Company Registration Number: 10309116 (England & Wales)

CONNECT EDUCATION TRUST

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

CONNECT EDUCATION TRUST
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

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CONNECT EDUCATION TRUST

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members	Paul Morrall Andrew Nicholas Tom Sheldon Margaret McAlpine Keith Carrano (Resigned 4 October 2024)
Trustees	Alex Monk, Chair of Trustees Stephen Way, Vice Chair of Trustees Julie Rayson Bronwen Tumani (Resigned 24 September 2025) John West Vincent McInerney Jonathan Simms Karen Mautner Annie Kent (appointed 23 September 2024, resigned 24 November 2025)
Company registered number	10309116
Company name	Connect Education Trust
Principal and registered office	Chesterfield Primary School Chesterfield Road Enfield London EN3 6BG
Accounting Officer	Androulla Nicou
Executive Leadership Team	Androulla Nicou, Accounting Officer/CEO Estelle Tierney, Chief Operations Officer/Chief Finance Officer Allan McLean, Chief Education Officer
Independent Auditors	Price Bailey LLP Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditors Causeway House 1 Dane Street Bishop's Stortford Hertfordshire CM23 3BT
Bankers	Lloyds Bank plc PO Box 1000 BX1 1LT

CONNECT EDUCATION TRUST

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

The Trustees present their Annual Report together with the financial statements and Auditor's Report of the Connect Education Trust (the Trust or the Charitable Company) for the year ended 31 August 2025.

The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' Report, and a Directors' Report under company law.

During the 2024/25 academic year, the Trust operated six primary academies and one all-through Special Academy. As of 1 August, the Trust welcomed a new school, Eversley Primary, concluding the year with a total of eight. During 2023/24 the Trust operated six Primary Academies and one all through Special Academy. At the October 2024 census the Schools had a combined pupil roll of 3,546 pupils of which 217 were nursery pupils. This figure was 3,460 in the October 2023 census. The Trust employed a total of 461 staff.

Introduction

We are Connect, a leading Multi-Academy Trust creating remarkable futures for thousands of pupils through educational excellence. With seven schools, 461 people, and over 3,000 pupils under our care, we are proud to be making a difference to the communities we serve.

Since 2016, we've welcomed Bowes, Carterhatch Junior, Chesterfield, Delta, Grange Park and Hazelbury Primary Schools to our Multi Academy Trust, as well as Fern House – a Special School for 5-16 year olds. In 2025 we welcomed Eversley Primary School to our family.

We firmly believe that we are better together, and the collective experience of our people and our individual school communities allows us to achieve far more than we ever could alone.

Connect schools offer exceptional education to our pupils. A place where pupils and our people enjoy coming to school and where their full potential is realised.

Our mission is to connect with our pupils and offer them an exceptional education. Recruiting inspirational and committed teachers, school leaders and people to empower each and every one of the children in our care.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Trust is a company (number 10309116) limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The Charitable Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association are its primary governing documents. The Trustees of The Charitable Company are also the Directors for the purposes of company law. The terms Trustee and Director are interchangeable. The Charitable Company includes the following Schools:

- Bowes Primary School converted on 1st September 2016
- Chesterfield Primary School converted on 1st September 2016
- Hazelbury Primary School converted on 1st September 2016
- Grange Park Primary School converted on 1st November 2017
- Fern House School sponsored on 1st November 2017
- Carterhatch Junior School converted on 1st January 2018
- Delta Primary School opened 1st September 2018
- Eversley Primary School converted on 1st August 2025

The operation of the Schools and employment of staff are the responsibility of the Trustees. The Trust retains control of School budgets and finances, and monitors these through its Board of Trustees (the Board).

Details of the Trustees who served throughout the period are included in the Reference and Administrative Details section. Within this Report the term Trustee or Director refers to a member of the Board of Trustees and the term Governor to a member of a Local Governing Body (LGB).

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 and Officers’ Indemnities

In accordance with normal commercial practice the Trust has purchased insurance to protect Trustees, Governors and Officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on Trust business. The insurance provides unlimited cover on any one claim, and details of the costs are disclosed in Note 13 to the accounts.

Method of Recruitment and Appointment or Election of Trustees

Trustees are appointed for a fixed term, normally four years. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is an ex official member of the Board of Trustees. Other Trustees are appointed by the Members or by the Board of Trustees.

The Articles of Association make provision for ten Trustees plus the CEO.

Towards the end of the last financial year, one Trustee resigned, and one Trustee vacancy was filled. The Trust Board consisted of nine Trustees.

Organisational Structure

The governance of the Trust is defined in the Memorandum and Articles of Association together with the Funding Agreement with the Department of Education.

In 2024/25 the Trustees met 11 times a year in total; 3 full Trust Board meetings, 4 Education and Safeguarding Committee meetings and 4 Finance and Audit Committee meetings. The Board has a lead Trustee for specific areas of responsibility meeting senior leaders between meetings and reporting back to the Board. The People and Performance committee also meets 3 times per year.

The Trustees are responsible for setting strategic policy and monitoring the Trust budget. Through monitoring the budget, they make major decisions about the direction of the Trust, capital expenditure and senior appointments. The Trustees monitor standards, performance and pupil outcomes, ensuring each School retains or improves their Ofsted judgement and is working to achieve best possible outcomes for all pupils.

The CEO of Connect Education Trust is the Accounting Officer.

The Executive Leadership Team comprises three Chief Officers who work together to provide strategic leadership across the Trust. They work with Headteachers to ensure each School is compliant with the strategic aims of the Trust.

The Headteachers along with their Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for the day-to-day operation of their School, in particular organising staff, resources, and pupils. The Headteachers are responsible for the authorisation of spending within agreed budgets and for the appointment of staff following vetting and safeguarding recruitment processes.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

Key Management Personnel include Trustees and those staff to whom the Trustees have delegated significant authority and responsibility in the day-to-day running of the Trust. The Trust has adopted the national pay and conditions for teaching and local agreements for support staff.

Pay and remuneration of senior leaders are decided by a variety of contributory factors, such as the school group size, performance management and the level of experience of each staff member. In addition, pay levels may be affected by nationally agreed pay awards, the ability to recruit and retain in post, all of which are in accordance with the Connect Education Trust's appointment and pay policies.

The remuneration for the Chief Executive Officer is considered and approved by the People and Performance Committee.

Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

Owing to the nature of the Trust's operations and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, it is inevitable that from time-to-time transactions will take place with organisations in which Trustees may have an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the Trust's financial regulations and normal procedures. Any transaction where the Trustee may have a pecuniary interest is only undertaken in accordance with the 'at cost' principle described in the Academy Trust Handbook. All Trustees, Local Governing Body Members and staff complete a register of business interest to declare their interests annually. The Trust does not have a formal sponsor.

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

The Trustees have implemented clear policies and procedures for dealing fairly with suppliers. Formal orders are placed and agreed payment terms always adhered to.

The Trustees consider pupils and parents to be their "customers". Whilst pupils encounter engagement daily, engagement with parents is carried out through regular newsletters and face to face meetings.

