English and Maths is 78.4%. This is above indicative national averages.

Key Stage 5 outcomes

- Trust Average Point Score (APS) has remained largely in line with 2023 results at 34.91.
- There is an improving performance in applied general qualifications across schools.
- Value added improved overall but remains negative across all schools.

Secondary Priorities

- Reduce the absence of disadvantaged pupils and those eligible for SEN support.
- Improve the progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
- Improve the progress and attainment of pupils eligible for SEN support by the end of KS4.
- Undertake a strategic review of provision at post-16 to explore recruitment and retention and curriculum pathways to continue to strengthen numbers on roll and outcomes.

School Inspection – current judgements

Ofsted Inspection Results

Grade	No of schools	Percentage
Outstanding	7	15%
Good	35	77%
Good improving	1	N/A
RI	4	8%
Percentage of schools good or better		92%

Catholic School Inspections

Grade	No of schools	Percentage
Outstanding	36	77%
Good	11	23%
RI	0	0%
Inadequate	0	0%
	47	
Percentage of schools good or better		100%

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Quality of Education

Ensuring that the quality of education is at least good across all schools in the trust remains our main priority. We are working collaboratively together, in clusters, to support the development of the curriculum. We have secured the services of a number of nationally acclaimed experts to support us with our curriculum developments.

This academic year has seen the development of Subject Leader collaborative working groups coming together more frequently to share ideas and expertise.

Behaviour and Attitudes

Ensuring that there is a safe, calm, orderly and positive environment in all of our schools is essential. The Trust has an overview of all behaviour policies. The trust is notified and involved in all suspensions or exclusions. Trends are reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team. The introduction of our new Management Information System (MIS) Arbor has allowed daily attendance levels of all pupils in all schools to be monitored closely across the whole Trust. This is a significant improvement in MI available real time and allows more effective monitoring and action planning to take place.

The Trust launched a Parent Code of Conduct during this academic year, which has been genuinely well-received by the majority of parents, and welcomed by the staff teams across our schools, who appreciate the support of the Trust Leadership team.

Personal Development

All of our schools place the personal development of pupils at the centre of what they do. The Catholic ethos, vision and values underpins all aspects of daily life in schools. The Trust Vision and Values are the pre-requisite of all we do. The Trust ethos is underpinned with our Value of Through Christ, In Partnership.

Our schools use the diocesan RSE and PSHE guidance. Pupils are actively encouraged to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The trust has organised some additional opportunities for disadvantaged pupils to take part in performing arts, positive mental health and sporting activities.

Leadership and Management

We have been working with 'The Centre for Teaching' to develop subject leadership across the primary and secondary phases. Curriculum collaboration groups are now very well attended and frequently using the expertise of national specialists to support the development of the primary curriculum, which will subsequently feed through to Secondary level. Curriculum groups already in place include Early Years, Science, Music, art and design and design and technology. Some primary headteachers have sort some individual additional support from secondary heads of department. We have also established a new headteachers programme, a deputy headteacher formation programme and an executive headteachers support network. All of which have support from the Trust Executive Leadership Team and are very active groups!

Early Years

We have established 5 early years cluster groups to support our early years leaders. We are holding an annual conference this year for all EY practitioners. We are currently supporting a number of our schools to improve their provision both indoors and outdoors. We have also opened 3 new nursery provisions and have plans to open more in the future.

Sixth Form

Our sixth form leaders are working collaboratively as a group. They are looking at curriculum and exam specification. They have identified where some departments are stronger than others and they are sharing good practice, visiting each others schools to review and offer ideas for collaboration.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Going concern

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

Promoting the success of the Trust.

The Trust Board has high aspirations for all BWCET schools and appreciates that there is much to be celebrated. Directors have high standards in their decision-making processes to protect the Trust's long-term viability. This must include the interests of all stakeholders, staff, business relationships with suppliers and customers, and within the wider community. It is imperative for the school communities to continue to attract high levels of pupil numbers to ensure their admission numbers reflect the capacity of their school communities.

Financial review

The principal sources of the Academy's income is obtained from the Department for Education (DfE) via the Education Skills & Funding Agency (ESFA) in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is restricted for particular purposes. Such grants and all associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the statement of financial activities for the period ending 31st August 2024.

During the period ending 31st August 2024 total Trust revenue expenditure of £108,206,691 was more than DfE grant funding together with other incoming resources. The excess of expenditure over income was £5,486,995 excluding LGPS adjustments, capital income and depreciation. All of the expenditure shown in the Statement of Financial Activities is in furtherance of the Trusts objectives.

Budget and expenditure reviews have been conducted by the Trust Central Finance Team, Trust Finance Committee and Trust Board.

Each academy will have their reserves held individually prior to academy conversion ringfenced for their future use. This had prior approval from the Trust Board and is supported by the Diocese.

The Trust also received School Condition Allocation Funding (SCA) in order to maintain and develop school sites. Devolved Formula Capital from the Diocese and ESFA was also received on behalf of some schools. Total capital grant was £3,229,722

Prior to conversion, each of the Local Governing Committees agreed to contribute an annual contribution of 5% of school income to the Trust to provide the Central Essential Services Team and Trust-wide provision of services via external suppliers.

General and unrestricted reserves of the Trust reduced to £3,364,448.

The whole school Trust Forecast for 2023-24 was submitted to the ESFA for scrutiny in August 2024 showing all 47 schools and the anticipated income/expenditure forecast for the next 3 years. This was formally approved and ratified by the Trust Board prior to submission.

The Trust Exec Team and the Board have been monitoring the school budgets and overall reserve position very closely this financial year. In order to ensure a further similar reduction in reserves is not seen in the coming financial year 2024-25, the Board has approved the usage of Integrated Curriculum Financial Planning model to ensure schools remain efficient and can have a healthy financial future, whilst advancing the overall achievements of the trust schools for their pupils.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

FINANCIAL EFFECT OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

SEND Crisis. The media has continually drawn attention to the crisis currently facing pupils, their parents and staff in schools, caused by the lack of Special School provision, for the most severe needs and increasing staffing required in school to support inclusion.

Staff Supply Costs. In order to maintain adequate staffing in school to deal with the SEND crisis, additional Supply staff are more regularly necessary. This additional staffing cost is not provided for by current Grant funding.

Cost of living crisis is continuing. Purchasing power of schools is reduced, pressure on already decreasing and tight margins is becoming unmanageable for some schools.

Falling birth rate. All 4 Local Authorities have forecast dramatic reductions in the birth rate, which ultimately sees surplus school places and therefore falling pupil numbers in schools. This then feeds through to lower financial forecasts for schools.

Unfunded Pay Rises. Despite the government advising that the payrise during the current year would be fully funded, and indeed a grant was received, this does not cover the Trust staff payrises due to the profile of teaching staff.

Reserves policy

The Trust Board is mindful that since the rapid expansion of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust since 2019, schools joining the Trust were forecasting a reduction in their reserves prior to even joining the Trust. They have been reducing year on year due to rising costs and lower funding levels. The Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle understand the importance of ensuring that Trusts can operate effectively whilst ensuring they have the capacity to respond to adverse changes in financial circumstances of any of its schools. It is important that creative strategic planning and decision-making across the Trust supports the mitigation of risk upon the continuing operations of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust. The Diocesan Growth Plan foresaw the financial risks to small schools and in essence created Trusts due to needing the strong to support the weak.

The Diocese previously introduced an over-arching Reserves Policy to be implemented across all four Diocesan 'Base MAT's' of an aspirational level of 8%. There has been acknowledgement since the development of the Trusts, that in many cases reserves must be utilised to complete necessary building maintenance, implement curriculum improvements and develop school staffing structures which have impacted reserves. Some school reserves are way below the level of the aspirational 8%, indeed they have fallen into negative reserves. The Trust Leadership team is working with each Headteacher and SLT to manage the financial challenges they are facing due to low birth rates/pupil numbers and increasing levels of supply staff needed. This will be monitored on a monthly basis by the Chair/Head/School Business Manager and Executive Leaders.

The Trust remains solvent, is not in an overall deficit position and forecasts take into account actions being completed to mitigate the risks. However due to the emerging Cost of Living crisis the Board of Directors do not wish to commit to long term investments at this point in time and continue to review the changing position very closely.

Investment policy

The Trust Board is risk averse, and mindful that they are the custodians of a significant amount of public money on behalf of our schools. Therefore, the Board have not committed to any investments for a longer term than 12 months in the past due to the financial climate and uncertainty with funding for schools. However, the Board made the decision back in July 2023 to enter into a higher rated short term investment account with Lloyds, the Trust bankers. This low risk arrangement was thought to be particularly prudent, during this period of time and has earned a significantly higher level of interest than in previous years, which also supports the overall trust budgetary position. The Trust has seen the financial benefits of this decision during 2023-24.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Principal risks and uncertainties

Capacity to handle risk

The Trust manages its finances and risks appropriately, under the direction of not only the Trust Board and the Finance and Audit Committee members, they do so together with the Internal and External Auditors. The Trust Handbook for Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust is the financial guide for Trustees', Headteachers and staff within academies and the Essential Services team to follow. The Handbook draws upon the financial requirements specified in academy Funding Agreement, approved by the Secretary of State for Education prior to conversion to Academy status, must be adhered to by Trustees and staff.

