

**DIXONS ACADEMIES TRUST  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**Annual Report and Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

**Company Registration Number 02303464  
(England and Wales)**

## Dixons Academies Trust

### Contents

Section	Page
Reference and Administrative Details	3
Trustees' Report	5
Governance Statement	17
Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance	21
Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities	22
Independent Auditors' Report on the Financial Statements	23
Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity	26
Statement of Financial Activities Including Income and Expenditure Account	28
Balance Sheet	29
Cash Flow Statement	30
Notes to Financial Statements	31



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Reference and Administrative Details for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

<b>Members</b>	<p>Joanne Williams (resigned 31 December 2022)</p> <p>Sir James Hill</p> <p>Bryan Collins</p> <p>Lynn Barrett</p> <p>Sir Nick Weller (appointed 21 February 2023)</p>
<b>Trustees</b>	<p>Mike Blackburn OBE – Chair, Trust Board</p> <p>John Bowers MBE – Vice Chair, Trust Board, Chair, Dixons City Academy / Dixons Kings Academy Local Academy Body</p> <p>Ruby Bhatti OBE – Chair, Dixons Marchbank Primary / Dixons Manningham Primary Local Academy Body</p> <p>David Clayton (resigned 31 December 2022)</p> <p>Bryan Collins – Chair, Dixons Sixth Form Local Academy Body (resigned 31 August 2023)</p> <p>Brent Fitzpatrick MBE – Chair, Finance Committee; Local Academy Body Member, Dixons Allerton Academy and Dixons Cottingley Academy</p> <p>Kuldip Nijjar – Chair, Audit and Risk Committee</p> <p>Susan Richardson – Chair, Dixons Trinity Chapeltown Academy Local Academy Body (resigned 30 September 2022)</p> <p>Helen Thornton</p> <p>Sarah Elizabeth Young (resigned 30 September 2023)</p> <p>Robert Keniwell (appointed 01 September 2023)</p> <p>Sally Anne Kenyon (appointed 01 September 2023)</p> <p>Linda McGrath (appointed 01 September 2023)</p> <p>Richard Tutt (appointed 01 September 2023)</p>
<b>Senior Management Team</b>	<p>Luke Sparkes – Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Amanda Bailey – Deputy Chief Executive: Finance and Operations (resigned 31 October 2023)</p> <p>Neil Miley – Deputy Chief Executive: Education; Acting Principal, Dixons Unity Academy (until 31 December 2022)</p> <p>Jennifer Cross – Executive Director: Development</p> <p>Mark Harrison – Executive Director: Manchester and Liverpool</p> <p>Clare Skelding – Executive Director: Bradford and Leeds</p> <p>Justine Oldham – Executive Principal, Primary</p> <p>Ryan Dolan – Executive Director: Information (resigned 29 September 2023)</p> <p>Tahmina Jahan – Executive Director: Communications</p> <p>Faizal Musa – Chief People Officer</p> <p>Natalie Brookshaw – Executive Principal (appointed 05 June 2023)</p> <p>Daniel Carr – Executive Principal, Dixons Allerton Academy (appointed 1 September 2023)</p> <p>Jason Patterson – Executive Principal, Dixons Trinity Chapeltown Academy (appointed 05 June 2023)</p> <p>Iain Duggan – Principal, Dixons Croxteth Academy (appointed 17 April 2023)</p> <p>Mike Feely – Principal, Dixons City Academy (resigned 04 June 2023)</p> <p>Rachael Fidler – Principal, Dixons Broadgreen Academy</p> <p>Stephen Garvey – Principal, Dixons Newall Green Academy (appointed 20 February 2023)</p> <p>Kevin Green – Principal, Dixons Brooklands Academy (resigned 31 July 2023)</p> <p>Rebecca Greenwood – Primary Principal, Dixons Allerton Academy</p> <p>Helen Haunch – Principal, Dixons Marchbank Primary</p> <p>Ashley Jacobs – Principal, Dixons Unity Academy (appointed 01 January 2023)</p> <p>Judith Kidd – Director, Dixons Centre for Growth</p> <p>Kat Lang – Principal, Dixons McMillan Academy</p>



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Reference and Administrative Details for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

	<p>Terri Leighton – Principal, Dixons Manningham Primary</p> <p>Raouf Mohammed – Principal, Dixons City Academy (appointed 05 June 2023)</p> <p>Luke Robbins-Ross – Principal, Dixons Music Primary (resigned 30 April 2023)</p> <p>Mark Rothery – Principal, Dixons Sixth Form Academy</p> <p>Emma Steele – Principal, Dixons Trinity Academy &amp; Dixons Music Primary</p> <p>Chris Wilson – Principal, Dixons Fazakerley Academy</p> <p>Richard Wilson – Principal, Dixons Kings Academy</p> <p>Francesca Hitch – Principal, Dixons Cottingley Academy (appointed 05 June 2023)</p> <p>James Haseldine – Interim Principal, Dixons Brooklands Academy (appointed 29 August 2023)</p> <p>Matthew Sanderson – Head of Secondary, Dixons Allerton Academy (appointed 26 June 2023)</p> <p>Angelique O’Garra – Head of Primary – Dixons Chapeltown Academy (appointed 01 September 2022)</p> <p>Emma Hickey – Head of Secondary – Dixons Chapeltown Academy (appointed 05 June 2023)</p> <p>Robyn Ellis – Executive Director, OpenSource (appointed 13 March 2023)</p> <p>Nicola Parry – Head of School, Dixons Music Primary (appointed 17 April 2023)</p>
<b>Company Secretary</b>	<p>Amanda Bailey (resigned 31 October 2023)</p> <p>Kathryn Berrill (appointed 10 November 2023)</p>
<b>Accounting Officer</b>	Luke Sparkes, Chief Executive Officer (appointed 1 September 2022)
<b>Registered Principal Office</b>	<p>Dixons Academies Trust</p> <p>Ripley Street</p> <p>Bradford</p> <p>West Yorkshire</p> <p>BDS 7RR</p>
<b>Company Registration Number</b>	02303464 (England and Wales)
<b>Bankers</b>	<p>Lloyds Bank</p> <p>City Office</p> <p>45 Hustlergate</p> <p>Bradford</p> <p>BD1 1NT</p>
<b>Solicitors</b>	<p>Hill Dickinson LLP</p> <p>No. 1 St. Paul’s Square</p> <p>Liverpool</p> <p>L3 9SJ</p>
<b>Independent Auditors</b>	<p>BHP LLP</p> <p>New Chartford House</p> <p>Centurion Way</p> <p>Cleckheaton</p> <p>BD19 3QB</p>