Objectives and Aims

The principal object and aim of the Charitable Company is the operation of several Academy Schools to provide free education and care for pupils of different abilities within its local community between the ages of 2 and 16.

Objectives, Strategies and Activities

During the year the Trust has worked towards these aims by:

- all Schools have maintained the highest quality of provision for all pupils;
- continuing to develop outstanding governance and leadership;
- continuing to achieve financial stability and maximising the best use of staff and resources; and
- ensuring that each School retains or improves their existing Ofsted judgement and that they are working to achieve best possible outcomes for all pupils.

Our success in fulfilling our aims can be measured by:

- achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2);
- the retention and recruitment of high-quality staff;
- external School Improvement Reports;
- the provision of high-quality training (CPD) for all staff, Trustees and LGB members;
- monitoring pupil numbers to ensure that School budgets are healthy and resources are used effectively; and
- effective succession planning in key roles.

Public Benefit

The Trustees believe that by working towards the objects and aims of the Trust as detailed above, they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission.

Achievements and Performance

The children completed SATS assessments in 2025. DfE performance tables will be released in December 2025. However, the data will be available from October/November through the ASP (Analyse School Performance) and IDSR (Inspection Data Summary Report). All of our schools have outcomes in line or well above the national average.

The national average combined score was 61%. Bowes, Grange Park, Hazelbury and Carterhatch are all well above the national average for attainment at KS2. Hazelbury, Chesterfield, Carterhatch and Delta have far higher numbers of disadvantaged pupils than the national average. All of these schools have set accurate targets and performed extremely well.

Progress data is only available for 2022 and 2023. It will not be available this year. The Trust has a clear annual Education Action Plan and a three year Education Strategy in place to tackle any underachievement, whilst also being mindful of the national context in 2025 and the impact on outcomes for disadvantaged pupils following the pandemic. All schools in the Trust are outperforming the national pattern for disadvantaged pupils and some schools have completely closed the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.

Ofsted Visits

There were 4 Ofsted inspections in 2024/25. Two inspections were ‘ungraded’ section 8 inspections. Hazelbury Primary and Carterhatch Juniors both received very positive reports and maintained their ‘good’ judgements. Two inspections were graded section 5 inspections and both schools were graded Outstanding in all 5 categories.

The Trust also supported Eversley Primary school for the past 18 months in the lead up to joining the Trust. The school was inspected 3 weeks before officially joining the Trust and was graded Outstanding in all 5 areas.

Performance Indicators

The Trusts main key performance indicators are as follows:

- end of year statutory tests for Key 2, Multiplication Times Table check, Phonics check in Year 1 and Early Years Foundation Stage outcomes;
- reports from Ofsted; and
- reports from the Chief Education Officer and external consultants where appropriate.

Financial Performance

- as funding is based on pupil numbers this is a key performance indicator. Total pupil numbers at the October 2024 census were 3,546 (excluding nursery) This number was 3,206 in the previous Autumn census. Pupil numbers are closely monitored as falling pupil numbers present a financial risk to the schools;
- another key financial performance indicator is staffing costs as a percentage of total income. For 2024/25 this was 80% when assets transferred on conversion are excluded from income. The Trustees are confident that staffing levels are closely monitored to agreed Full Time Equivalents and staffing structures all approved by the Trust Board;
- the Trust Board also monitors premises costs against the General Annual Grant (GAG) income; capitation spend for curriculum departments to GAG income, total income less grants and cash flow on a regular basis to ensure that the budget is set and managed appropriately. All of the above KPI's were within the parameters set by the Trust Board; and
- the Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee examines the financial performance of the Trust on a monthly Going Concern basis with a detailed review of the accounts.

Going Concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, it has adopted 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 Charitable Company

The Trustees have an obligation to act in a way most likely to promote the success of the Charitable Company. Details regarding engagement with employees, suppliers, parents, pupils and other connected parties have been covered in separate notes within the Trustees' Report. The obligation to assess the likely consequences of decisions in the longer term is noted within the reserves policy below as Trustees balance the needs of current and future cohorts.

The Trustees have identified reputational and ethical areas as key risks and their actions in these areas are covered within principal risks and uncertainties later within this Strategic Report.

Financial Review

The principal source of funding for the Trust is the General Annual Grant (GAG) and other grants that it receives from the Department for Education (DfE). For the year ended 31 August 2025 the Trust received £28,278,329 GAG and other Government funding (excluding capital). Total income for the year was £47,055,114. A high percentage of income is spent on wages and salaries and support costs to deliver the Trust's primary objective of the provision of education. During the year the Trust spent £28,194,790 on general running expenses. The carry forward for 2024/25 is £148,242,522 of restricted fixed asset funds, £2,059,889 unrestricted funding and £809,278 of restricted general funds. The deficit for the year was £108,725 excluding charges relating to the LGPS and movements in fixed asset funds.

	Restricted General Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Fixed Asset Fund	Pension Reserve	Total
Donation on transfer/conversion	-	-	18,200,000	(108,000)	18,092,000
Incoming Resources	26,950,931	1,327,398	684,785	-	28,963,114
Resources Expended	(26,554,233)	(1,640,557)	(653,085)		(28,847,875)
LGPS Charge				(944,000)	(944,000)
Depreciation			(1,588,645)		(1,588,645)
Employer contributions paid				1,148,000	1,148,000
Total Resources Expended	(26,554,233)	(1,640,557)	(2,241,730)	204,000	(30,232,520)
Assets Purchased from GAG	(192,264)	-	192,264		-
Actuarial Gains				(96,000)	(96,000)
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	204,434	(313,159)	16,835,319	-	16,726,594
Balance at 1 September 2024	604,844	2,373,048	131,407,203	-	134,385,095
Balance at 31 August 2025	809,278	2,059,889	148,242,522	-	151,111,689

Reserves Policy

The Trustees are aware of the requirement to balance current and future needs and always aim to set a balanced budget with annual income balancing annual expenditure. The Trustees monitor estimated year-end carry forward figures via the regular reports from the Chief Financial and Operations Officer and Head of Service - Finance. The budget plan identifies how any carry forward will be allocated in the plan for the following academic year, including the identification of any funds earmarked for a specific project or purpose.

The Trust's current level of free reserves (total funds less the amount held in fixed assets and restricted funds) is £2,059,889. This has been built up from a mixture of locally raised income and balances transferred from the predecessor schools.

The Trust Board agreed that all schools within the Trust should have a 3-year financial plan to set aside a school reserve, equal to 6% of GAG and associated income. The school reserve will be the funds that the school draws on initially in the event of a requirement of additional funding. The Trust has placed surplus funds in the 32-day notice account and a 95-day notice account.

The policy of the Trust is to carry forward a prudent level of resources designed to meet the long-term cyclical needs of renewal and any other unforeseen contingencies, subject to the constraint that the level of resources does not exceed the level permitted by the DfE.