The risk and control framework

Financial and risk management guidance is contained within The Trust Financial Handbook, and provides detailed information on a wide range of financial management, funding and accounting issues, whilst setting out the overall governance framework and key systems and controls that should be in place within Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust. It is the responsibility of the Accounting Officer (CEO), Chief Operating Officer (COO) and the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in the Trust to ensure that the Central Finance team, as well as those individuals within academies with responsibility for Finance, carry out their duties on accordance with the financial and risk management objectives and policies within the Trust.

The system of internal control is designed to manage risks effectively to a reasonable level, accepting that the trust will not be able to eliminate risk completely. Directors consider strategic risks facing the trust and have an Audit committee in place to review the risk register in detail. Significant risks are then delegated to the appropriate committee to ensure appropriate action is taken and progress monitored.

Principal risks during this accounting year continued to be centred upon the current level of uncertainty of future funding via the DfE/ESFA and falling reserves. This must be carefully monitored and will also continue to be uncertain due to the change in government from the General Election in Summer 2024.

The trust suffered from 3 schools being closed due to the Reinforced Aeriated Concrete (RAAC) crisis in 2023-24, during this financial period, and we incurred massive expenditure because of the crisis. The Trust COO and CFO have been in continual lengthy discussions with representatives from the DfE and ESFA to be reimbursed for all RAAC related expenditure as promised at the beginning of the crisis. We continue with the discussions.

The trust is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme for Support Staff, which results in the recognition of a significant deficit on the trust balance sheet.

The general, sector wide, Staffing attendance levels, supplier contracts, cost of living crisis, falling income generation for schools and continued service provision (as well as anticipated increases in the costs of that provision) are being monitored, documented and informed. It is of major concern to the public sector that due to the significant impact of the cost of living crisis and reduction in income generation opportunities for our private suppliers, that many may cease to trade and schools are left without provision.

We consider that the major risks to which the Trust is exposed, as identified by the trustees, have been reviewed and that systems or procedures have been established to manage those risks. The internal control systems and the exposure to risks are matters that are considered on a termly basis by management, trustees and the audit and finance committees.

The Internal Audit visits are calendared termly, and the annual audit conducted during the Autumn term. Each of the written reports are presented to the Accounting Officer, Finance Committee and Trust Board meetings on a termly basis. The External Audit Partner also presents the findings of the annual External Audit personally to the full Trustee group each Autumn. This element of scrutiny provides the Board and Local Academy Boards with comfort that their statutory duties and financial responsibilities as detailed in the guidance within the Academies Handbook are being discharged satisfactorily by the Central trust team.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Fundraising

Under the provisions of the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016 this section must include information on fundraising practices. The areas to cover are included in section 13 of the Act and include:

Fundraising amongst the school community is limited to small-scale support for registered charities and extracurricular events that are to be supported/accessed by the students/their families. There are no fundraising activities to support the general/daily operations of the academies within the Trust. Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust has not worked with, nor had any oversight of, any commercial participators / professional fundraisers within the current financial year. All monies received from fundraising activity is administered through the school finance/Central team and credited to the individual school income accounts, conforming to recognised standards.

The schools do not receive any direct nor indirect fundraising from external philanthropic donors. Any income generated in excess of the Dedicated School Grant income, is directly from the Education Skills Funding Agency or Department of Education.

The Trust has not received any complaints about the small-scale fundraising it conducts and Trustees are satisfied that the public, including vulnerable people, are not subjected to any unreasonably intrusive or persistent fundraising approaches, and undue pressure to donate.

Streamlined energy and carbon reporting

Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust continue to work with our Local Authority Partners, Durham County Council, Gateshead Council, Northumberland Council and Sunderland Council, through procurement of Energy via the NEPO framework and additional energy management support from each individual authority.

As an organisation we are undertaking different approaches to understand our carbon impact and to reduce consumption and our carbon footprint.

The electricity we use is produced via Nuclear energy and is therefore zero carbon producing and we are seeking to consider other technologies such as solar power across our schools.

Actions taken this year include:

- BWCET are continuing to engage our Local Authorities, detailed above, to provide Energy Management Services through a service level agreement for all schools. This provides the staff at the Trust with day+1 data on our energy use across the building estate through an energy portal allowing staff to maintain oversight on consumption.
- Annual energy use reports have been produced for the individual schools in the Trust which have contracted into this Service.

Methodology

The data collection and processing of schools in Durham has been prepared by Energy leads in all authorities within their Energy Management Teams. They have many years of experience in energy management and reporting, producing the key documentation and monitoring protocols used in the individual authorities carbon management programme.

The data (01/09/2024-31/08/2024) from utilities has been collated from different energy management tools. The report uses Invoice data, which is supplied by utility providers, via the NEPO framework, and backed up by automatic half hourly meter readings and regular physical meter reads.

This information was multiplied by the relevant Carbon Factors from BEIS using the relevant dataset to calculate emissions.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-conversion-factors-for-company-reporting>

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

BWCET Summary

UK Greenhouse gas emissions and energy use data for the period	1 September 2023 to 31st August 2024
Energy Consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh)	19,549,679
Gas	10,742,530
Electricity	8,546,423
Oil	146,708
Transport Fuel	Included above

Scope 1 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e	
Gas consumption	1,990

Scope 2 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e	
Purchased electricity	1,156

Scope 3 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e	
Business travel in employee-owned vehicles	81

Total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO2e	3,227
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Intensity ratio	
Tonnes CO2e per pupil (All Schools)	0.24

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Plans for future periods

The principles announced in October 2019 set out the foundations for the Trust structures within the Diocese. BWCET has appointed highly skilled curriculum specialists to support teachers to effectively support, monitor and model high quality teaching. 'Opening Worlds' curriculum has been developed across the Trust and staff fully embrace its purposeful intent. Pupils and staff are benefitting massively from its introduction, without a doubt.

Bishop Wilkinson Centre for Teaching has a new partner in Best Practice Network and has continued to successfully attract, train, develop and place many students within schools across the trust. During a teacher recruitment and retention crisis, it is imperative that new, nurtured and well trained talent will be secured within the trust. Full training schedules for both Early Career Teachers as well as existing staff in numerous roles is also carefully planned and delivered across the academic year.

Detailed School Improvement Plans have been developed by Headteachers, their Senior Leadership Teams, School Improvement Partners and their Local Governing Committee members, and are monitored by Leaders across the Trust with the objective of delivering a robust, exciting and planned curriculum to all students, which is built in each school to take into account their own context.

As a Trust with responsibility for more than 5 schools and more than 3,500 children going forward, the Trust receives automatic School Condition Allocation Funding (SCA) without having to submit bids from individual schools for funding for Capital works funding. This year funding was in the region of £2.4m and it allows the Trust to prioritise the capital investment required to individual schools and the Board receive information on the priorities at Board meetings throughout the year. The Director of Estates and Chief Operating Officer liaise with external Consultancy, Arcadis in order to prioritise school projects. Priority is given to Health & Safety projects, together with heating maintenance etc.

Bishop Wilkinson Commercial Services (trust trading arm) was registered at Companies House as a separate entity (company number 13236026). As a large Trust we currently manage both our Catering division income and expenditure through the separate trading arm, as well as the activities undertaken to support other schools across the region with procurement compliance. We understand first-hand the unique challenges and restrictions school and academies face, and the services have been comprehensively designed to support schools through the entire procurement process, releasing vital cash, making savings and ensuring compliance at pace. This will not only be an excellent resource for the area, it will also assist in self-generating additional income for the Trust.

Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

Neither the Academy nor its Trustees are acting as custodian trustee.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Auditor

Insofar 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.

Azets Audit Services have been the Trust External Auditors since a tendering exercise was undertaken in 2020. In line with the revised guidance/requirements from the ESFA, the Trust conducted a tender to ensure we had separated out the Internal and External Services to separate Audit providers. Therefore the Board was happy following the tender process to appoint Azets as External Auditors and Clive Owen as Internal Auditors accordingly. The Trust team have received excellent, professional services and guidance from both parties.

The trustees' report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 13 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:


Cllr M Gannon
Chair

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Scope of responsibility

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

As trustees we have reviewed and taken account of the guidance in the DfE's Governance Handbook and Competency Framework for Governance. 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 Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the board of trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' Report and in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities. The Board of Directors has formally met 8 times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the board of trustees was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
Mr C Coxon (Vice Chair)	5	8
Cllr M Gannon (Chair)	5	8
Mrs A Boyle	6	8
Rev C M Hayden (Resigned 19 July 2024)	1	8
Mr D Hicks	2	8
Mr A Egdel	7	8
E G Dolphin (Appointed 12 March 2024)	5	8
P B Witte (Appointed 13 October 2023)	7	8
Father S P Purdy (Appointed 12 March 2024)	3	4
H D Keough (Appointed 1 November 2023 and resigned 19 July 2024)	6	8
Mrs K Hutchinson (Appointed 13 October 2023 and resigned 19 July 2024)	4	8

The work of the Board of Directors is considered by the Diocesan Members. All Directors are knowledgeable, passionate and can articulate the strategic vision for the Trust very well. They have been appointed due to their considerable skillset and experience. The Board are proactive and undertake their roles seriously and with great stewardship. The Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle, as well as the Department for Education formally approve the Board Members.