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

#### Structure, governance and management

Our Trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act) present their annual report, together with the financial statements and auditor's report, of Dixons Academies Trust for the year ended 31 August 2023. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report, a directors' report and a strategic report under company law.

Our trust operates academies for students aged 3 to 19 serving a catchment area in the inner-city communities of Leeds, Bradford, Manchester and Liverpool. It has a pupil capacity of 15,105 and had a roll of 13,970 in the school census on 5 October 2023.

##### a. Constitution

Dixons Academies Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. Its registered office is situated in England and Wales. The company was first established on 6 October 1988. The Charitable Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association (dated 28 March 2018) are the primary governing documents of our trust.

Our trustees are responsible for the charitable activities of our trust and are the Directors of the Charitable Company for the purposes of company law. The Charitable Company operates as Dixons Academies Trust.

Details of our trustees who served during the year, and to the date these accounts are approved are included in the reference and administrative details on page 3.

The principal activities and objectives of our trust are the advancement of education for public benefit in the United Kingdom by establishing, maintaining and developing high performing schools.

Our schools are nationally recognised for offering an ambitious curriculum underpinned by a strong values-driven culture and a relentless focus on the highest standards of student achievement.

Our students meet and work together in harmonious and happy school communities drawn from all cultures and backgrounds across our four cities. We believe our students have a key role to play in the economic development and social regeneration of our cities in the next generation and beyond.

##### b. 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.

##### c. Trustees' indemnities

There are no qualifying third-party indemnity provisions in place in respect of trustees, other than trustees and officers' insurance, which is in place.

##### d. Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Trustees

The members of Dixons Academies Trust are responsible for the appointment of our trust Board and the chairs of the local academy board.

All trustees and local ambassadors are appointed based upon the contribution they can make to the development and future success of our trust. Except for staff ambassadors, no trustees or ambassadors receive remuneration for their services other than reasonable out of pocket expenses.

In order to keep a balance of skills and expertise on each local board, trustees consider any skill gaps and may approach individuals (this may include parents) explaining the type of skills set or expertise our trust is looking for. Identified individuals will be invited to put their names forward. In the case of parent ambassadors, if more than one parent expresses an interest, then it may be necessary to hold an election within the parent body of the academy in question.

In order to find the people with the appropriate skills, there may be occasions where agencies are approached to see if they can help our trust to find potential trustees with the required skill sets.

A short application form will be completed and the individual will be invited to meet key staff and trustees or members. If an appointment is made, the successful individual will receive an induction appropriate to their new role.

##### e. Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

New trustees are inducted into the working of our trust, including policies and procedures, at arranged meetings with the Chief Executive with support from the head of governance and executive services. The training and induction provided will depend on the individual trustees' skill set and experience. Where appropriate, induction will include training on educational, charity, legal and financial matters (with copies of policies, procedures, minutes, budget plans, management accounts and other appropriate documentation).



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

#### f. Organisational structure

The organisational structure of our trust is based on the principles that:

- Our members of the academy define the object, purpose and ethos of the company.
- Our trustees, who form the trust board, have overall responsibility and ultimate decision-making authority for all the work of the Company, including the establishing and running of schools and, in particular, each academy as a school. This is largely exercised through strategic planning and the setting of policy. It is managed through the business planning, monitoring of budgets, performance appraisal, the setting and monitoring of standards and the implementation of quality assurance processes.
- Our trustees have the power to direct change where required to ensure that the object, purpose and ethos of the Company are met.
- Our trustees may delegate some responsibilities for the day-to-day operation of each academy directly to a local academy board (LAB) through a Scheme of Delegation (the Scheme). A single LAB oversees a cluster of up to three academies, but the funding granted for each academy must be applied only to that academy subject to the requirement of the scheme. The principal of each academy is an ex officio ambassador of the LAB.
- Our executive team, consisting of the chief executive officer and executive leaders, control our trust/academies at an executive level by implementing the policies laid down by the Trustees and reporting back to them regularly. The principals across our trust are responsible for the authorisation of spending within agreed budgets and the appointment of staff at their academy. Some spending control is devolved to members of their senior leadership team with financial limits above which a senior manager must countersign.
- Individual academy senior leadership teams include the principal, vice principals, assistant principals and the operations and business manager. These managers are responsible for the day-to-day operation of the academy, in particular organising teaching staff, facilities and students.
- to assist our trustees in their work, our trust has established the three following sub-committees:
  - Audit and risk committee
  - Finance committee
  - Remuneration committee

Our trust consists of the following academies:

Academy	Date Joined	Type
Dixons City Academy	September 2005	Secondary
Dixons Allerton Academy	September 2009	All-through Academy
Dixons Trinity Academy	September 2012	Secondary
Dixons Music Primary	September 2012	Primary
Dixons Marchbank Primary	January 2014	Primary
Dixons McMillan Academy	September 2014	Secondary
Dixons Manningham Primary	January 2015	Primary
Dixons Kings Academy	January 2015	Secondary
Dixons Trinity Chapeltown Academy	September 2017	All-through Academy
Dixons Cottingley Academy	July 2018	Secondary
Dixons Unity Academy	October 2018	Secondary
Dixons Sixth Form	September 2019	Post-16
Dixons Fazakerley Academy	September 2021	Secondary
Dixons Broadgreen Academy	December 2021	Secondary / Post-16
Dixons Brooklands Academy	January 2022	Secondary
Dixons Croxteth Academy	November 2022	Secondary
Dixons Newall Green Academy	September 2023	Secondary



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

#### g. Pay policy for key management personnel

Principals and other educational senior leaders are paid by reference to national leadership pay scales. Salary ranges are consistent across our trust and are dependent on seniority of position and size of school. The chief executive officer is on a salary agreed by the remuneration committee after benchmarking against similar-sized trusts. The remuneration committee meets annually to review all key personnel salaries.