The Trust's balance on restricted general funds (excluding pension reserve) plus the balance on unrestricted funds at 31 August 2025 was £2,869,167

The cash balance of the Trust has been very healthy all year, ending the year with a balance of £4,500,643. A significant proportion of this cash is held against specific projects and is not available to meet normal recurring expenditure. The Trustees monitor cash flow as part of the Committee financial reports and attempt to hold a minimum of £60,000 to cover short term cash flow variances.

Investment Policy

The aim of the policy is to ensure funds that the Trust does not immediately need to cover anticipated expenditure are invested to maximise its income but with minimal risk. The aim is to research where funds may be deposited applying prudency in ensuring there is minimum risk. The Trustees do not consider the investment of surplus funds as a primary activity, rather as good stewardship and as and when circumstances allow.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Board of Trustees works to maintain a central risk register identifying the major risks, to which each School is exposed, and identifying actions and procedures to mitigate those risks. This register is approved and monitored by the Board of Trustees. The internal control systems and the exposure to identified risks are monitored on behalf of the Trustees at Committee meetings.

The principal risks facing the Trust are outlined below; those facing the Schools at an operational level are addressed by its systems and by internal financial and other controls.

The Trustees report that the Trust's financial and internal controls conform to guidelines issued by the DfE, and that improvements to the wider framework of systems dealing with business risk and risk management strategy continue to be made and formally documented. It is recognised that systems can only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that major risks have been adequately managed.

As a group of schools, the level of financial risk is low. Cash flows can be reliably forecast, monitored and reported. Staff costs make up the majority of expenditure and are relatively stable with contingencies in place to cover such items as staff sickness and maternity leave.

The Trustees assess the other principal risks and uncertainties facing the Connect Education Trust as follows:

- each School within the Trust has considerable reliance on continued Government funding through the DfE and there is no assurance that Government policy or practice will remain the same or that public funding will continue at the same levels or on the same terms;
- Failures in governance and/or management - the risk in this area arises from potential failure to manage effectively the Trust’s finances, internal controls, compliance with regulations and legislation, statutory returns, etc. The Trustees continue to review and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate these risks;
- Reputational - the continuing success of the individual Schools is dependent on continuing to attract pupils in sufficient numbers by maintaining the highest educational standards. To mitigate this risk Trustees,ensure that student progress and outcomes are closely monitored and reviewed;
- Safeguarding and child protection - the Trustees continue to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the areas of selection and monitoring of staff, the operation of child protection policies and procedures, health & safety and discipline;
- Staffing - the success of the Schools is reliant on the quality of its staff and the Trustees monitor and review policies and procedures and recruitment to ensure continued development and training of staff as well as ensuring there is clear succession planning;
- Fraud and mismanagement of funds - The Trustees have appointed Azets to carry out independent and external checks on financial systems and records as required by the Academy Trust Handbook. All finance staff receive training to keep up to date with financial practice requirements and develop their skills in this area;
- Financial instruments – the Trust only deals with bank balances, cash and trade creditors, with limited trade (and other) debtors. The risk in this area is considered to be low;
- Defined benefit pension liability – as the Government has agreed to meet the defined benefit pension liability of any school ceasing to exist the main risk to the Trust is an annual cash flow funding of part of the deficit. Trustees take these payments into account when setting the annual budget plan; and
- Data protection/cyber security risks are increasing.

The Trust and each School have continued to strengthen its risk management process throughout the year by improving the process and ensuring staff awareness, including the consideration of those risks impacting on trustees' responsibilities to ensure the trust's estate is safe, well maintained and complies with relevant regulations.

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting

Greenhouse gas emissions and energy use data for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 – UK:		
Total energy consumption (kWh)		**1,233,739**
• gas,		204,423
• electricity,		1,020,979
• transport fuel - owned transport (e.g. mini bus)	5,379	8,337
• transport fuel - employee vehicles	-	-

Scope 1 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e	
Gas consumption	37
Owned transport – mini-buses	20
Total scope 1	57
Scope 2 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e	
Electricity	217
Scope 3 emissions in metric tonnes CO2e	
Business travel in employee owned vehicles	-
Total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO2e	**274**

Intensity ratio	
Number of pupils	**3,970**
Tonnes CO2e per pupil	0.069

Quantification and Reporting Methodology

We have followed the 2019 HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines. We have also used the GHG Reporting Protocol – Corporate Standard and have used the 2020 UK Government's Conversion Factors for Company Reporting.

Intensity measurement

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

Measures taken to improve energy efficiency

The use of video conferencing which was crucial during the lockdown period has continued to be encouraged as an effective way to hold meetings. Where possible staff have embraced a hybrid working model, which has saved on car journeys to and from the place of work.

Plans for Future Periods

Strategic Intentions

The Trust Board have agreed six key strategic intentions for the Trust that will steer our growth and development over the next three years:

1. People and Partners
2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment
3. Curriculum and Opportunity
4. Standards and Outcomes
5. Governance and Leadership
6. Sustainability

It is essential that our strategic planning is realised through effective operational delivery. There are a collection of strategies and associated delivery plans which guide the work of the Trust and that of our Schools. Our approach to managing change is founded on a systematic approach, where each area of work has its own plan. As the Trust develops and with the changing educational landscape, as a provider, it is critical that we remain flexible and are able to quickly adapt and change to deliver the most effective services for our children and young people.

Fundraising

The Trust only held small fundraising events during the year including summer fayres, Christmas fetes and non-uniform days. The Trust does not work with professional fundraisers or companies who carry out fundraising on its behalf. During the year no complaints or issues have arisen as a result of the fundraising events.

Trade Unions

During the year the Trust spent £11,188 on the Trade Union facilities' time SLA.

Employee Involvement

Where appropriate the Trust consults on matters such as policy, pay, health, safety and welfare with the relevant support staff and teaching trade unions. The Trust provides information to employees generally by way of email, memoranda and staff meetings. Central conferences and workshops are provided to Trustees, Headteachers, School Leaders and all our people. The People Engagement Committee steers our way as an established Multi Academy Trust and ascertains our people-based priorities to ensure that we will achieve our mission. The strategy outlines what our staff can expect from the Trust and what the Trust expects from its staff.

The People Engagement Committee establishes a two-way working relationship to ensure the Trust hears the views from a wide range of staff. It is the key to delivering our Multi Academy Trust Development Plan. The People Engagement Committee will make our vision a reality. We will continue to consult with our people as we further develop the strategy. The Strategy is based on a continuous development process and its content will continue to change as we move forward as an inclusive Trust.

At each of the Schools, information is channelled via the Leadership meetings. Employees are encouraged to familiarise themselves with Ofsted reports, available from the Trust website and pupil progress and attainment statistics when they are made available.

Equal Opportunities Policy

It is the Trust's policy to ensure equality of opportunities is afforded to staff, students and other stakeholders. Training, career development and promotion opportunities are available to all employees. Applications for employment by disabled persons are given full and fair consideration for all vacancies in accordance with their particular aptitude and abilities. In the event of employees becoming disabled then every effort is made to retrain them in order that their employment within the Trust may continue.