Governance reviews

A full external review of Governance was last carried out by the Confederation of School Trusts in 2022. No issues were raised during this process. The next review is due to take place in 2025 and work is currently underway to engage an external organisation to carry this out.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Conflicts of interest

At the beginning of each Board and Local Governing Committee meeting, all Clerks ensure that Directors/Governors are asked to advise and reference any conflicts of interest with any of the agenda items being discussed. This record is maintained by the Clerks and a register published on each school and Central website. All involved in governance across the Trust are aware of the importance of these declarations and the ESFA regulations around this.

All Local Governing Committee member takes part in Governor Open Days in their academies and are introduced to pupils in a live school environment. This was considered to be imperative for Governors understanding and decision-making processes. Throughout the Open Days various members of the Senior team present Data and updates on their own departments to assist Governors in their role, which are organised on a termly basis to see the School in action. All school curriculum leaders have appointed Governors who monitor progress and performance.

All Local Governing Committees undertake a repeat self- evaluation of their individual skill sets which are collated by their Clerk and subsequently discussed by the full LGC. All results of the Skills Analysis is sent to the Director of Governance for onward submission to the Board for review. All new LGC Members complete the Skills Analysis documentation prior to their appointment and this is subject to scrutiny by the Diocese at application stage.

The purpose of the Standards Committee is to inform, evaluate and monitor the educational standards in trust schools.

Meetings

Attendance at Standards Committee meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
Mr A Egdell	3	3
Mr C Coxon	1	3
Mrs P Witte	1	2

The Finance Committee is a committee of the Trust Board of Directors. It meets as required by the Board on at least a termly basis. The CEO, COO and CFO present to the Finance Committee but are not Members of the Committee. The finance committee are responsible for ensuring compliance with the Funding Agreement and ensuring that all relevant financial regulations relating to the Trust are observed.

Attendance at Finance Committee meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
Mr C Coxon (Vice Chair)	3	3
Mrs A Boyle	3	3
E G Dolphin (Appointed 12 March 2024)	2	2

The Audit Committee is also a sub-committee of the main board of trustees. They plan to meet on a termly basis, unless there are any urgent matters to attend to, when they would meet immediately. The purpose of the Audit Committee is to plan the annual audit strategy within the trust and review the Internal and External Auditors findings.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Attendance at Audit & Risk Committee meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustees	Meetings attended	Out of possible
Mr D Hicks	3	3
H D Keough (Appointed 1 November 2023 and resigned 19 July 2024)	1	3

The Audit Committee works with the Finance Team, reviews the internal and external auditors reports and assesses risks for the school going forward.

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 achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

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

- Tendering for partners to carry out Minor Works across the Trust to fulfil the requirements of the estates strategic plan. 2 suppliers were awarded contracts in each of the 3 separate areas of Mechanical and Electrical, Roofing and General Works. This allows the Trust to work with these partners as the need arises rather than having to issue separate tenders each time a project needs to be completed at one of the 47 schools. This process has allowed a compliant, cost-effective approach to utilising the awarded capital funding.
- Tendering for preferred partners for the supply of agency staff. During 23/24 an award was made to Schools Mutual Services (Tier 1) and CER (Tier 2) that schools in the Trust are able to contact for any agency staff requirements. The 2-tier system was put in place to allow a wider pool of available personnel. SMS offered the lowest operational margin whilst paying staff to their correct scale point with the addition of an enhanced contribution to a pension scheme. This award means the Trust achieves value for money through the margins applied whilst the staff employed by the agency are paid fairly and receive an enhanced benefit.
- Supporting all 47 schools with their centralized procurement projects, enabling increased purchasing power and realisation of economies of scale. Examples for 23/24 include paper, outdoor play and catering equipment contracts.

The purpose of the system of internal control

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 2023 to 31 August 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts. This process is regularly reviewed by the board of trustees.

Capacity to handle risk

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 Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust for the period 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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 monthly management accounts/periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the board of trustees;
- regular reviews by the finance, audit and standards committee reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties;
- identification and management of risks.

The board of trustees has decided to utilise an independent, internal and audit function from Clive Owen LLP. Throughout the academic year 2023-24 they carried out audit visits to primary and secondary schools across the Trust.

The programme of work for Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust was agreed by the Trust Board in the Autumn Term 2023, before further discussions around the selection of academies to be visited were undertaken with the Audit Committee, Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Finance Officer in a series of meetings from January 2024 onwards. The areas for review were areas where the internal procedures are carried out by the individual academies finance department and are not part of the Trust Central Finance function. These included a review of:

- Payroll
- HR Processes.

Below is a list of all schools visited during the 2023-24 academic year to undertake the above Internal Assurance work.

- St Patrick's Dipton DPA
- Our Lady Queen of Peace OLQ
- St Patrick's Consett CPA
- St Thomas More, Belmont BTP
- Corpus Christi COR
- St Augustines AUG
- St Thomas More, Blaydon THO
- Cardinal Hume CHS
- St Joseph's Stanley SSJ
- St Michael's Houghton SMI
- St Peters PET
- St Mary and St Thomas Aquinas MTH
- St Pius PIU
- St Joseph's Juniors JJB
- Sacred Heart SHB
- St Joseph's Blaydon BLJ
- St Patricks Langley Moor LPA
- St Matthews, Prudhoe MAT
- St Bedes, Sacriston BES
- St Godrics DGO
- St Roberts of Newminster SRO
- St Bedes, Lanchester LBE
- St Joseph's Middle School HEJ
- St Leonards LEO
- St Joseph's Gateshead GAJ

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

A summary of the findings from Clive Owen LLP audit team were presented to the Audit Committee and Trust Board, and followed up with discussions with the individual school representatives as follows:

Clive Owen LLP audit team commented "From the Internal Scrutiny work undertaken throughout the academic year 2023-24 there is suitable monitoring of risk areas."

Review of effectiveness

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

- The work of the Internal and External auditors
- The financial management and governance self-assessment process
- The completion and analysis of data submitted within the Schools Resource Management Tool
- The work of the Chief Financial Officer, Central Finance team, Chief Operating Officer, Cluster Finance Managers, School Business Managers and Finance assistants within the Trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the Internal control framework.

Conclusion

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

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 13 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Cllr M Gannon
Chair



Mr N Hum OBE
CEO/Accounting Officer

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

STATEMENT OF REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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

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

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



Mr N Hurn OBE
Accounting Officer



13 December 2024

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The trustees (who are also the directors of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the accounts in accordance with the Annual Accounts Direction issued by the Education & Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

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

In preparing these accounts, the trustees are required to:


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

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

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

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

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 13 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:



Cllr M Gannon
Chair

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Opinion

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

In our opinion the accounts:

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

Basis for opinion

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

Emphasis of matter

We draw your attention to note 2 to the financial statements which describes how the LGPS balance has been accounted for. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the academy 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.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of trustees

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

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

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

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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 2023 to 2024 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.

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

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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.



**Graham Fitzgerald BA FCA DChA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Azets Audit Services**

Statutory Auditor

23/12/2024
.....

Wynyard Park House
Wynyard Avenue
Wynyard
United Kingdom
TS22 5TB

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 23 August 2024 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2023 to 2024, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust during the period 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Respective responsibilities of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 31 January 2012 and the Academies Financial Handbook, extant from 1 September 2023, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Approach

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

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

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

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

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- completion of self assessment questionnaire by Accounting Officer
- discussions with the Accounting Officer and finance team
- review of Internal Assurance reports
- review of trustee and committee meeting minutes
- review of finance and other relevant policies
- review of purchases, expenses and expense claims on a sample basis including the application of controls and tendering processes where applicable
- review of gifts and hospitality transactions including the application of controls
- review of credit and debit card transactions including the application of controls
- review of payroll transactions on a sample bases including the application of controls
- review of potential special payments to staff
- review of leases and consideration of areas where borrowing may have been incurred
- consideration of transactions with related and connected parties
- review of register of business interests for completeness and compliance with regulations
- enquiries into transactions that may require disclosure under ESFA delegated authority rules
- consideration of value for money and appropriateness of transactions

Conclusion

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

Azets Audit Services

Reporting Accountant
Azets Audit Services

Dated: 23/11/2024

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds: General £ Fixed asset £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and capital grants	3	103,862	-	3,229,722	3,333,584
Donations - transfer from local authority on conversion		212	-	-	212
Charitable activities:					
- Funding for educational operations	5	3,447,428	94,805,964	-	98,253,392
Other trading activities	4	4,094,454	-	-	4,094,454
Investments	6	267,777	-	-	267,777
Total		7,913,733	94,805,964	3,229,722	105,949,419
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	4,962,988	-	-	4,962,988
Charitable activities:					
- Educational operations	9	2,342,953	100,341,751	1,474,376	104,159,080
Total	7	7,305,941	100,341,751	1,474,376	109,122,068
Net income/(expenditure)		607,792	(5,535,787)	1,755,346	(3,172,649)
Transfers between funds	20	(1,788,471)	5,806,103	(4,017,632)	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	23	-	1,886,000	-	1,886,000
Adjustment for restriction on pension assets	23	-	(1,803,000)	-	(1,803,000)
Net movement in funds		(1,180,679)	353,316	(2,262,286)	(3,089,649)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		6,260,336	(3,259,316)	21,098,896	24,099,916
Total funds carried forward		5,079,657	(2,906,000)	18,836,610	21,010,267