#### Trade union facility time

Dixons Academies Trust published its trade union facility time below for the period ending 31 August 2023:

Relevant union officials	
Number of employees who were relevant union officials during the relevant period	Full-time equivalent employee number
20	19.6
Percentage of time spent on facility time	
Percentage of time	Number of employees
0%	9
1% - 50%	11
51% - 99%	0
100%	0
Percentage of pay bill spent on facility time	
Provide the total cost of facility time	£10,923
Provide the total pay bill	£72,006,026
Provide the percentage of the total pay bill spent on facility time, calculated as: (total cost of facility time/total pay bill) x 100	0.015%
Paid trade union activities	
Time spent on paid trade union activities as a percentage of total paid facility time hours calculated as: (total hours spent on paid trade union activities by relevant union officials during the relevant period/total paid facility time hours) x 100	100%

#### Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

Our trust has connections with the following organisations:

- Trust board chair, Mike Blackburn OBE, is a director at Mike Blackburn Ltd, a director at the Growth Company and The Lowry Centre Trust, and governor of GM International Marketing Advisory Board.
- Trust board vice chair, John Bowers MBE, is an educational consultant for Ambition Institute, trustee at Minerva Academy Trust, and governor at Clareborough Primary School, Manor Park and Great Marlow School
- Trustee and finance committee chair, Brent Fitzpatrick MBE, is a member of Exceed Academies Trust (an exempt charity), a member of the National Governance Association, and a trustee at Pennine Academies, Yorkshire, Director at Low Wave Ltd, Waste and Recycling Solutions Ltd, SPV202 Limited, Shellhound Plc, U4EA Plc, and U.K Space Plc
- Trustee, member of the audit and risk committee and chair of governors for Dixons Marchbank / Dixons Manningham Primary, Ruby Bhatti OBE, is a non-executive director of Carlisle Business Centre, NED for Action for Community Ltd and Arise Yorkshire Ltd, and a trustee of Bradford Diocesan Academy Trust, Director at Active Bradford Limited, The Priestley Academy Trust, The Girlington Centre Limited and Girlington Community Association
- Chief Executive Officer, Luke Sparkes, is a trustee of the Confederation of School Trusts (CST).



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

- Former CEO (resigned 31 October 2022), Sir Nick Weller, is a Trustee of New Schools Network, Director, Beckfoot Trust, Director, Venture Trust and current CEO of Academy Transformation Trust
- Deputy chief executive officer: Finance and Operation (resigned 31 October 2023), Amanda Bailey is a governor for the Apprentice Academy.
- Audit and risk committee member, Helen Thornton is the Chief People Officer, Independent Wealth Planners and Director of Stosh Ltd.

Any transactions with the above connected organisations comply with the requirements set out in the Academies Trust Handbook.

#### Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)

Our trust continuously seeks to encourage the involvement of its employees in its management through an annual conference, cyclical executive updates and academy visits, weekly check-in meetings for leaders, and our weekly trust-wide email newsletter: Team Dixons. Employees are consulted on issues of concern to them through consultative meetings and are kept informed of specific policies directly by management.

Our trust will employ disabled persons when they appear to be suitable for the role and every effort is made to ensure they are given full and fair consideration. There are policies in place (Equality and Diversity policy, Health and Safety policy etc.) so that employees, who have been injured or disabled during the course of their employment can, where possible, continue with their employment.

During their employment, our trust seeks to work with employees, taking into account their personal circumstances, to ensure appropriate training, development and advancement opportunities are available to enable them to reach their full potential.

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

As the trust board at Dixons Academies Trust, we have a legal responsibility under section 172 of the Companies Act 2006 to act in good faith in a way which would be most likely to promote the company's success for the benefit of its members as a whole, and to have regard to the long-term effect of our decisions on the company and its stakeholders. This statement addresses the ways in which, as a trust board, we carry out this responsibility.

#### Promoting our trust's success

Our trust is strongly committed to serving areas in the North to transform the life chances of children and their communities through the highest-quality teaching. Dixons' academies serve areas with high levels of students eligible for free school meals and with special educational needs and disabilities and are continually looking to expand to reach as many children as possible to improve their quality of life. Strategic decisions are based on the long-term objective of growth for our trust, maximising the number of children whose life chances can be improved.

#### Our students and parents

As a trust, we put our students at the heart of everything we do. That is part of our trust's culture: the parents of the students in our academies are continuously informed of the progress of their children and the safeguarding measures in place to ensure the safety of their children. We communicate with parents through letters, telephone calls / texts and emails to ensure that they are constantly aware of the activities of our trust. We organise parent-teacher meetings and listen to parents' concerns to improve the service we provide.

#### Our employees

Our trustees recognise that employees are fundamental and key to delivering the strategic plan of our trust. The success of our trust depends on attracting, retaining and motivating its talent. We help to engage with our employees by setting remuneration at a competitive rate compared to national rates and providing a rigorous professional development review process and intensive coaching. All staff also have access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). The EAP is a confidential counselling and information service, which is available 24/7, to assist staff with personal or work-related problems that may affect their health, wellbeing and performance.