Funds Held as Custodian Trustee on Behalf of Others

No funds were held as Custodian Trustee on behalf of others.

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.

The Trustees' Report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 17 December 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Alex Monk
Chair of Trustees

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Scope of responsibility

As Trustees, we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that Connect 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 set out in the DfE's Governance Guide, Governance Handbook, and the Competency Framework for Governance. These documents are shared annually with the Trust Board, and Trustees are encouraged to familiarise themselves with and consider this guidance as part of their ongoing responsibilities.

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Chief Executive Officer, 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 Connect 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 Trustees has formally met 3 times during the year.

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

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Karen Mautner	3	3
Alex Monk, Chair of Trustees	3	3
Stephen Way, Vice Chair of Trustees	2	3
Julie Rayson	3	3
Bronwen Tumani	2	3
John West	2	3
Vincent McInerney	2	3
Jonathan Simms	3	3
Annie Kent	0	3

Review of year

During the 2024/25 academic year, the Trust Board consisted of nine Trustees, with one outstanding vacancy being successfully filled in September 2024.

The full Trust Board met on three occasions. In addition, lead Trustees for specific areas engaged with senior leaders between formal meetings and provided updates and assurance reports to the Board.

The Trust is supported by three standing committees: the Finance and Audit Committee, the Education and Safeguarding Committee, and the People and Performance Committee.

The Finance and Audit Committee met four times; the Education and Safeguarding Committee also convened four times; and the People and Performance Committee met three times to undertake its annual duties relating to pay and performance.

Governance (continued)

Conflicts of interest

The Trust manages conflicts of interest through a robust procurement policy and by maintaining a comprehensive, up-to-date register of interests. Relevant information from this register is shared across the organisation where appropriate to support transparent decision-making. The Trust also continues to collect enhanced information regarding close family members of Members, Trustees, and Key Management Personnel.

Governance reviews

The Trust Board conducted a comprehensive skills audit in April 2025 to identify any gaps and inform a targeted training program for the upcoming academic year. The findings from the audit also guide the Board in determining the skills required when vacancies arise, ensuring the Trust continues to benefit from a well-balanced and effective governance team.

In July 2025, the Trust Board undertook the National Governance Association (NGA) MAT Governance Self-Evaluation. This review examined key areas including culture, leadership, skills, diversity, board structure, core functions, compliance, evaluation, and impact. The outcomes of the evaluation confirmed that governance across the Trust remains in a strong position.

The Trust Board maintains a detailed working knowledge of each school within the Trust, including their individual strengths and the challenges they face. This insight enables the Board to provide effective challenges to the executive leadership team and to drive continuous educational improvement. Financial oversight and accountability are particular strengths, as evidenced by the Trust’s sound financial management and reserves policy. Central costs are deliberately kept to a minimum to ensure that the maximum possible proportion of resources is directed to school budgets.

Committees

Finance and Audit Committee

The Finance and Audit Committee is a sub-committee of the main Board of Trustees. It's purpose is to cover finance, resources, risk management audit and asset management. 6 Trustees are on the Finance and Audit Committee, the CEO ad CFOO also attend. The Committee met 4 times during 2024-2025, including one meeting to review the end of year accounts for the Trust. The terms of reference for the Finance Committee include Audit responsibilities.

The Committee is responsible for setting and overseeing the annual budget, managing internal and external audit processes, monitoring significant capital projects, and ensuring compliance with health and safety requirements. It also plays a key role in updating the Trust’s financial regulations and undertaking due diligence when a new school joins the Trust. Oversight of major capital expenditure projects sits within the Committee’s remit, ensuring that both financial and operational objectives are met.

Between formal committee meetings, a monthly finance meeting is held with the Chair of Finance and Audit, the CFO, and the Head of Service – Finance. These meetings review monthly management accounts, including cash flow, providing the Chair with regular financial oversight and ensuring that the programme of audit and scrutiny is delivered effectively. The Chair, in conjunction with the Trust Board, determines the scope of the internal audit commissioned during the year.

The Committee also oversaw the full programme of strategic due diligence for Eversley Primary School, supporting its smooth transition into the Trust on 1 August 2025.

There were no changes to the Committee during the year.

Governance (continued)

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Jonathan Simms	4	4
John West	4	4
Alex Monk	4	4
Julie Rayson	4	4
Stephen Way	4	4
Annie Kent	3	4

Review of value for money

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

The Accounting Officer considers how the 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 appropriate. The Accounting Officer for the Trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- To efficiently manage the School Condition Allocation funding, to focus on ensuring buildings are fit for purpose and kept in good condition, as well as prioritising projects that will address energy efficient issues within the school.

- A Trust wide approach and overview of the staffing structures across all schools so that the recruitment of staff is undertaken only when a full evaluation of the post and the structure and the budget has been considered.

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Connect Education Trust for the year 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to handle risk

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

The risk and control framework

The 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. It includes:

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Board of Trustees;
- regular reviews by the Finance and Audit Committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines; and
- identification and management of risks.

Internal Scrutiny / Audit

The Board of Trustees has decided to buy-in an internal audit service from Azets.

This option has been chosen because they have the expertise, breadth of service, offer value for money and have knowledge of Connect.

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

- Monthly management reporting
- Payroll
- Business cards
- Website review
- Whistleblowing
- Risk management
- Benchmarking

On an annual basis, the internal auditor reports to the Board of Trustees, through the Finance and Audit Committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Trustees' financial responsibilities. On an annual basis the internal auditor prepares a summary report to the committee outlining the areas reviewed, key findings, recommendations and conclusions to help the Committee consider actions and assess year on year progress.

The internal auditor has delivered their schedule of work as planned and there were no material control issues arising as a result of the internal auditor's work.

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

Conclusion

Based on the advice of the Finance and Audit Committee and the Accounting Officer, the Board of Trustees is of the opinion that the Trust has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control.

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

Alex Monk
Chair of Trustees

Androulla Nicou
Accounting Officer

Date: 17 December 2025

STATEMENT OF REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

As Accounting Officer of Connect Education Trust, I confirm that I have had due regard to the framework of authorities governing regularity, propriety and compliance, including the Trust's funding agreement with DfE, and the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook, including responsibilities for estates safety and management. I have also considered my responsibility to notify the Board of Trustees and DfE of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management.

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

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 DfE.

Androulla Nicou
Accounting Officer

Date: 17 December 2025

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

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

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

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

Alex Monk
Chair of Trustees

Date: 17 December 2025

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECT EDUCATION TRUST

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Connect Education Trust (the 'Trust') for the Year ended 31 August 2025 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025 issued by the Department for Education.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Trust's affairs as at 31 August 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the Year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025 issued by the Department for Education.

Basis for opinion

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

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 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.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECT EDUCATION TRUST (CONTINUED)

Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

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

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

Responsibilities of trustees

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

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the 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 Trust or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECT EDUCATION TRUST (CONTINUED)

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

We gained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the Trust and the sector in which is operates and considered the risk of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included those regilations directly related to the financial statements, including financial reporting and tax legislation and Trust sector regulations including GDPR, employment law, health and safety and safeguarding.