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

Comparative year information Year ended 31 August 2023	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds: General Fixed asset		Total 2023 £
		£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and capital grants	3	87,343	-	3,840,352	3,927,695
Donations - transfer from local authority on conversion		139,450	-	-	139,450
Charitable activities:					
- Funding for educational operations	5	3,382,143	88,481,196	-	91,863,339
Other trading activities	4	3,331,324	-	-	3,331,324
Investments	6	22,239	-	-	22,239
Total		6,962,499	88,481,196	3,840,352	99,284,047
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	7	4,253,075	63,561	-	4,316,636
Charitable activities:					
- Educational operations	9	2,904,990	93,172,572	1,056,886	97,134,448
Total	7	7,158,065	93,236,133	1,056,886	101,451,084
Net income/(expenditure)		(195,566)	(4,754,937)	2,783,466	(2,167,037)
Transfers between funds	20	-	(536,583)	536,583	-
Other recognised gains/(losses)					
Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes	23	-	8,004,000	-	8,004,000
Net movement in funds		(195,566)	2,712,480	3,320,049	5,836,963
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		6,455,902	(5,971,796)	17,778,847	18,262,953
Total funds carried forward		6,260,336	(3,259,316)	21,098,896	24,099,916

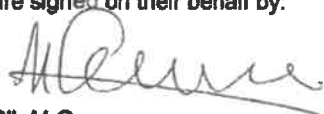
BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	14	17,952,744	17,530,922
Investments	13	1	1
		<u>17,952,745</u>	<u>17,530,923</u>
Current assets			
Stock	15	144,306	44,110
Debtors	16	5,209,388	3,993,252
Cash at bank and in hand		10,609,427	16,667,351
		<u>15,963,121</u>	<u>20,704,713</u>
Current liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(9,291,756)	(9,673,570)
		<u>6,671,365</u>	<u>11,031,143</u>
Net current assets			
		<u>6,671,365</u>	<u>11,031,143</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>24,624,110</u>	<u>28,562,066</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18	(707,843)	(914,150)
		<u>23,916,267</u>	<u>27,647,916</u>
Net assets excluding pension liability			
		<u>23,916,267</u>	<u>27,647,916</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	23	(2,906,000)	(3,548,000)
		<u>21,010,267</u>	<u>24,099,916</u>
Total net assets		<u>21,010,267</u>	<u>24,099,916</u>
Funds of the academy trust:			
Restricted funds	20		
- Fixed asset funds		18,836,610	21,098,896
- Restricted income funds		-	288,684
- Pension reserve		(2,906,000)	(3,548,000)
		<u>15,930,610</u>	<u>17,839,580</u>
Total restricted funds		<u>15,930,610</u>	<u>17,839,580</u>
Unrestricted income funds	20	5,079,657	6,260,336
		<u>5,079,657</u>	<u>6,260,336</u>
Total funds		<u>21,010,267</u>	<u>24,099,916</u>

The accounts on pages 35 to 72 were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 13 December 2024 and are signed on their behalf by:



Mr M Gannon
Chair

Company registration number 07890590 (England and Wales)

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash used in operating activities	22	(7,432,099)	(2,439,084)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Dividends, interest and rents from investments		267,777	22,239
Capital grants from DfE Group		3,011,448	3,840,352
Capital funding received from sponsors and others		218,274	-
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(1,896,197)	(1,808,541)
Net cash provided by investing activities		1,601,302	2,054,050
Cash flows from financing activities			
Repayment of other loan		(227,127)	(175,779)
Net cash used in financing activities		(227,127)	(175,779)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(6,057,924)	(560,813)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year		16,667,351	17,228,164
Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year		<u>10,609,427</u>	<u>16,667,351</u>

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

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

1.1 Basis of preparation

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

The academy trust has not prepared consolidated accounts on the grounds that the activities of the subsidiary company are not material to results of the group as a whole. Details of the financial position of the subsidiary company are included in the notes to the financial statements.

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.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

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 fixed assets

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

Transfer of assets from existing academies

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

1.4 Expenditure

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

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Expenditure on raising funds

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

Charitable activities

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

1.5 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets costing £10,000 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.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

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

Leasehold improvements	50 years straight line
Assets under construction	Not depreciated
Computer equipment	3 years straight line
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	7 years straight line
Motor vehicles	7 years straight line

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use and reclassified to freehold or leasehold land and buildings.

The academy trust occupies the footprint of the school buildings, which are owned by the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. The Diocese are the providers of the buildings on the same basis as when the academy was a maintained school. The academy trust occupies the buildings under a mere licence. This continuing permission of the trustees is pursuant to, and subject to, the trustees' charitable objects, and is part of the Catholic Church's contribution since 1847 to provide State funded education in partnership with the State. The licence delegates aspects of the management of the land and buildings to the academy trust for the time being, but does not vest any rights over the land in the academy trust. The trustees have given an undertaking to the Secretary of State that they will not give the academy trust less than two years notice to terminate the occupation of the buildings. Having considered the factual matrix under which the academy trust is occupying the buildings the trustees have concluded that the value of the land and buildings occupied by the academy trust will not be recognised on the balance sheet of the academy. Subsequent expenditure funded by the academy has been capitalised.

The remaining land is owned by the local authorities and leased to the trust for 125 years. Building improvements funded by the academy have been capitalised at cost.

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 Investments

Fixed asset investments are stated at market value.

1.9 Financial instruments

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

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

Financial assets

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

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

Financial liabilities

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

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

1.10 Stock

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

1.11 Taxation

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

1.12 Pensions benefits

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

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

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

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.13 Fund accounting

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

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

Restricted general funds comprise all other restricted funds received and include grants from the Education and Skills Funding Agency/Department for Education.

1.14 Agency arrangements

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

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.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

(Continued)

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 23, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2024. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability. The UK corporate bond yields at 31 August 2024 are at their highest levels for many years resulting in higher accounting discount rates at the year end. This places a significantly lower value on the pension obligations compared to last year and will be one of the main reasons a net asset has been reported. We have ensured that our assumptions are appropriate for the Academy Trust and the valuation has been based on the following estimates:

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

There is no known intention to exit the LGPS and therefore the economic benefit of a refund would be highly unlikely and on that basis recognition of an asset is considered inappropriate. We have however considered the economic benefit available to the Academy Trust as a future contribution reduction and whether it is appropriate to recognise the net asset in full. Under FRS 102, a net asset restriction may apply as the prevailing view is that a minimum funding requirement for future service exists in the LGPS. We requested our actuaries consider the impact of the minimum funding requirement on the asset ceiling and as a result we have restricted the asset to £nil based upon an asset restriction calculation. Our valuation in respect of the members of the Durham Pension Scheme produced a liability, therefore this has been reported as such and not netted off the Tyne and Wear Scheme balance. We consider this to be appropriate and a more accurate reflection of the pension positions as at 31 August 2024.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated as to write off the cost of an asset off over its useful economic life. The accounting policies are disclosed in the accounting policy above.

Assets transferred on conversion

The trust has transferred the assets of the predecessor schools. The value of the assets transferred have been estimated by trustees and management by reference to asset registers and other information from the predecessor schools and the capitalisation and depreciation policies of the trust.

3 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Capital grants	-	3,011,448	3,011,448	3,840,352
Other donations	103,862	218,274	322,136	87,343
	<u>103,862</u>	<u>3,229,722</u>	<u>3,333,584</u>	<u>3,927,695</u>

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

4 Other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Hire of facilities	111,311	-	111,311	122,700
Catering income	50,318	-	50,318	96,075
School trips	1,901,604	-	1,901,604	1,102,516
Teaching school	150	-	150	12,058
Other income	2,031,071	-	2,031,071	1,997,975
	<u>4,094,454</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,094,454</u>	<u>3,331,324</u>

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

5 Funding for the academy trust's educational operations

Educational operations	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
DfE/ESFA grants				
General annual grant (GAG)	-	70,647,855	70,647,855	68,192,636
Other DfE/ESFA grants:				
- UIFSM	-	1,073,963	1,073,963	974,176
- Pupil premium	-	3,363,418	3,363,418	3,269,403
- PE and Sports Premium	-	733,102	733,102	734,108
- Rates	-	366,515	366,515	350,176
- Teachers pension grants	-	966,740	966,740	297,370
- Teachers pay grants	-	1,241,328	1,241,328	9,855
- Mainstream schools additional grant	-	2,422,151	2,422,151	1,009,234
- National grant	-	41,042	41,042	267,388
- Supplementary grant	-	-	-	2,059,340
- RAAC related income	-	2,016,145	2,016,145	-
- ESFA 16-19 funding	-	7,358,158	7,358,158	7,266,398
- Others	-	112,682	112,682	3,037
	-	90,343,099	90,343,099	84,433,121
Other government grants				
Local authority grants	-	3,960,777	3,960,777	3,529,390
COVID-19 additional funding				
DfE/ESFA				
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	502,088	502,088	518,685
Other incoming resources	430,510	-	430,510	476,773
Total funding for educational operations	430,510	94,805,964	95,236,474	88,957,969
Catering Income	3,016,918	-	3,016,918	2,905,370
Total funding	3,447,428	94,805,964	98,253,392	91,863,339