#### Our suppliers

As a trust, we aim to maintain the highest possible standards of integrity in business relationships with suppliers. We rely on our suppliers to deliver learning materials, catering and food supplies to our individual academies on a timely manner, which are key to the service we provide.

We communicate with our suppliers through emails, specifically designed supplier forms and letters to update on any changes on terms and conditions. Our suppliers all have a direct channel of contacting our trust for any changes on their supplier accounts, which are actioned promptly to avoid any delay in payment. During the financial year, our trust remained committed to prompt payment terms to ensure fair payment practices.

#### Our regulatory funding partners

Our trust board believes that constant engagement with the ESFA, Local Authorities and other government agencies is vital to our success. We continue to engage with our donors and sponsors through reports, online meetings and publications on our website. During



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

the year, we have complied with all the financial and non-financial requirements of our donors and sponsors and submitted timely reports and returns. Our chief executive officer and executive directors have ensured that our trust adheres to all regulatory and legal requirements in delivering educational service and activities.

#### Our planet

Our trust board is committed to reducing our carbon footprint. We are installing LED lights on a rolling programme across our academies and working with an energy consultant to improve the energy efficiency of our buildings where possible. Energy consumption is particularly relevant given the increase in the unit price of gas and electricity and our trust is looking at a number of ways to reduce energy consumption including closing buildings early, blanket switch off of IT devices overnight, improving the insulation of our buildings and updating heating equipment to more energy efficient plant. We dispose of waste responsibly and recycle materials where possible.

#### Public benefit

Our trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements of Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit in determining the activities undertaken by our trust and have complied with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit. Our trust is keen to emphasise the public benefit provided by our trust, which can be seen by the activities, and performance outlined within the trustees' report.

### Strategic Report prepared by the Chief Executive Officer

#### About our trust

Our trust board, executive team and staff are all strongly committed to serving areas in the North with a history of poor education to transform the life chances of children and their communities. Our schools serve areas with high levels of students eligible for free school meals and with special educational needs and disabilities.

Dixons was built around the high-performing Dixons City Academy, which was one of the first City Technology Colleges which were the early blueprint for the academy programme. A third of our schools were brand new start-ups under the free school programme, while the other two-thirds are turnarounds adopted from failing predecessors in special measures.

Over the past five years, our trust has more than doubled in size, growing to serve almost 14,000 students, supported by around 1,800 staff, and with a budget of over £100m. We cater for children aged 3-19 in 17 schools in the inner-city communities of Leeds, Bradford, Manchester and Liverpool. We lead 11 secondary academies (inc. Newall Green), three primaries, two all-through academies, and a sixth form academy. Six of our academies are judged Outstanding; five are judged Good (four of which were sponsored from special measures); one was recently judged Inadequate (despite a compelling formal complaint); and a further five academies are awaiting their first inspection under Dixons' leadership.

Over the next three years, Dixons plans again to grow significantly, building our hubs along the M62 in Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester. Our latest free school, Dixons Newall Green in Wythenshawe, opened September 2023, and we were successful in our wave 15 bid to open two further free schools in Manchester in 2-4 years' time. We continue to work with the DfE regions group to explore other opportunities on both sides of the Pennines.

#### Why do we exist?

Our trust's mission is to challenge educational and social disadvantage in the North. All of our schools serve areas of deprivation and communities with higher levels of free school meals than the national average. By the age of 18, we want every student to have the choice of university or a high-quality apprenticeship.

#### How do we behave?

We are a values-driven organisation, and our schools are communities with a strong sense of moral purpose. We expect staff and students to work hard: to be determined to get things done. We expect everyone to be good: to behave with integrity and honesty at all times. And we expect all of our people to be nice: to show humility, to be fair, and to be a positive team player.

#### What do we do?

We establish high-performing non-faith academies which maximise attainment, value diversity, develop character and build cultural capital. We are ambitious and make no excuses based on our students' backgrounds. All students are expected to make outstanding progress that will enable them to succeed in further or higher education and in the world of work. We spend more on teaching than other trusts and cut cost elsewhere. The extended school week offers students more time in the classroom, as well as more opportunities to broaden their horizons and engage in a wider range of co-curricular experiences. We see diversity as a strength and want all students to value, and to learn from, the diversity around them.

#### How will we succeed?

The first of our strategic anchors is academic rigour because we believe that children need powerful knowledge to understand and interpret the world: without it they remain dependent upon those who have it. Powerful knowledge is cognitively superior to that needed for daily life, transcending and liberating students from their daily experience. Our curriculum is designed to be remembered,



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

and is led by, collaborated on, and delivered by high-quality subject specialists. It is owned by students from all faiths and backgrounds and is the entitlement of all: we resist parental opt-outs.

Our operational model is one of aligned autonomy across our academies. We are aligned because we all share the same mission and values; because we want all Dixons students and staff to benefit from our best collective practice; because we all benefit from the collective Dixons resources, brand and reputation; because central services become simpler to deliver and more efficient; and because growth can be better controlled, supported and managed. We value autonomy because leadership and personal accountability are founded on ownership and self-direction; because conformity kills innovation and drives away the best staff; and because standardisation fails to respond to changing needs and fails to adapt to a changing environment. Therefore, we seek to find the optimal balance between consistency across our academies and self-determination by their leaders.

Talent is the third of our strategic anchors and one strand of our strategic plan. There is a pressing business need to ensure that our people-brand is as attractive as our educational brand. Our sector particularly has an issue of recruitment and retention and, although we fare better than many other trusts, it is vital that we recognise that we must recruit, retain and motivate talent in order to continue to challenge educational and social disadvantage.

#### Educational performance

As we navigate the lingering effects of the COVID pandemic, it's important to recognise that while exams and grading might have returned to something more 'normal', schooling itself is far from it. Emerging signals in national results data suggest stark regional difference as well as a widening of the disadvantage gap. Couple this with the ongoing attendance challenges that we are facing and it's not hard to see that, in very real terms, this is not 2019.