The risks were discussed with the audit team and we remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit. We carried out specific procedures to address the risks identified. These included the following:

- We reviewed systems and procedures to identify potential areas of management overrides. In particular, we carried out testing of journal entried and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of any large or unusual transactions to determine whether they were significant to our assessment.
- We reviewed key controls, authorisation procedures and decision making processes for any unusual or one-off transactions.
- We reviewed minutes of Trustee meetings and other relevant sub-committees of the Board and agreed the financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation.
- We have made enquiries of the Accounting Officer and senior management team to identify laws and regulations applicable to the Academy. We assessed details of any breaches where applicable in order to assess the impact upon the Trust.

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 is also greater regarding irregularities occuring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

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

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF CONNECT EDUCATION TRUST (CONTINUED)

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Trust'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 Trust's Members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Trust and its Members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Tom Meeks FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of
Price Bailey LLP
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditors
Causeway House
1 Dane Street
Bishop's Stortford
Hertfordshire
CM23 3BT

17 December 2025

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO CONNECT EDUCATION TRUST AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 7 August 2023 and further to the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE) as included in the extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts 2024 to 2025, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether anything has come to our attention that would suggest, in all material respects, the expenditure disbursed and income received by Connect Education Trust during the Year 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 have not been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

Respective responsibilities of Connect Education Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The Accounting Officer is responsible, under the requirements of Connect Education Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 31 August 2016 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2024, 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 extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts 2024 to 2025. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the Year 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 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 DfE. 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 Trust's income and expenditure.

INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO CONNECT EDUCATION TRUST AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION (CONTINUED)

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- An assessment of the risk of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance
- Consideration and corroboration of the evidence supporting the Accounting Officer's statement on regularity, propriety and compliance and how the Trust complies with the framework of authorities.
- Evaluation of the general control environment of the Trust, extending the procedures required for financial statements to include regularity, propriety and compliance
- Discussions with and representations from the Accounting Officer and other key management personnel.
- An extension of substantive testing from our audit of the financial statements to cover matters pertaining to regularity, in order to support the regularity conclusion, including governance, internal controls, procurement and the application of income.

Conclusion

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

Reporting Accountant
Price Bailey LLP

Date: 17 December 2025

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Income from:						
Donations and capital grants	3	2,212	70,950	18,884,785	18,957,947	840,322
Other trading activities	5	1,189,879	-	-	1,189,879	999,798
Investments	6	110,726	-	-	110,726	80,543
Charitable activities	4	24,581	26,771,981	-	26,796,562	25,413,106
Total income		1,327,398	26,842,931	18,884,785	47,055,114	27,333,769
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities	7	1,640,557	26,350,233	2,241,730	30,232,520	29,045,687
Total expenditure		1,640,557	26,350,233	2,241,730	30,232,520	29,045,687
Net income/ (expenditure)		(313,159)	492,698	16,643,055	16,822,594	(1,711,918)
Transfers between funds	17	-	(192,264)	192,264	-	-
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)		(313,159)	300,434	16,835,319	16,822,594	(1,711,918)
Other recognised gains/(losses):						
Actuarial losses on defined benefit pension schemes	24	-	(96,000)	-	(96,000)	(193,000)
Net movement in funds		(313,159)	204,434	16,835,319	16,726,594	(1,904,918)
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward		2,373,048	604,844	131,407,203	134,385,095	136,290,013
Net movement in funds		(313,159)	204,434	16,835,319	16,726,594	(1,904,918)
Total funds carried forward		2,059,889	809,278	148,242,522	151,111,689	134,385,095

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

CONNECT EDUCATION TRUST

(A Company Limited by Guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 10309116

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2025

	Note		2025 £		2024 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	14		147,687,664		130,884,045
Current assets					
Debtors	15	1,319,507		785,918	
Cash at bank and in hand		4,500,643		4,209,329	
		5,820,150		4,995,247	
Current liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(2,396,125)		(1,494,197)	
Net current assets			3,424,025		3,501,050
Defined benefit pension scheme asset	24		-		-
Total net assets			151,111,689		134,385,095
Funds of the Trust					
Restricted funds:					
Fixed asset funds	17	148,242,522		131,407,203	
Restricted income funds	17	809,278		604,844	
Total restricted funds	17		149,051,800		132,012,047
Unrestricted income funds	17		2,059,889		2,373,048
Total funds			151,111,689		134,385,095

The financial statements on pages 26 to 56 were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and are signed on their behalf, by:

Alex Monk
Chair of Trustees

Date: 17 December 2025

The notes on pages 29 to 56 form part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

	Note	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash used in operating activities	19	(311,933)	(576,817)
Cash flows from investing activities	20	603,247	632,177
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the Year		291,314	55,360
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the Year		4,209,329	4,153,969
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the Year	21, 22	4,500,643	4,209,329

The notes on pages 29 to 56 form part of these financial statements

1. Accounting policies

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

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

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

The Trust's functional and presentational currency is Pounds Sterling.

Connect Education Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

1.2 Company status

The Trust is a Company limited by guarantee. The Members of the Company are named on page 1. In the event of the Trust being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10 per Member.

1.3 Going concern

The Trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the Trust 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 financial statements and have concluded that the Trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, thus they continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

The Trust derives the majority of its income from local and national government grant funding which is secured for a number of years, under the terms of the Trust Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education. This will ensure that the Trust can continue operating for a period of at least 12 months following the date of this report. The financial statements do not contain any adjustments that would be required if the Trust were not able to continue as a going concern.

1.4 Fund accounting

Unrestricted income funds represent those resources which may be used towards meeting any of the charitable objects of the 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 funders where the asset acquired or created is held for a specific purpose.

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

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

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.5 Income

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

- **Grants**

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

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

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

- **Donations**

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

- **Other income**

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

- **Transfer on conversion**

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

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.6 Expenditure

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

- **Charitable activities**

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

1.7 Interest receivable

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

1.8 Tangible fixed assets

Assets costing £5,000 or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

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

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

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Long-term leasehold land	- 125 years straight line
Long term leasehold buildings	- 50 years straight line
Furniture and fixtures	- 5 years straight line
Computer equipment	- 4 years straight line
Motor vehicles	- 4-7 years straight line

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

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.9 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

1.10 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

1.11 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 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.

1.12 Financial instruments

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

Financial assets - trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost as detailed in note 15. Prepayments are not financial instruments. Cash at bank is classified as a basic financial instrument and is measured at face value.

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 as detailed in note 16. 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.

1.13 Operating leases

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

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.14 Pensions

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

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

The LGPS is a funded multi-employer scheme, and the assets are held separately from those of the academy 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/(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.

If pension scheme assets are more than liabilities a surplus is recognised only to the extent that the academy trust is able to recover the surplus either through reduced contributions in the future or through refunds from the scheme. Any change in the restriction of the surplus is an actuarial gain or loss and is recognised in other recognised gains and losses.

2. Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgment

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 24, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2025. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

At the balance sheet date the pension scheme assets were more than the liabilities, resulting in a surplus. It was necessary to determine the extent to which this surplus was capable of being recovered either through reduced contributions in the future or through refunds from the scheme. A refund is only available on ceasing to participate in the scheme, which is not practicably possible whilst the academy trust continues in operation due to the requirement to provide access to the scheme to relevant employees and would not be possible if the trust were to cease operations as these operations would be transferred to another academy trust that would take over any asset. With regard to reductions in contributions the Trust is pooled with other trusts in the setting of its contribution rates under the scheme. In addition the Trust considers there to be a minimum funding requirement in respect of its contributions. Consequently the Trust does not consider that it is able to recover the surplus through reduced contributions in the future and has therefore restricted the surplus recognised to £nil.

3. Income from donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Donations	2,212	178,950	-	181,162	209,845
Transferred on conversion	-	(108,000)	18,200,000	18,092,000	-
Capital grants	-	-	684,785	684,785	630,477
Total 2025	2,212	70,950	18,884,785	18,957,947	840,322
Total 2024	6,695	230,199	603,428	840,322	

In 2024, income from donations was £209,845, of which £6,695 was unrestricted and £203,150 was restricted.

In 2024, capital grants was £630,477 of which £27,049 was restricted and £603,428 was restricted fixed asset.

4. Funding for the Trust's charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Provision of education				
DfE grants				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	18,331,788	18,331,788	17,617,664
Other DfE grants				
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	964,155	964,155	1,735,482
CSBG & NI grant	-	1,043,692	1,043,692	-
Pupil premium	-	1,645,415	1,645,415	1,696,337
UIFSM	-	390,937	390,937	395,378
PE & sports grant	-	139,790	139,790	140,360
Teachers pension and pay grants	-	574,138	574,138	548,470
	-	-	23,089,915	22,133,691
Other Government grants				
Local Authority grants	-	3,682,066	3,682,066	3,257,743
Other funding				
Catering income	24,581	-	24,581	21,672
Total 2025	24,581	26,771,981	26,796,562	25,413,106
Total 2024	21,672	25,391,434	25,413,106	

In 2024, income DfE/ESFA grants was £22,133,691 and was entirely restricted.

In 2024, income from other Government grants was £3,257,743, all of which was restricted.

In 2024, income from catering income was £21,672, all of which was unrestricted.

5. Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Lettings income	60,451	60,451	48,480
Other activities	1,129,428	1,129,428	951,318
Total 2025	1,189,879	1,189,879	999,798
Total 2024	999,798	999,798	

In 2024, total income from other trading activites was £999,798, of which £921,032 was unrestricted and £78,766 was restricted.

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Total funds 2024 £
Investment income	110,726	110,726	80,543
Total 2025	110,726	110,726	80,543
Total 2024	80,543	80,543	

In 2024, all investment income was in relation to unrestricted funds.

7. Expenditure

	Staff Costs 2025 £	Premises 2025 £	Other 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Provision of education:					
Direct costs	17,328,376	-	939,245	18,267,621	17,464,554
Allocated support costs	5,755,021	2,860,308	3,349,570	11,964,899	11,581,133
Total 2025	23,083,397	2,860,308	4,288,815	30,232,520	29,045,687
Total 2024	21,621,183	4,205,367	3,219,137	29,045,687	

In 2024 direct expenditure consisted of £16,583,638 staff costs and £880,916 other costs.

In 2024 support expenditure consisted of £5,111,662 staff costs, £4,205,367 premises costs and £2,264,104 other costs.

8. Charitable activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Direct costs	18,267,621	17,464,554
Support costs	11,964,899	11,581,133
	30,232,520	29,045,687

	2025 £	2024 £
Analysis of support costs		
Support staff costs and educational support	5,755,021	5,111,662
Depreciation	1,588,646	1,733,012
Technology costs	371,814	360,186
Premises costs	1,271,662	2,472,355
Other support costs	2,911,246	1,820,659
Governance costs	41,545	69,393
Legal costs	24,965	13,866
	11,964,899	11,581,133

9. Net (expenditure)/income

Net (expenditure)/income for the year includes:

	2025 £	2024 £
Operating lease rentals	32,670	25,115
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	1,588,646	1,733,012
Fees paid to auditors for:		
- audit	25,100	23,000
- other services	17,380	12,600

10. Staff

a. Staff costs and employee benefits

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Wages and salaries	15,361,181	15,009,835
Social security costs	1,807,411	1,593,022
Pension costs	3,255,709	2,994,807
	20,424,301	19,597,664
Agency staff costs	2,469,944	1,949,402
Staff restructuring costs	189,152	74,117
	23,083,397	21,621,183

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

	2025 £	2024 £
Redundancy payments	149,658	-
Severance payments	39,494	74,117
	189,152	74,117

10. Staff (continued)

b. Severance payments

The Trust paid 4 severance payments in the year (2024 - 4), disclosed in the following bands:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
£0 - £25,000	4	3
£25,001 - £50,000	-	1

c. Special staff severance payments

Included in severance payments above are special severance payments totalling £26,178 (2024: £nil). These are non-statutory. Individually, the payments were £1, £10,000 and £16,177.

d. Staff numbers

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

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Management	10	10
Teaching	167	173
Educational support	284	288
	461	471

e. Higher paid staff

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

	2025 No.	2024 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	24	14
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	9	7
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	4	3
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	3	-
In the band £100,001 - £110,000	1	2
In the band £110,001 - £120,000	1	1
In the band £120,001 - £130,000	1	1
In the band £130,001 - £140,000	1	-
In the band £160,001 - £170,000	-	1
In the band £170,001 - £180,000	1	-

10. Staff (continued)

f. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Trust comprise the Trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the Trust was £681,914 (2024 - £618,821).

Included in the above are employer National Insurance contributions of £68,800 (2024 - £58,786) employer pension contributions £102,673 (2024 - £97,668).

11. Central services

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

- Financial servcies
- HR
- Audit
- Legal services
- Operational support services
- Premises management

The Trust charges for these services on the following basis:

To fund these costs, the Trust charges a top slice equivalent to 4.75% (2024 - 4.75%) of each Academy's funding. The funding includes the total GAG and LA funding - Early years and high needs funding.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Hazelbury Primary School	287,506	278,132
Bowes Primary School	131,556	137,800
Chesterfield Primary School	170,392	175,319
Grange Park Primary School	191,219	177,509
Fern House Primary School	108,813	108,184
Carterhatch Primary School	103,041	96,753
Delta Primary School	48,928	44,963
Total	1,041,455	1,018,660

12. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the Year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2024 - £nil).

During the year ended 31 August 2025, expenses totalling £43 were reimbursed to one trustee for travel expenses (2024: £nil).

13. Trustees' and Officers' insurance

The Trust has opted into the Department of 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 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 membership.