6 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Short term deposits	267,777	-	267,777	22,239

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

7 Expenditure

	Staff costs £	Non-pay expenditure Premises £	Other £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Expenditure on raising funds					
- Direct costs	2,420,083	-	2,542,905	4,962,988	4,318,636
Academy's educational operations					
- Direct costs	64,944,375	-	5,572,086	70,516,461	62,937,847
- Allocated support costs	14,291,459	11,684,799	7,666,361	33,642,619	34,196,601
	<u>81,655,917</u>	<u>11,684,799</u>	<u>15,781,352</u>	<u>109,122,068</u>	<u>101,451,084</u>

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2024 £	2023 £
Operating lease rentals	872,061	516,010
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	1,248,217	1,056,886
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	228,159	-
Fees payable to auditor for:		
- Audit	35,450	29,800
- Other services	9,000	4,775
Net interest on defined benefit pension liability	<u>85,000</u>	<u>362,000</u>

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

8 Central services

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

- human resources;
- financial services;
- legal services;
- educational support services;
- facilities management;
- governance; or
- others as arising.

Central services have been charged to academies at rates varying between 0% and 5% during year, with the percentage determined by when the academy joined the trust, whether the academy is a primary or secondary academy, and the financial position of the academy

The amounts charged during the year were as follows:	2024 £	2023 £
St Michael's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	50,088	45,194
St Bede's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	46,691	44,130
Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	72,375	66,253
St Robert of Newminster Catholic School and Sixth Form College (Sunderland)	488,856	567,132
St John Boste Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	42,267	39,985
St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College (County Durham)	426,825	404,893
St Leonard's Catholic School (County Durham)	422,927	382,892
St Thomas More Catholic School (Gateshead)	602,996	514,853
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	52,544	50,540
St Matthew's Catholic Primary School (Northumberland)	31,882	31,110
St Bede's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	26,800	25,657
St Godric's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	48,811	45,849
Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	23,678	-
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Ushaw Moor)	27,849	-
St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	46,694	39,043
St Joseph's Catholic Middle School (Northumberland)	67,887	70,191
St Mary's Catholic First School (Northumberland)	29,499	26,721
St Alban's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	45,020	42,999
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	50,078	46,249
St Michael's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	39,303	35,307
St Benet's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	48,939	44,143
St Oswald's Catholic Primary (Gateshead)	51,386	47,730
St Joseph's Catholic Primary (County Durham - Stanley)	50,501	45,444
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	42,315	40,548
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	75,727	68,714
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	52,590	49,351
Cardinal Hume Catholic School (Gateshead)	475,495	432,203
St Anne's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	37,962	35,677
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	47,945	44,062
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Gilesgate)	32,457	29,254

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

8 Central services

(Continued)

St Thomas More Primary School (County Durham - Belmont)	23,379	20,473
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - South Moor)	30,730	31,450
St Plus Xth Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Consett)	26,241	22,982
St Philip Neri Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Dunston)	42,940	39,981
Our Lady and St Joseph Brooms Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Leadgate)	26,991	25,689
St Joseph's Catholic Junior School (County Durham - Birtley)	28,265	25,284
St Joseph's Catholic Infant School (County Durham - Birtley)	24,547	23,849
St Peter's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Low Fell)	48,336	44,143
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Consett)	84,872	80,822
Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	52,109	48,344
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Blaydon)	51,412	46,369
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Whickham)	48,309	43,077
St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	38,672	33,736
St Mary' & St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Blaydon)	48,644	44,996
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Langley Moor)	22,277	22,169
All Saints' Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Lanchester)	43,242	37,916
St Agnes' Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Crawcrook)	44,054	41,157
	<u>4,243,407</u>	<u>3,948,361</u>

9 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Direct costs				
Educational operations	-	70,516,461	70,516,461	62,937,847
Support costs				
Educational operations	2,342,953	31,299,666	33,642,619	34,196,601
	<u>2,342,953</u>	<u>101,816,127</u>	<u>104,159,080</u>	<u>97,134,448</u>

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

9 Charitable activities	(Continued)	
	2024 £	2023 £
Analysis of support costs		
Support staff costs	14,291,459	14,934,262
Depreciation	1,474,376	1,056,886
Technology costs	1,049,148	1,309,228
Premises costs	10,210,423	9,563,821
Legal costs	42,452	88,577
Other support costs	6,497,836	7,179,791
Governance costs	76,925	64,036
	<u>33,642,619</u>	<u>34,196,601</u>

10 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

None of the trustees have been paid remuneration or have received other benefits from an employment with the academy trust.

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

11 Staff

Staff costs

Staff costs during the year were:

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	58,226,545	53,426,199
Social security costs	5,934,338	5,341,889
Pension costs	13,430,044	12,635,396
Staff costs - employees	<u>77,590,927</u>	<u>71,403,484</u>
Agency staff costs	3,561,502	3,327,354
Staff restructuring costs	503,488	285,418
	<u>81,655,917</u>	<u>75,016,256</u>
Staff development and other staff costs	606,637	543,375
Total staff expenditure	<u>82,262,554</u>	<u>75,559,631</u>
Staff restructuring costs comprise:		
Redundancy and severance payments	<u>503,488</u>	<u>285,418</u>

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

11 Staff

(Continued)

Special staff severance payments

Special staff severance payments are amounts paid to employees outside of statutory and contractual requirements. Included in staff restructuring costs are special severance payments totalling £198,998 (2023: £129,673). Individually, the payments were: £13,281, £23,619, £28,189, £18,741, £10,000, £19,778, £10,704, £11,632, £24,250, £7,764 and £31,040.

Staff numbers

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

	2024 Number	2023 Number
Teachers	710	707
Administration and support	904	932
Management	174	161
	<u>1,788</u>	<u>1,800</u>

Higher paid staff

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

	2024 Number	2023 Number
£60,001 - £70,000	74	42
£70,001 - £80,000	28	19
£80,001 - £90,000	11	7
£90,001 - £100,000	7	6
£100,001 - £110,000	7	3
£110,001 - £120,000	2	-
£130,001 - £140,000	2	-
£170,001 - £180,000	-	1
£200,001 - £210,000	-	1
£220,001 - £230,000	1	-
	<u>1</u>	<u>-</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 NI costs) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £1,843,023 (2023: £1,557,565).

12 Trustees' and officers' insurance

The academy trust has opted into the Department for Education's Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA), an alternative to insurance where UK government funds cover losses that arise. This scheme protects trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy trust business, and 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.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

13 Fixed asset investments

	£
Market value	
At 1 September 2023 and 31 August 2024	1
Historical cost:	
At 31 August 2024	-
At 31 August 2023	-

The fixed asset investment is in respect of the wholly owned subsidiary, Bishop Wilkinson Commercial Services Limited incorporated 1 March 2021.

The results for the year ended 31 August 2024 were as follows:

Turnover	£177,689
Expenditure	(£227,034)
Net Loss	(£49,345)

Capital & reserves:	
Called up share capital	£1
Profit and loss reserves:	(£99,408)
Total equity	(£99,407)

14 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold improvements	Assets under construction	Computer equipment	Fixtures, fittings and equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cost						
At 1 September 2023	16,949,674	-	2,863,872	1,611,326	51,929	21,476,801
Additions	1,141,335	100,824	518,460	135,578	-	1,896,197
Disposals	(255,344)	-	(47,146)	(26,678)	-	(329,168)
At 31 August 2024	17,835,665	100,824	3,335,186	1,720,226	51,929	23,043,830
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2023	1,407,566	-	1,828,120	678,140	32,053	3,945,879
On disposals	(30,324)	-	(47,146)	(23,540)	-	(101,010)
Charge for the year	410,296	-	626,739	203,477	5,705	1,246,217
At 31 August 2024	1,787,538	-	2,407,713	858,077	37,758	5,091,086
Net book value						
At 31 August 2024	16,048,127	100,824	927,473	862,149	14,171	17,952,744
At 31 August 2023	15,542,108	-	1,035,752	933,186	19,876	17,530,922

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

14 Tangible fixed assets

	Leasehold improvements	Assets under construction	Computer equipment	Fixtures, fittings and equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cost						
At 1 September 2023	16,949,674	-	2,863,872	1,611,326	51,929	21,476,801
Additions	1,141,335	100,824	518,460	135,578	-	1,896,197
Disposals	(255,344)	-	(47,146)	(26,678)	-	(329,168)
At 31 August 2024	17,835,665	100,824	3,335,186	1,720,226	51,929	23,043,830
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2023	1,407,566	-	1,828,120	678,140	32,053	3,945,879
On disposals	(30,324)	-	(47,146)	(23,540)	-	(101,010)
Charge for the year	410,296	-	628,739	203,477	5,705	1,246,217
At 31 August 2024	1,787,538	-	2,407,713	858,077	37,758	5,091,086
Net book value						
At 31 August 2024	16,048,127	100,824	927,473	862,149	14,171	17,952,744
At 31 August 2023	15,542,108	-	1,035,752	933,186	19,876	17,530,922