Our trust comprises schools at very different stages of development – some are early on a five-year school improvement journey – and we acknowledge those differences – we take on the schools who need us the most and we have done so in the most challenging moment socially, economically and professionally.

Despite this, overall, 2022/23 was a successful year for our trust, and our results for most schools were broadly in line with 2019 levels. However, we recognise that to achieve our mission we need to overcome our contextual challenges and deliver even better results next year.

#### Primary phase

- Improved KS1 attainment at nearly all schools (compared to 2022). The only exception being at Chapeltown, partly due to staffing changes and lower student starting points.
- At KS2, Marchbank performed better than in 2019 and in line with national for reading, writing and maths (RWM) combined; Manningham performed in line with pre-pandemic levels, but below national. Music did not perform as strongly as in 2019 but did improve on 2022 (by 8%) and in line with national for RWM combined. Due to the pandemic, Allerton's first results were last year, so the school doesn't yet have a reliable 3-year trend in performance.
- Disadvantaged KS2 students at Music and Marchbank performed better than in 2022, and Marchbank's disadvantaged students performed better than in 2019 by 26% (RWM combined). However, our overall results for disadvantaged students were below national, so we recognise there is more work to be done.

#### Secondary phase

- At KS4, five of our seven schools that have been with us for more than three years increased (or achieved within 1% of) the percentage of students achieving grade 5 or above in English and maths (Basics) when compared to 2019. Two of the three schools that have been with us for more than one, but less than three years, improved on 2019. Similarly, for the percentage of students achieving grade 5 or above in the EBacc, four out of seven and two out of three improved on 2019.
- Disadvantaged KS4 students performed extremely well at most schools: seven out of ten schools had a higher percentage of disadvantaged students achieve Basics at 5+ compared to 2019; of the other three schools, one was within 2% of 2019, and one was above the national figure for 2019.

#### Post-16

- At Post-16, colleges performed in line with national at A\*-C, but below national at A\*-B. Given the national picture, differential impact of COVID and that we allow students to study academic courses with comparatively lower GCSE grades, it's acceptable that our A\*-C is in line with national, but the proportion of our students achieving higher grades is well below what we would normally expect.
- At Sixth Form, the progress and attainment of students studying vocational courses significantly improved (over a 10% increase at Distinction / Distinction\* grades) on 2022. Given the lower outcomes nationally, this is an impressive improvement.

#### Ofsted

- *While we do not design our academies around external frameworks or do things specifically for Ofsted, it is always welcome to receive independent, external endorsement of our approach.*



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

- Three highly successful Ofsted inspection outcomes: Cottingley (Inadequate to Good), Sixth Form (Outstanding) and Manningham (remains Good).
- An exceptionally disappointing Ofsted outcome at Unity (Requires Improvement to Inadequate – despite a formal complaint):
  - We never use context as an excuse, but we understand it deeply. Unity is in the top 1% nationally for the proportion of children who have been supported by FSM their whole lives. Poverty in this community is inter-generational – COVID knows poverty, so too the cost-of-living crisis
  - Having taken Unity on part-way through an academic year that was followed by pandemic disruption in each subsequent year, last academic year was the first full Dixons year, and the progress is tangible
  - Currently, Unity continues to fall short of our own standards, but we can see the progress and where improvement is needed. We are unequivocal that Unity is a significantly better school than before it joined our trust
  - Unity is responding to the end points of the unbearable pressures placed upon our community; we will return to pre-pandemic norms but the school, critical to social recovery, needs to be given time to do so
- In the last two years, we have taken on four inadequate schools across Liverpool and Manchester; as our internal benchmarking shows, and as confirmed by external partners, they have all increasingly demonstrated marked improvements in culture, curriculum and teaching since joining our trust.

#### Centre for Growth

- The Centre for Growth is now firmly positioned at the centre of our trust to support the development of all colleagues and our academies.
- In terms of enhanced development activity, 1,000 colleagues have attended training from 40 different programmes internally, in addition to numerous conferences and support beyond Dixons from our NPQ Consortium, Behaviour Hub and OpenSource offers.
- The Centre for Growth now manages over 30 cross cutting teams, led by trust APs and champions to develop our trust backbone and respond to both general and localised need.
- Our ED&I work has focussed on our principals and senior leaders to date, as a foundation for the next phase of our ED&I strategy. Training has received exceptional feedback and has the potential to be transformative at individual and trust-level with roll-out over the next three years.
- All our trainees passed their PGCE courses, and the majority are staying with us as ECTs this year. We are delighted to have recruited 25 trainees to train to teach with Dixons 2023/24, bucking the national trend, and comprised of a more diverse and representative profile.
- Our new approach to professional growth is increasingly visible and felt as having positive impact on relationships and belonging from associate staff. It is a priority for 2023/24 to increase consistency and use coaching to improve performance.
- Our EEF Research School has concluded six high profile partnerships with Delta, Wakefield LA, Barnsley LA, Kirklees LA, BDAT and Bradford OA. Several of these have been independently evaluated with positive outcomes for school knowledge and capacity in the region. These involved training over 600 teachers and leaders from over 200 schools.

#### Dixons OpenSource (OS, OS+)

- As requested by the DfE, we are supporting five trusts through a combination of the trust and school improvement offer and the priority education investment areas grant focused on English, maths and attendance: 2 in Greater Manchester, 2 in South Yorkshire and one in Bradford.
- Behaviour Hubs: 3 schools moved from Requires Improvement to Good (with same model as OS+ Onsite).
- 100% of OS+ partners (9 active) would recommend OS+ to colleagues.
- ImpactEd partnership currently in design to enable impact reporting looking forward, and to complete a retrospective impact report.

#### Going concern

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

#### Financial review

The responsibility for the monitoring and support of open academies lies with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), which handles the funding for all 4-19 education.