14. Tangible fixed assets

	Long-term leasehold property £	Furniture and equipment £	Computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation					
At 1 September 2024	140,969,280	471,323	1,721,093	7,750	143,169,446
Additions	-	5,425	186,839	-	192,264
Acquired on conversion	18,200,000	-	-	-	18,200,000
Disposals	-	(406,899)	(758,847)	-	(1,165,746)
At 31 August 2025	159,169,280	69,849	1,149,085	7,750	160,395,964
Depreciation					
At 1 September 2024	10,310,514	437,514	1,535,322	2,051	12,285,401
Charge for the Year	1,434,376	13,788	138,930	1,550	1,588,644
On disposals	-	(406,898)	(758,847)	-	(1,165,745)
At 31 August 2025	11,744,890	44,404	915,405	3,601	12,708,300
Net book value					
At 31 August 2025	147,424,390	25,445	233,680	4,149	147,687,664
At 31 August 2024	130,658,766	33,809	185,771	5,699	130,884,045

15. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Due within one year		
Trade debtors	261,673	92,790
Other debtors	43,242	31,579
Prepayments and accrued income	735,108	370,690
VAT recoverable	279,484	290,859
	1,319,507	785,918

16. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	997,119	548,631
Other taxation and social security	443,848	348,564
Other creditors	2,238	2,266
Accruals and deferred income	952,920	594,736
	2,396,125	1,494,197

	2025 £	2024 £
Deferred income brought forward	308,927	295,946
Resources deferred during the Year	352,578	308,927
Amounts released from previous periods	(308,927)	(295,946)
Deferred income carried forward	352,578	308,927

Deferred income relates to income received in advance for 2025-26, including school trips, Universal Infant Free School Meals and enrichment clubs.

17. Statement of funds

	Balance at 1 September 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2025 £
Unrestricted funds						
Unrestricted funds	2,373,048	1,327,398	(1,640,557)	-	-	2,059,889
Restricted general funds						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	604,844	18,331,788	(17,935,090)	(192,264)	-	809,278
Other DfE / ESFA grants	-	4,758,127	(4,758,127)	-	-	-
Other Government grants	-	3,682,066	(3,682,066)	-	-	-
Restricted donations	-	178,950	(178,950)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	-	(108,000)	204,000	-	(96,000)	-
	604,844	26,842,931	(26,350,233)	(192,264)	(96,000)	809,278
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Restricted fixed asset fund	130,884,045	18,200,000	(1,588,645)	192,264	-	147,687,664
Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)	-	68,660	(68,660)	-	-	-
SCA Grant	523,158	616,125	(584,425)	-	-	554,858
	131,407,203	18,884,785	(2,241,730)	192,264	-	148,242,522
Total Restricted funds	132,012,047	45,727,716	(28,591,963)	-	(96,000)	149,051,800
Total funds	134,385,095	47,055,114	(30,232,520)	-	(96,000)	151,111,689

17. Statement of funds (continued)

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

Unrestricted funds

This represents income which may be used towards meeting any of the charitable objectives of the Trust at the discretion of Trustees.

General Annual Grant (GAG)

This represents funding from the DfE to cover the costs of recurrent expenditure.

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the Trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2025.

Other DfE and ESFA funding

This represents funding received from the DfE/ESFA which is restricted in nature.

Other Government grants

This represents funding received from other Government bodies, local and national, which are restricted in nature to help for example, raise achievement and improve outcomes for pupils from low income families who are eligible for free school meals or special educational needs pupils.

Restricted donations

This represents contributions made by parents towards the running costs of trips for the pupils of the Schools and the associated costs.

Pension reserve

This reserve represents the Trust's share of the deficit on the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS).

Restricted fixed asset fund

Restricted fixed asset fund represents the value of fixed assets held in line with the charitable objectives of the Trust. The transfer between funds represents additions purchased through GAG funding.

Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)

This represents funding received from the DfE specifically for the maintenance and improvements of the Trust's building facilities.

School Condition Allocation (SCA)

This represents a Government grant allocation for Trust-wide capital or repair projects.

17. Statement of funds (continued)

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

	Balance at 1 September 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Unrestricted funds					
Unrestricted funds	2,159,333	1,029,942	(816,227)	-	2,373,048
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	249,067	17,617,664	(17,261,887)	-	604,844
Other DfE / ESFA grants	-	4,516,027	(4,516,027)	-	-
Other Government grants	251,916	3,257,743	(3,509,659)	-	-
Restricted donations	-	308,965	(308,965)	-	-
Pension reserve	-	-	193,000	(193,000)	-
	500,983	25,700,399	(25,403,538)	(193,000)	604,844
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Restricted fixed asset fund	132,526,214	-	(1,642,169)	-	130,884,045
Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)	-	69,277	(69,277)	-	-
SCA Grant	1,103,483	534,151	(1,114,476)	-	523,158
	133,629,697	603,428	(2,825,922)	-	131,407,203
Total Restricted funds	134,130,680	26,303,827	(28,229,460)	(193,000)	132,012,047
Total funds	136,290,013	27,333,769	(29,045,687)	(193,000)	134,385,095

17. Statement of funds (continued)

Total funds analysis by academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2025 were allocated as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Hazelbury Primary School	649,037	333,555
Bowes Primary School	(157,721)	(24,853)
Chesterfield Primary School	(455,249)	(110,156)
Grange Park Primary School	292,877	315,852
Fern House Primary School	294,655	214,272
Carterhatch Junior School	268,186	246,163
Delta Primary School	(90,192)	(120,799)
Eversley Primary School	118,632	-
Central Services	1,948,942	2,123,858
Total before fixed asset funds and pension reserve	2,869,167	2,977,892
Restricted fixed asset fund	148,242,522	131,407,203
Total	151,111,689	134,385,095

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

	Deficit £
Chesterfield Primary School	(455,249)
Delta Primary School	(90,192)
Bowes Primary School	(157,721)

17. Statement of funds (continued)

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

Chesterfield Primary School:

The Chesterfield year end position was a £455,249 deficit. Chesterfield Primary School has experienced declining pupil numbers over the last few years, resulting in staff costs no longer being fully funded by pupil led DFE income. A redundancy process was implemented during the academic year 2024-25 to reduce future staffing expenditure and secure financial stability. The redundancy payments have been accounted for in the year and therefore this has increased the in year deficit significantly. As a result the school is now on track to recover the majority of the deficit by August 2026.

Delta Primary School

The year end position for this academy was a £90,192 deficit. Delta Primary School has demonstrated strong financial management this year, maintaining an in year surplus throughout. However, additional savings are still required to clear the prior year deficit, and further cost reductions are planned to achieve this.

Bowes Primary School:

The year end position for this academy was a £157,721 deficit. Bowes Primary School has reported an in year deficit due to lower pupil numbers in prior years which has led to a slightly higher staffing headcount. We are reviewing staffing levels this academic year to reduce costs and support a return to a balanced financial position.