15 Stock

	2024 £	2023 £
Catering and other consumables stock	144,306	44,110

16 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	332,315	231,669
VAT recoverable	784,302	1,016,850
Other debtors	238,842	149,402
Prepayments and accrued income	3,853,929	2,595,331
	5,209,388	3,993,252

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Other loans	168,516	189,336
Trade creditors	2,089,619	2,637,837
Other taxation and social security	1,400,456	1,308,258
Other creditors	1,916,118	1,902,393
Accruals and deferred income	3,717,047	3,635,746
	<u>9,291,756</u>	<u>9,673,570</u>

18 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Other loans	<u>707,843</u>	<u>914,150</u>
	<u>707,843</u>	<u>914,150</u>
	2024 £	2023 £
Analysis of loans		
Not wholly repayable within five years by instalments	221,064	283,257
Wholly repayable within five years	655,295	820,229
	<u>876,359</u>	<u>1,103,486</u>
Less: included in current liabilities	(168,516)	(189,336)
	<u>707,843</u>	<u>914,150</u>
Amounts included above	<u>707,843</u>	<u>914,150</u>
Loan maturity		
Due in more than one year but not more than two years	164,817	189,336
Due in more than two years but not more than five years	321,961	630,893
Due in more than five years	221,065	283,257
	<u>707,843</u>	<u>1,103,486</u>

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

18 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

(Continued)

The loan balances comprises;

- CIF loan provided to Cardinal Hume Catholic School by the ESFA totalling £105,000, the loan duration is 10 years and the interest rate is 1.85%.
- CIF loan provided to St Thomas More Catholic School by the ESFA totalling £80,000, the duration is 10 years and the interest rate is 2.29%.
- Salix loan provided to St Thomas More Catholic School by the ESFA totalling £220,000, the duration is 10 years and no interest is being charged.
- Three Salix loans provided to St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College by the ESFA totalling £200,826, the duration of each loan is 8 years and no interest is being charged.
- Twenty-eight Salix loans relating to LED lighting schemes across twenty eight of the schools in the Trust totalling £863,297, the duration of each loan is between 6-8 years and no interest is being charged.
- CIF Loan provided to Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School by the ESFA totalling £30,000, the loan duration is 5 years and the interest rate is 1.91%.

19 Deferred income

	2024 £	2023 £
Deferred income is included within:		
Creditors due within one year	1,442,076	875,867
Deferred income at 1 September 2023	875,867	982,994
Released from previous years	(875,867)	(982,994)
Resources deferred in the year	1,442,076	875,867
Deferred income at 31 August 2024	1,442,076	875,867

Deferred income includes universal infant free school meals funding received, rates grant, early years funding, school trip income and ICT service sales invoices in advance of the following academic year.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	288,684	70,647,855	(76,742,642)	5,806,103	-
UIFSM	-	1,073,963	(1,073,963)	-	-
Pupil premium	-	3,363,418	(3,363,418)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	502,088	(502,088)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	112,682	(112,682)	-	-
Other government grants	-	3,960,777	(3,960,777)	-	-
Teachers pension grants	-	966,740	(966,740)	-	-
Teachers pay grants	-	1,241,328	(1,241,328)	-	-
PE and sports premium	-	733,102	(733,102)	-	-
Rates	-	366,515	(366,515)	-	-
National tutor grant	-	41,042	(41,042)	-	-
Mainstream additional schools grant	-	2,422,151	(2,422,151)	-	-
RAAC related income	-	2,016,145	(2,016,145)	-	-
ESFA 16-19 funding	-	7,358,158	(7,358,158)	-	-
Pension reserve	(3,548,000)	-	559,000	83,000	(2,906,000)
	<u>(3,259,316)</u>	<u>94,805,964</u>	<u>(100,341,751)</u>	<u>5,889,103</u>	<u>(2,906,000)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Inherited on conversion	247,332	-	(12,291)	-	235,041
DfE group capital grants	16,615,262	3,011,448	(1,244,479)	(4,017,632)	14,364,599
Capital expenditure from GAG	3,947,389	-	(202,719)	-	3,744,670
Other private grants	108,913	-	(5,413)	-	103,500
Donated assets	180,000	218,274	(9,474)	-	388,800
	<u>21,098,896</u>	<u>3,229,722</u>	<u>(1,474,376)</u>	<u>(4,017,632)</u>	<u>18,836,610</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>17,839,580</u>	<u>98,036,686</u>	<u>(101,816,127)</u>	<u>1,871,471</u>	<u>15,930,610</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	<u>6,260,336</u>	<u>7,913,733</u>	<u>(7,305,941)</u>	<u>(1,788,471)</u>	<u>5,079,657</u>
Total funds	<u>24,099,916</u>	<u>105,949,419</u>	<u>(109,122,068)</u>	<u>83,000</u>	<u>21,010,267</u>

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20 Funds

(Continued)

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

General Annual Grant must be used for the normal running costs of the academy. Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the academy trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2024.

The pension reserve reflects the LGPS transactions. The costs and income associated with the defined benefit pension scheme have been recorded in the restricted fund. Staff costs are paid from this fund, including contributions to the LGPS, and the pension liability has therefore been aligned with these funds.

DfE/EFA capital grants includes; Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) and School Condition Allowance (SCA), of which £3,431,510 is carried forward to spend in future years. The trust also has loan balances of £876,359 accounted for within fixed asset funds.

Asset additions funded by GAG and unrestricted funds are reflected in the gains, losses and transfers column. Some non-capitalised expenditure has been funded by capital grants, this is also shown in this column.

The Inherited Fixed Asset Fund reflects the fixed assets acquired on conversion. Depreciation on these assets is charged against this fund.

Unrestricted funds can be used for any purpose at the discretion of the trustees, within the objectives of the academy trust.

The academy's restricted general and unrestricted funds were £5,079,657 as at 31 August 2024.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20 Funds

(Continued)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2023 £
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	4,399,204	68,192,636	(71,766,573)	(536,583)	288,684
UIFSM	-	974,176	(974,176)	-	-
Pupil premium	-	3,269,403	(3,269,403)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	518,685	(518,685)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	3,037	(3,037)	-	-
Other government grants	-	3,529,390	(3,529,390)	-	-
Teachers pension grants	-	297,370	(297,370)	-	-
Teachers pay grants	-	9,855	(9,855)	-	-
PE and sports premium	-	734,108	(734,108)	-	-
Rates	-	350,176	(350,176)	-	-
National tutor grant	-	267,388	(267,388)	-	-
Supplementary grant	-	2,059,340	(2,059,340)	-	-
Mainstream additional schools grant	-	1,009,234	(1,009,234)	-	-
ESFA 16-19 funding	-	7,266,398	(7,266,398)	-	-
Pension reserve	(10,371,000)	-	(1,181,000)	8,004,000	(3,548,000)
	<u>(5,971,796)</u>	<u>88,481,196</u>	<u>(93,236,133)</u>	<u>7,467,417</u>	<u>(3,259,316)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Inherited on conversion	260,266	-	(12,934)	-	247,332
DfE group capital grants	13,390,659	3,840,352	(831,909)	216,160	16,615,262
Capital expenditure from GAG	3,823,313	-	(196,347)	320,423	3,947,389
Other private grants	114,609	-	(5,696)	-	108,913
Donated assets	190,000	-	(10,000)	-	180,000
	<u>17,778,847</u>	<u>3,840,352</u>	<u>(1,056,886)</u>	<u>536,583</u>	<u>21,098,896</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>11,807,051</u>	<u>92,321,548</u>	<u>(94,293,019)</u>	<u>8,004,000</u>	<u>17,839,580</u>
Unrestricted funds					
General funds	<u>6,455,902</u>	<u>6,962,499</u>	<u>(7,158,065)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,260,336</u>
Total funds	<u>18,262,953</u>	<u>99,284,047</u>	<u>(101,451,084)</u>	<u>8,004,000</u>	<u>24,099,916</u>

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20 Funds

(Continued)