Most of our trust's income is obtained from the ESFA and the Local Education Authority in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is restricted as defined by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The grants received from the ESFA and Local Education Authority



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

during the year ended 31 August 2023 and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Our trust also receives grants for fixed assets from the Department for Education. In accordance with the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice, 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (SORP 2019), such grants are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities as restricted income in the fixed asset fund. The restricted fixed asset fund balance is reduced by annual depreciation charges over the expected useful life of the assets concerned.

Incoming resources (excluding Restricted Fixed Asset Funding) amounted to £102.7 million and were sufficient to cover all outgoings to produce an operating in year surplus of £0.819 million (before FRS102 pension costs).

During the year, Dixons Croxteth Academy (formerly De La Salle Academy Trust) was a single academy trust and transferred to our trust on 1 November 2022. At the date of transfer in, the operations, assets and liabilities were transferred to our trust at Enil consideration. The transfer has been accounted for as a combination that is in substance a gift. The assets and liabilities transferred were valued at their historic cost and recognised in the balance sheet under the appropriate headings with a corresponding net amount recognised as a net (gain/loss) in the Statement of Financial Activities as Donations – transfer from single academy trust.

As we continue to recover from the impact of COVID-19 pandemic and the severe disruptions it caused to students, our trust continues to receive funding from the DfE/ESFA to support students recover and catch up on lost learning. During the year, our trust received additional COVID-19 related grants totalling £1.385 million to support pupils whose education has been impacted by COVID-19 and disadvantaged students. This funding was fully expended during the year.

During the year, our trust received £310k Trust Capacity fund to support the growth and development of our trust that was fully expended at the year-end. As our trust continues to grow in size, we received £270k pre-opening grant for Dixons Newall Green Academy which opened on the 1 September 2023. The funding was used to cover anything the academy needed up to the point of opening and the funds were fully expended in the year.

The restricted general fund as reported in note 19 excluding pension liability is £6.453 million and the unrestricted fund balance is £1.418 million as at 31 August 2023 giving an actual reserve balance of £7.871 million.

The net book value of tangible and intangible fixed assets at 31 August 2023 was £139 million (2022: £134 million). Movements in tangible fixed assets are shown in note 14 to the accounts. The increase is due to the transfer of Dixons Croxteth Academy assets valued at historic costs. The restricted fixed asset fund is then reduced by annual depreciation charges over the expected useful life of the assets concerned. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and associated support services to academy students.

The deficit in LGPS pension funds is recognised on the balance sheet in accordance with the provisions of FRS102. The total deficit in the scheme as at 31 August 2023 was £479k (2022: £3.444m). The decrease in pension liability has been largely driven by changes in financial assumptions, which resulted in a gain of £4,864m after restricting the surplus recognised on the balance sheet to nil. Market derived CPI inflation and salary increase rate has reduced by 0.10% from the prior year thus resulting in lower liability. The corporate bond yield (upon which the discount rate is derived) has risen over the period by 1.0%. This has served to reduce the employer's obligations and led to the gain on the balance sheet. However, we inherited £788k pension liability from Dixons Croxteth Academy that joined our trust during this financial year. The employment and finance cost totalled £1,111k (2022: £5,155k). Movements in the pension fund are reported in note 29 of the Financial Statements. The pension liability is underwritten by the Government if settlement was ever required.

The balance sheet discloses cash and bank balances of £12.781 million (2022: £10.367 million). The increase in cash balance is because of the additional grants received that were not fully expended in the year ended 31 August 2023, surpluses made by the academies and the transfer of Dixons Croxteth bank account balance of £743k.

#### Reserves and investment policy

Our trustees review the reserve levels of our trust annually. This review encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams, the need to match income with commitments and the nature of reserves. Our trustees have determined that the appropriate level of reserves, excluding restricted fixed asset funding, should be equivalent to at least 5% of total turnover. The reason for this is to provide sufficient working capital to cover delays between spending and receipt of grants and to provide a cushion to deal with unexpected emergencies such as urgent maintenance. Our trustees have taken the decision to centralise all reserves in respect of our trust.

As at 31 August 2023, the total reserves of our trust were £7.871m (2022: £7.052m) of which the restricted general funds were £6.453m (2022: £5.681m). The fund ratio as a % of total income stand at 7.7% as at 31 August 2023, higher than the minimum limit of 5% as per the reserve policy but this includes the ringfenced income to be spent in 23/24.

Our trust's level of free reserves (total funds less the amount held in fixed assets and general restricted funds), as at 31 August 2023, were £1.418 million (2022: £1.371 million). The increase of the unrestricted funds is due to recognising the net surplus funds transferred from Dixons Croxteth Academy as unrestricted. The operating in-year surplus for our trust was at £0.819m (2022: £0.859m) equating to 1% of total income.

Our trustees' investment powers are governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association and allow the charity's funds to be invested in a wide range of investment vehicles without restriction. Our trustees have approved the investment of surplus cash into



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

Flagstone, a bank deposit platform across a number of banks with varying terms non greater than twelve months. This is managed through closely monitored cashflow forecasting and working capital analysis.

Details of the funds held by our trust are set out in notes 19 and 20 of the attached financial statements.

#### Principle risks and uncertainties

The system of risk management is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks which effect the uncertainty of achieving our trust's objectives and to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and their impact should they be realised. The process also considers how risks are managed and whether they are deemed efficient, effective and economic.

The risk register is reviewed by the executive team prior to each audit and risk committee and trust board meeting. As part of the process of the risk register remaining agile, the review looks at each risk and determines whether the risk has become an issue. Issues are then moved to the issues log which is also reported to the trustees. The review of the risk register also includes a wider lens look at the current issues facing the education sector to identify the emerging risks.