17. Statement of funds (continued)

Total cost analysis by academy

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

	Teaching and educational support staff costs £	Other support staff costs £	Educational supplies £	Other costs excluding depreciation £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Hazelbury Primary School	4,855,590	1,098,801	204,498	998,892	7,157,781	6,883,854
Bowes Primary School	2,432,958	587,540	103,920	451,940	3,576,358	3,617,236
Chesterfield Primary School	2,843,848	889,861	112,208	468,419	4,314,336	4,176,311
Grange Park Primary School	3,017,925	1,060,228	177,001	971,900	5,227,054	4,760,156
Fern House Primary School	1,354,609	604,364	58,885	232,863	2,250,721	2,091,220
Carterhatch Junior School	1,877,201	261,740	63,945	373,311	2,576,197	2,447,135
Delta Primary School	769,557	214,453	29,847	152,500	1,166,357	1,125,172
Eversley Primary School	233,941	14,570	310	65,858	314,679	-
Trust - Central Services	105,552	860,659	-	1,094,180	2,060,391	2,211,591
Trust	17,491,181	5,592,216	750,614	4,809,863	28,643,874	27,312,675

18. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	147,687,664	147,687,664
Current assets	2,059,889	3,205,403	554,858	5,820,150
Creditors due within one year	-	(2,396,125)	-	(2,396,125)
Total	2,059,889	809,278	148,242,522	151,111,689

18. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	130,884,045	130,884,045
Current assets	2,373,048	2,099,041	523,158	4,995,247
Creditors due within one year	-	(1,494,197)	-	(1,494,197)
Total	2,373,048	604,844	131,407,203	134,385,095

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

	2025 £	2024 £
Net income/(expenditure) for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	16,822,594	(1,711,918)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation	1,588,645	1,733,012
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(684,785)	(630,477)
Interest receivable	(110,726)	(92,543)
Defined benefit pension scheme obligation inherited on conversion	108,000	-
Pension liability movements	(204,000)	(193,000)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(533,589)	457,180
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	901,928	(139,071)
Donated fixed assets	(18,200,000)	-
Net cash used in operating activities	(311,933)	(576,817)

20. Cash flows from investing activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Interest received	110,726	92,543
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(192,264)	(90,843)
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	684,785	630,477
Net cash provided by investing activities	603,247	632,177

21. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2025 £	2024 £
Cash in hand and at bank	4,500,643	4,209,329

22. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2024 £	Cash flows £	At 31 August 2025 £
Cash at bank and in hand	4,209,329	291,314	4,500,643
	4,209,329	291,314	4,500,643

23. Academy Trust with a newly converted academy

On 1 August 2025 Eversley Primary School converted to academy status under the Academies Act 2010 and all the operations and assets and liabilities were transferred to Connect Education Trust from London Borough of Enfield for £nil consideration.

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

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

	Restricted funds £	Restricted fixed asset funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets			
Leasehold land and buildings	-	18,200,000	18,200,000
Pensions			
LGPS scheme assets	346,000	-	346,000
LGPS scheme liabilities	(454,000)	-	(454,000)
Net (liabilities)/assets	(108,000)	18,200,000	18,092,000

24. Pension commitments

The 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 the London Borough of Enfield. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

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

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

Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

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

24. Pension commitments (continued)

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

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

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

- employer contribution rates set at 28.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy)
- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £262,000 million and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £222,200 million, giving a notional past service deficit of £39,800 million

The result of this valuation was implemented on 1 April 2024. The next valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2027.

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the Year amounted to £2,287,776 (2024 - £2,036,576).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website (https://www.teacherspensions.co.uk/news/employers/2019/04/teachers-pensions-valuation-report.aspx).

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. The Trust is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the plan. Accordingly, the 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 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 contribution made for the Year ended 31 August 2025 was £1,513,000 (2024 - £1,500,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £1,148,000 (2024 - £1,134,000) and employees' contributions totalled £365,000 (2024 - £366,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 20.1 per cent for employers and 5.5 - 12.5 per cent for employees.

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

24. Pension commitments (continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions

	2025 %	2024 %
Rate of increase in salaries	4.2	4.15
Rate of increase for pensions in payment / inflation	2.7	2.65
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	6.05	5.0

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

	2025 Years	2024 Years
Retiring today		
Males	21.1	20.8
Females	23.3	23.3
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	22.2	21.9
Females	24.7	24.7

As at the 31 August 2025 the Trust had a defined benefit pension obligation of £18,514,000 (2024 - £20,345,000). The sensitivity analysis detailed below would increase/(decrease) the closing defined benefit obligation in the following way:

Sensitivity analysis

	2025 £000	2024 £000
Discount rate +0.1%	(393)	(433)
Discount rate -0.1%	393	433
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	741	814
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	(741)	(814)
CPI rate +0.1%	390	425
CPI rate -0.1%	(390)	(425)

24. Pension commitments (continued)

Share of scheme assets

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

	At 31 August 2025 £	At 31 August 2024 £
Equities	13,611,000	11,502,000
Bonds	6,686,000	6,275,000
Property	2,627,000	2,301,000
Cash and other liquid assets	955,000	837,000
Total market value of assets	23,879,000	20,915,000

The scheme's assets are valued at £23,879,000, due to this resulting in assets exceeding liabilities a surplus exists. The surplus has been capped by an asset ceiling calculated by the actuary based on application of the scheme rules which state the trust only has a limited entitlement to future economic benefit resulting from this actuarial valuation. The value of this is £5,365,000 (2024 - £570,000) which has restricted the value of assets recognised in the accounts to £18,514,000.

The actual return on scheme assets was £1,511,000 (2024 - £1,979,000).

The amounts recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities are as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Current service cost	(977,000)	(953,000)
Interest income	1,074,000	935,000
Interest cost	(1,041,000)	(923,000)
Total amount recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities	(944,000)	(941,000)

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

	2025 £	2024 £
At 1 September	20,345,000	17,602,000
Transferred in on new school joining the trust	454,000	-
Current service cost	977,000	953,000
Interest cost	1,041,000	923,000
Employee contributions	365,000	366,000
Actuarial (gains)/losses	(4,262,000)	813,000
Benefits paid	(406,000)	(312,000)
At 31 August	18,514,000	20,345,000

24. Pension commitments (continued)

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

	2025 £	2024 £
At 1 September	20,345,000	17,602,000
Transferred in on new school joining the trust	346,000	-
Interest income	1,074,000	935,000
Actuarial (losses)/gains	(4,358,000)	620,000
Employer contributions	1,148,000	1,134,000
Employee contributions	365,000	366,000
Benefits paid	(406,000)	(312,000)
At 31 August	18,514,000	20,345,000

25. Operating lease commitments

At 31 August 2025 the Trust had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Not later than 1 year	30,227	4,772
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	82,055	965
	112,282	5,737

26. Members' liability

Each Member of the Charitable Company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the Company in the event of it being wound up while he/she is 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 they ceased to be a Member.

27. Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the Trust 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 Trustee have an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook, including notifying the DfE of all transactions made on or after 1 April 2019 and obtaining their approval where required, and with the Trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures relating to connected and related party transactions.

No related party transactions took place in the period of account, other than those detailed in note 12.