Total funds analysis by academy

	2024	2023
	£	£
Fund balances at 31 August 2024 were allocated as follows:		
St Michael's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	128,294	146,766
St Bede's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	(6,979)	48,949
Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	(69,377)	37,177
St Robert of Newminster Catholic School and Sixth Form College (Sunderland)	459,784	807,064
St John Boste Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	30,639	159,600
St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College (County Durham)	308,277	838,840
St Leonard's Catholic School (County Durham)	345,764	145,636
St Thomas More Catholic School (Gateshead)	192,928	612,855
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	(11,820)	43,076
St Mathew's Catholic Primary School (Northumberland)	(65,465)	(26,533)
St Bede's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	(190,494)	(71,078)
St Godric's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	114,873	135,681
Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	(106,337)	18,363
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Ushaw Moor)	(129,624)	32,135
St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	(24,601)	(47,747)
St Joseph's Catholic Middle School (Northumberland)	44,831	159,028
St Mary's Catholic First School (Northumberland)	(193,840)	(117,386)
St Alban's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	167,346	206,104
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	277,982	188,599
St Michael's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	(25,070)	34,304
St Benet's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	63,070	(9,785)
St Oswald's Catholic Primary (Gateshead)	289,166	282,566
St Joseph's Catholic Primary (County Durham - Stanley)	244,352	249,844
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	38,075	58,764
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	252,136	215,591
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	40,385	136,663
Cardinal Hume Catholic School (Gateshead)	1,824,657	1,812,724
St Anne's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	286,409	247,718
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	39,934	64,415
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Gilesgate)	(140,775)	(115,797)
St Thomas More Primary School (County Durham - Belmont)	(75,855)	(29,825)
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - South Moor)	(221,287)	(86,972)
St Pius Xth Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Consett)	(26,373)	52,047
St Phillip Neri Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Dunston)	(63,068)	(17,292)
Our Lady and St Joseph Brooms Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Leadgate)	122,368	120,704
St Joseph's Catholic Junlor School (County Durham - Birtley)	99,664	47,753
St Joseph's Catholic Infant School (County Durham - Birtley)	39,732	58,044
St Peter's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Low Fell)	162,946	123,082

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20 Funds	(Continued)	
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Consett)	103,573	95,812
Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	103,140	115,763
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Blaydon)	240,048	161,363
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Whickham)	147,393	112,790
St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	(115,309)	(25,489)
St Mary' & St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Blaydon)	117,048	99,310
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Langley Moor)	(149,138)	15,408
All Saints' Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Lanchester)	(241)	4,606
St Agnes' Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Crawcrook)	158,058	179,193
Central services	272,439	(769,413)
Total before fixed assets fund and pension reserve	5,079,657	6,549,020
Restricted fixed asset fund	18,836,610	21,098,896
Pension reserve	(2,906,000)	(3,548,000)
Total funds	21,010,267	24,099,916

Schools with deficit fund balances:

Within the Trust, we have a number of small schools (12 with less than 100 pupils) whose reserves have been eroded over the last few years. 9 of these small schools now have a deficit reserve balance. Despite reviews around class sizes, staffing structures, leadership and admin support, the level of funding received is not sufficient to cover operating costs.

We are supporting our small schools through greater collaboration, shared leadership where possible and central team involvement to ensure they continue to flourish despite their challenging financial circumstances. Using this approach, we would expect the schools to move towards more balanced budgets going forward.

For 3 of our schools in deficit, new nurseries have been opened in either Sept 23 or Sept 24 to support pupil numbers and enhance the offer for parents. This strategy is being rolled out wherever possible across the Trust with 8 new nurseries being established over the last two years. This increases the amount of funding both within year for the nursery children and going forward in terms of GAG funding as, once enrolled, children tend to stay with the school.

In more general terms, many of our schools have been impacted by spiraling costs of supply staff caused by staff sickness, recruitment issues and the needs of children with special educational needs or challenging behaviour. In schools with very high SEND, the funding available has not been sufficient to cover the cost of the staffing required to meet the needs of the children. This impacts on the wider school budget.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20 Funds

(Continued)

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching and educational support staff	Other support staff costs	Educational supplies	Other costs excluding depreciation	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
St Michael's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	749,650	193,098	59,270	199,278	1,201,296	1,165,369
St Bede's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	821,119	157,913	42,148	207,000	1,228,180	1,157,800
Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	1,258,799	261,656	53,777	306,947	1,881,179	1,796,556
St Robert of Newminster Catholic School and Sixth Form College (Sunderland)	7,502,552	1,433,710	452,300	1,880,471	11,269,033	10,210,043
St John Boste Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	799,269	151,151	30,657	189,021	1,170,098	1,052,151
St Bede's Catholic Comprehensive School and Sixth Form College (County Durham)	6,501,944	1,535,448	707,605	1,369,691	10,114,688	9,045,000
St Leonard's Catholic School (County Durham)	6,501,018	1,124,059	518,558	1,624,676	9,768,311	8,804,565
St Thomas More Catholic School (Gateshead)	7,301,185	1,178,588	370,601	1,497,111	10,347,485	9,815,128
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	854,625	166,598	65,346	266,342	1,352,911	1,211,691
St Matthew's Catholic Primary School (Northumberland)	623,321	84,427	40,866	191,952	940,566	865,616
St Bede's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	528,881	116,982	40,468	86,945	773,276	731,852
St Godric's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	799,134	191,751	56,007	174,459	1,221,351	1,194,240
Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	439,824	129,483	42,737	98,046	710,090	597,547
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Ushaw Moor)	594,146	127,101	47,630	155,132	924,009	706,869
St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	756,251	200,457	32,847	150,108	1,139,663	1,054,111
St Joseph's Catholic Middle School (Northumberland)	1,229,354	196,146	37,916	271,484	1,734,900	1,558,324

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20 Funds

(Continued)

	Teaching and educational support staff £	Other support staff costs £	Educational supplies £	Other costs excluding depreciation £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
St Mary's Catholic First School (Northumberland)	504,050	130,574	27,904	127,603	790,131	939,058
St Alban's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	751,749	182,568	57,472	217,262	1,209,051	1,095,587
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	670,067	191,773	55,835	178,666	1,096,341	1,061,873
St Michael's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	719,353	157,207	25,273	144,508	1,046,341	948,827
St Benet's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	870,121	256,365	222,865	287,012	1,636,363	1,224,266
St Oswald's Catholic Primary (Gateshead)	813,635	178,003	68,525	266,992	1,327,155	1,293,938
St Joseph's Catholic Primary (County Durham - Stanley)	800,075	256,241	28,248	237,761	1,322,325	1,224,667
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham)	655,844	201,340	33,509	160,315	1,051,008	1,067,344
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	1,137,656	257,653	101,317	331,588	1,828,214	1,831,448
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	878,804	153,028	67,805	256,227	1,355,864	1,157,158
Cardinal Hume Catholic School (Gateshead)	7,466,894	1,533,117	478,484	1,756,071	11,234,566	9,880,136
St Anne's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	668,104	204,346	121,563	393,785	1,387,798	854,433
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Sunderland)	784,924	159,742	34,450	236,085	1,215,201	1,229,557
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Gilesgate)	554,289	181,919	43,901	135,655	915,764	1,009,655
St Thomas More Primary School (County Durham - Belmont)	392,910	139,124	54,731	121,868	708,633	616,614
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - South Moor)	567,679	145,294	31,387	118,090	862,450	858,330
St Pius Xth Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Consett)	518,541	170,422	30,441	90,980	810,384	763,900
St Philip Neri Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Dunston)	677,638	137,621	35,356	231,965	1,082,580	1,100,665

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

20 Funds

(Continued)

	Teaching and educational support staff £	Other support staff costs £	Educational supplies £	Other costs excluding depreciation £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Our Lady and St Joseph Brooms Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Leadgate)	373,468	148,462	26,136	106,451	654,517	638,308
St Joseph's Catholic Junior School (County Durham - Birtley)	370,523	83,304	39,839	127,738	621,404	658,648
St Joseph's Catholic Infant School (County Durham - Birtley)	348,742	104,982	32,005	115,156	600,885	601,150
St Peter's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Low Fell)	652,455	157,132	49,888	236,650	1,096,125	1,078,073
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Consett)	1,563,298	374,091	74,523	251,612	2,263,524	2,133,447
Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	915,522	136,846	41,745	275,019	1,369,132	1,280,986
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Blaydon)	725,811	152,686	42,728	238,214	1,159,439	1,186,225
St Mary's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Whickham)	612,829	157,557	45,308	252,379	1,068,073	1,009,694
St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School (Gateshead)	709,725	131,248	46,204	189,558	1,076,735	926,973
St Mary' & St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Blaydon)	731,734	190,195	54,700	276,089	1,252,718	1,288,508
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Langley Moor)	450,268	112,749	24,126	114,707	701,840	577,652
All Saints' Catholic Primary School (County Durham - Lanchester)	784,005	121,688	44,622	163,761	1,114,076	1,071,263
St Agnes' Catholic Primary School (Gateshead - Crawcrook)	648,720	109,523	47,638	193,592	999,473	942,615
Central services	2,861,107	1,396,142	278,188	3,236,109	7,571,546	6,695,342
	68,241,602	15,261,510	4,965,449	19,738,131	108,206,692	99,213,202

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

21 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds: General £	Fixed asset £	Total Funds £
Fund balances at 31 August 2024 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	1,671,286	-	16,281,458	17,952,744
Fixed asset investments	-	-	1	1
Current assets	12,531,611	-	3,431,510	15,963,121
Current liabilities	(9,123,240)	-	(168,516)	(9,291,756)
Non-current liabilities	-	-	(707,843)	(707,843)
Pension scheme liability	-	(2,906,000)	-	(2,906,000)
Total net assets	5,079,657	(2,906,000)	18,836,610	21,010,267

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds: General £	Fixed asset £	Total Funds £
Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:				
Tangible fixed assets	1,713,143	-	15,817,779	17,530,922
Fixed asset investments	-	-	1	1
Current assets	4,547,193	9,248,943	6,908,577	20,704,713
Current liabilities	-	(8,960,259)	(713,311)	(9,673,570)
Non-current liabilities	-	-	(914,150)	(914,150)
Pension scheme liability	-	(3,548,000)	-	(3,548,000)
Total net assets	6,260,336	(3,259,316)	21,098,896	24,099,916

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

22 Reconciliation of net expenditure to net cash flow from operating activities

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Net expenditure for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		(3,172,649)	(2,167,037)
Adjusted for:			
Net surplus on conversion to academy		(212)	(139,450)
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income		(3,229,722)	(3,840,352)
Investment income receivable	6	(267,777)	(22,239)
Defined benefit pension costs less contributions payable	23	(644,000)	819,000
Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost	23	85,000	362,000
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets		1,246,217	1,056,886
Loss on disposal of fixed assets		228,159	-
(Increase) in stocks		(100,196)	(16,334)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors		(1,216,136)	831,316
(Decrease)/increase in creditors		(360,995)	537,676
Stocks, debtors and creditors transferred on conversion		212	139,450
Net cash used in operating activities		(7,432,099)	(2,439,084)

23 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 South Tyneside Council & Durham County Council. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

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

Contributions amounting to £1,673,764 (2023: £1,381,624) were payable to the schemes at 31 August and are included within creditors.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Introduction

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

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

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

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

23 Pension and similar obligations

(Continued)

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

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

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

The employer's pension costs paid to the TPS in the period amounted to £10,467,164 (2023: £8,733,384).