The board of trustees will set their appetite and tolerance for each risk category, and this will be used to determine the target risk. To provide assurance to the board of trustees, the Head of Governance will facilitate regular discussions with each risk owner to determine whether mitigations are reducing the likelihood and impact of the risk and whether the mitigations are on track to bring the risk to the target level. The overview of the discussions is presented to the audit and risk committee and the board of trustees in the next cycle.

Our trustees have assessed the major risks to which our trust is exposed, in particular to those relating to teaching, provision of facilities and other operational areas of our trust, and our finances. Our trustees have adopted policies and procedures to mitigate these risks for the Executive team to implement and report to the Audit and Risk committee for any non-compliance. The key risks fall into six categories:

#### Strategic

Growth is a priority for our trust, but as we grow, there is a risk that trust leadership capacity is overstretched and lacks impact in new schools and/or declining performance in existing ones. To mitigate this risk, our trust has established strong leadership in Liverpool and Manchester, approved investment in shared services staffing and renewed the focus on change management and professional growth. There is also the risk that our trust's growth pipeline stalls and our trust loses talent who are seeking personal growth or promotion elsewhere. To mitigate this, a wide variety of talent is involved in the growth project, our trust is seeking White Paper opportunities and has been successful in two free school application both in Manchester, a secondary and a sixth form.

#### People

Our trust's success is very much dependent on recruiting, developing and retaining the very best people in every position in our schools and central services. One of the specific risks is the failure to recruit and promote an inclusive and representative workforce. This can lead to a lack of diverse role models leaving a talent pool untapped. To mitigate the risk, our trust has developed an equality, diversity and inclusion strategy and has rolled out training for all staff across our trust. Staff retention is another key risk due to many factors including change fatigue, cost of living, lifestyle choices. These risks could have a significant impact on teaching quality, governance, and risk of failure to comply with ESFA and DfE required standards. Our trust has implemented a people strategy to address the identified risks with a varied programme of first-class regular training and a wide range of opportunities for greater career development. In addition, our trust is working with a number of coaches, there is a new employee benefits offer, and hybrid working is supported.

#### Safeguarding

The safety of students and staff is of paramount importance to our trust. The risks of failure to protect and or safeguard the students and staff could have a detrimental impact on the reputation of our trust. Therefore, our trust places the highest importance on the safety and wellbeing of students and staff within our schools and central team. Our trust has in place robust safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures to support schools in ensuring that students are safe and feel supported, and everyone working in our trust is trained and knows when and how to raise any concerns that they may have about safeguarding. Implementation and effectiveness of these policies, which conform to DfE guidance, are monitored regularly. Our trust has in each of our schools a designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who ensures consistent best practice in safeguarding and child protection.

#### Finance and operations

The education sector continues to face uncertainty over the cost of energy and potential unfunded salary increases. Our trust will draw upon its reserve balance when required to fund these uncertainties as they arise. Our trust has in place procurement processes to ensure value for money. Capital programmes may be delayed which could impact on learning. There is early focus and action on CLFP, financial modelling and lobbying of Government for additional funding. Squeezes in academy budgets can result in staffing cuts and other compromises to educational quality. In the long term, our trust has in place strong financial planning and a budget maximisation strategy to ensure that educational needs are met. There is also a risk of a fall in roll in some of our trust's catchment areas due to a falling birth rate. This could lead to insufficient funding and hamper school improvement. Our trust has improved the local reputation of those schools affected and student recruitment is in line with other local schools that could attract students. There is a risk of cyber-attack that could cause significant disruption including - loss of data, expense, disabled network, and inoperable systems. The Trust has a Cyber strategy which covers updating firewalls and continual server patching which all support the security of the IT systems.



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

#### Estate

Managing our school estate effectively will ensure we have a safe, healthy and sustainable school environment. There is a risk that our trust fails to meet all the building regulations and health and safety at work act. Our trust has put in place estate management strategy and plan to ensure our estates are safe and compliant with regulations. External service contracts are in place where it is necessary to utilise competent, approved contractors to undertake work where it would not be viable to utilise our own staff. Our trust has several contracts in place which relate to Legionella, Fire Management, Gas, Electricity and Lifting Equipment. All remedial repairs identified through external service contracts have been received and have been prioritised, costed and actioned throughout the year.

#### Education

COVID-19 has had a significant impact and severe disruption on learning and there is a risk of failure to recover post-COVID causing a decline in culture and loss of learning which could lead to poor outcomes. Our trust has factored in additional capacity in its 5-year growth plan for culture, safeguarding and SEND. There is a risk that the turnaround schools may be vulnerable if inspected because of lost time due to COVID-19. Our trust's use of its academy transformation model to frame support can mitigate the risk and ensure continuous improvement. There is the risk of exam results falling below expectation within an academy. This could cause the loss of stakeholder confidence in the quality of education provided. Our trust has in place experienced and highly effective senior leaders, middle management and support staff to drive high standards in all our schools and ensure systems and processes are well embedded across our trust.

#### Fundraising

Our trust does not engage in raising funds directly from the general public and does not use a professional fundraiser or consider fundraising activity to be significant. Our trust will continue to monitor its sources of income and, should it start to generate significant funds from fundraising activities, will inform the fundraising regulator and take all necessary measures to ensure it complies with guidance issued.

#### Streamlined energy and carbon reporting

UK greenhouse gas emissions and energy use data for the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023	2022/23	2021/22
Energy consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh)	16,116,511	17,628,746
<b>Scope 1 emissions in metric tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e</b>		
Gas consumption	1,660.52	1,944.82
Owned transport – mini-buses	7.10	7.22
Total scope 1	1,667.62	1,952.04
<b>Scope 2 emissions in metric tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e</b>		
Purchased electricity	1,431.35	1,331.13
<b>Scope 3 emissions in metric tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e</b>		
Business travel in employee-owned vehicles	22.96	14.88
Total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	3,121.93	3,298.05
<b>Intensity ratio</b>		
Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e per pupil	0.22	0.25

#### Qualification and reporting methodology

We have followed the 2019 HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines. We have also used GHG Reporting Protocol – Corporate Standard and have used the 2023 UK Government's Conversion Factors for Company Reporting.