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

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

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contributions are as noted below. The agreed contribution rates for future years are 17.6 - 24% for employers and 5.5 - 12.5% for employees.

As described in note the LGPS obligation relates to the employees of the academy trust, being the employees transferred as part of the conversion from the maintained school and new employees who joined the scheme in the period. The obligation in respect of employees who transferred on conversion represents their cumulative service at both the predecessor school and the academy trust at the balance sheet date.

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

Total contributions made	2024 £	2023 £
Employer's contributions	3,819,000	3,082,000
Employees' contributions	1,079,000	919,000
Total contributions	<u>4,898,000</u>	<u>4,001,000</u>

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

23 Pension and similar obligations

(Continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions	2024 %	2024 %	2023 %	2023 %
Rate of increase in salaries	3.5	4.0	3.6	4.1
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.6
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	4.9	4.9	5.1	5.0
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.6

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

	Durham 2024 Years	Tyne & Wear 2024 Years	Durham 2023 Years	Tyne & Wear 2023 Years
Retiring today				
- Males	21.5	20.8	21.7	21.0
- Females	23.8	24.0	23.9	24.1
Retiring in 20 years				
- Males	22.4	21.7	22.9	22.2
- Females	24.6	25.1	25.0	25.5

Sensitivity analysis

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

	2024 £	2023 £
Discount rate + 0.1%	54,437,000	48,739,000
Discount rate - 0.1%	56,692,000	50,760,000
Mortality assumption + 1 year	54,137,000	48,472,000
Mortality assumption - 1 year	56,957,000	50,996,000
CPI rate + 0.1%	56,526,000	50,611,000
CPI rate - 0.1%	54,603,000	48,888,000

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

23 Pension and similar obligations

(Continued)

The academy trust's share of the assets in the scheme	2024 Fair value £	2023 Fair value £
Equities	28,185,000	23,693,000
Government bonds	2,270,000	2,023,000
Corporate bonds	8,492,000	7,276,000
Cash	635,000	831,000
Property	4,936,000	4,329,000
Other assets	9,926,000	8,034,000
Total market value of assets	54,444,000	46,186,000
Restriction on scheme assets	(1,803,000)	-
Net assets recognised	52,641,000	46,186,000

The actual return on scheme assets was £4,553,000 (2023: £(364,000)).

Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities	2024 £	2023 £
Current service cost	3,175,000	3,901,000
Interest income	(2,419,000)	(1,850,000)
Interest cost	2,504,000	2,212,000
Total amount recognised	3,260,000	4,263,000

The net gain recognised on Tyne & Wear scheme assets has been restricted because the full pension surplus is not expected to be recovered through refunds or reduced contributions in the future. Durham reported a net deficit, which has not been netted off the Tyne & Wear surplus.

Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 September 2023	49,734,000	54,026,000
Current service cost	3,175,000	3,901,000
Interest cost	2,504,000	2,212,000
Employee contributions	1,079,000	919,000
Actuarial loss/(gain)	248,000	(10,218,000)
Benefits paid	(1,193,000)	(1,106,000)
At 31 August 2024	55,547,000	49,734,000

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

23 Pension and similar obligations

(Continued)

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

	2024 £	2023 £
At 1 September 2023	46,186,000	43,655,000
Interest income	2,419,000	1,850,000
Actuarial (gain)/loss	2,134,000	(2,214,000)
Employer contributions	3,819,000	3,082,000
Employee contributions	1,079,000	919,000
Benefits paid	(1,193,000)	(1,106,000)
At 31 August 2024	54,444,000	46,186,000
Restriction on scheme assets	(1,803,000)	-
Net assets recognised	52,641,000	46,186,000

24 Analysis of changes in net funds

	1 September 2023 £	Cash flows £	31 August 2024 £
Cash	16,667,351	(6,057,924)	10,609,427
Loans falling due within one year	(189,336)	20,820	(168,516)
Loans falling due after more than one year	(914,150)	206,307	(707,843)
	15,563,865	(5,830,797)	9,733,068

25 Long-term commitments

Operating leases

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

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts due within one year	105,372	46,434
Amounts due in two and five years	191,981	38,100
	297,353	84,534

26 Capital commitments

	2024 £	2023 £
Expenditure contracted for but not provided in the accounts	871,275	979,044

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

27 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.

The academy trust occupies the footprint of the school building which is owned by its trustees, the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle. The Diocese are the providers of the buildings on the same basis as when the academy was a maintained school. The academy trust occupies the buildings under a mere licence. This continuing permission of the trustees is pursuant to, and subject to, the trustees' charitable objects, and is part of the Catholic Church's contribution since 1847 to provide State funded education in partnership with the State. The licence delegates aspects of the management of the land and buildings to the academy trust for the time being, but does not vest any rights over the land in the academy trust. The trustees have given an undertaking to the Secretary of State that they will not give the academy trust less than two years notice to terminate the occupation of the buildings. Having considered the factual matrix under which the academy trust is occupying the buildings the trustees have concluded that the value of the land and buildings occupied by the academy trust will not be recognised on the balance sheet of the academy.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

27 Related party transactions

(Continued)

Expenditure related party transactions

During the year the trust purchased staff insurance provision from The Education Mutual Limited, a company in which Mr N Hum OBE is also a director. The trust paid premiums of £622,620 (2023 - £569,088) during the year and received income of £427,301 (2023 - £416,217), at the year end, £892 is included in trade creditors.

- The academy trust made the transactions at arms' length following a competitive tendering exercise in accordance with its financial regulations, which Mr N Hum OBE neither participated in, nor influenced
- The Education Mutual Limited is a not for profit mutual company and all services are provided at cost. The company has provided a statement of assurance confirming this.
- In entering into all of these transactions, the academy trust has complied with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2023.

During the year the trust purchased supply staff provision from Schools Mutual Services Limited, a company in which Mr N Hum OBE is also a director. The trust paid £2,896,736 (2023 - £1,776,121) during the year. At the year end, £9,322 (2023 - £nil) is included in trade creditors.

- The academy trust made the transactions at arms' length following a competitive tendering exercise in accordance with its financial regulations, which Mr N Hum OBE neither participated in, nor influenced
- Schools Mutual Services Limited is a not for profit mutual company and all services are provided at cost. The company has provided a statement of assurance confirming this.
- In entering into all of these transactions, the academy trust has complied with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2023.

During the year the trust purchased catering services from Bishop Wilkinson Commercial Services Limited, the company is whole a wholly owned subsidiary of the Trust. The trust paid £35,842 (2023 - £23,696) during the year and £5,944 was included in trade creditors at the year end.

- The academy trust made the transactions at arms' length following a competitive tendering exercise in accordance with its financial regulations.
- Bishop Wilkinson Commercial Services Limited is a not for profit company and donates any profits made, to the Trust via a gift aid donation. The company has provided a statement of assurance confirming this.
- In entering into all of these transactions, the academy trust has complied with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2023.

During the year the trust purchased Catholic education support services of £140,293 (2023 - £193,470) from Hexham and Newcastle Diocese.

28 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.

BISHOP WILKINSON CATHOLIC EDUCATION TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

29 Agency arrangements

The academy trust distributes 16-19 bursary funds to students as an agent for ESFA. In the accounting period ending 31 August 2024 the trust brought forward £293,152 (2023: £211,154) undistributed funds, received £172,753 (2023: £160,774) and disbursed £95,539 (2023: £78,776) from the fund. An amount of £370,366 (2023: £293,152) is included in other creditors relating to undistributed funds that are repayable to ESFA.

The academy trust also distributes private sponsorship to students as an agent for certain individuals. In the accounting period ending 31 August 2024 the trust brought forward £16,032 (2023: £30,308) from previous years, received £nil (2023: £nil) and disbursed £nil (2023: £14,276) from funds. An amount of £16,032 (2023: £16,032) was included in other creditors prior to transfer relating to undistributed funds.