#### Intensity measurement

The chosen intensity measurement ratio is total gross emissions in metric tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e per student, the recommended ratio for the sector.

#### Measures taken to improve energy efficiency

We have procured the support of an energy consultant and are looking at all avenues for reducing our energy consumption and improving our energy efficiency. We have received funding from the DfE and are investing £644k to install energy efficient lights across our academies. This will reduce consumption and cost of energy. We have increased video conferencing technology for staff

## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

meetings to reduce the need for travel between sites. We are also making sure staff switch off all electrical appliances, computers, laptops etc. when not in use. We are constantly looking at ways to reduce our carbon footprint.

#### Plans for future periods

We focus exclusively on areas of social and educational disadvantage, either by sponsoring turnaround schools to address educational failure, or by opening new free schools to meet growing demand.

Our trust aims to achieve the highest educational outcomes for all our students as well as providing professional growth opportunities for our staff so that all our schools can continue to grow and become self-supporting.

We will continue to build upon the educational success and financial stability of our schools through our three strategic anchors: prioritising academic rigour, ensuring aligned autonomy, and putting our people first.

Each of our schools is at its own point on the journey of academy transformation and all work with excellence, resolve and clarity. Part of that clarity comes from our commitment to simplicity – we know our focus.

#### We have only four strands to our trust's 2-5 year plan:

- To build greater structural, educational, financial and talent resilience to ensure consistently high standards across our trust.
- To expand our hubs in the Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool city regions.
- To make our Centre for Growth the go-to place for our trust and the sector-lead for rigorous implementation, crafting school culture, and equality, diversity and inclusion.
- And to provide education to 20,000 students across the North.

In order to achieve our 2-5 year plan, we continue to work through a roster of big moves (breakout opportunities that are 'hard to reverse') as part of our rolling strategic plan.

#### Our current big moves:

- Grow our sense of belonging through coaching for professional growth
- Finish our IT strategy
- Make academy transformation more programmatic
- Grow shared services to deliver service excellence
- SEND

Dixons Croxteth joined our trust early last academic year, and we were successful in our bid to open two further free schools in Manchester. We continue to work closely with the DfE regions group to explore further opportunities as part of our growth strategy.

#### Funds held as custodian on behalf of others and agency arrangements

Our trust receives 16-19 bursary payments from the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Our trust does not recognise this income as its own income and pays out all monies received for its primary purpose to the relevant parties. Other than this agency arrangement, our trust does not act as a custodian trustee on behalf of others.

#### Pension reserve

The presence of a pension surplus or deficit does not constitute an immediate realisable asset or liability and does not mean the equivalent amount is already committed or no longer available.

The presence of a pension surplus or deficit will generally result in a cash flow effect for our trust in the form of a decrease or increase in the employer's pension contributions over a period of years. Our trust is confident that it can meet the required pension contributions from projected future income without a significant impact on its planned level of activity.

The risk surrounding our trust's pension liability has been taken into consideration when preparing the annual budgets and, therefore, our trust's reserves requirement will continue to be calculated without setting aside a designated reserve to cover the pension liability.



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Trustees Report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

#### Disclosure of information to auditors

Each of the persons who are trustees at the time when this trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- as far as the trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware
- trustees have taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a trustee in order to be made aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditors are aware of that information.

This report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of our trust board, as the company directors, on 12 December 2023, signed on its behalf by:



Mike Blackburn OBE  
Chair, Trust Board



# Dixons Academies Trust

## Governance Statement for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

### Scope of responsibility

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

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

Our trust board 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 Dixons Academies Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to our trust board 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 governors' responsibilities. The Trust Board has formally met six times during the year.

The finance and audit and risk committees, which meet at least three times per year, are sub-committees of our trust board. Their purpose is to assist our trust board in fulfilling its oversight responsibilities with regard to the management of our trust. They do this through the review of financial projections, management accounts and balance sheet reconciliations and risk register to make recommendations to the trust board. In addition, they review the financial statements and accounting policies, receive and review the internal and external auditors report and ensure that recommendations are actioned, and risk managed.

Attendance during the year at meetings of our trust board, finance committee and audit and risk committee was as follows:

Name	Trust Board	Audit and Risk Committee	Finance Committee
Ruby Bhatti OBE	4/6	2/3	-
John Bowers MBE	4/6	-	-
David Clayton (resigned 31 December 2022)	2/3	2/2	-
Bryan Collins (resigned 31 August 2023)	5/6	-	-
Brent Fitzpatrick MBE (Chair, Finance Committee)	5/6	-	5/5
Jo Lynch	-	3/3	-
Sarah Young (resigned 30 September 2023)	5/6	-	4/5
Mike Blackburn OBE	6/6	-	
Kuldip Nijjar	6/6	3/3	
Helen Thornton	4/6	-	
James Wilkinson	-	-	5/5
Susan Richardson (resigned 30 September 2022)	0/1	-	-
John Holroyd	-	-	5/5
Julia Lea	-	-	4/5

### Conflict of interest

Trustees complete a declarations of interest form annually in September. The information from this form is collated into a Register of Interests document which is then uploaded to the trust website.

At every meeting of the trust board and its delegated committees, there is a standing agenda item where trustees are given the opportunity to declare their interests in any matters pertaining to the agenda. Our trust ensures that trustees follow all rules in the company's governing document about conflict of interest and we review our policies regularly and discuss it with new trustees.



## **Dixons Academies Trust**

### **Governance Statement for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

#### **Governance reviews**

As part of the wider improvements to governance, BDO, the internal auditor, carried out a governance review in May 2023. The review consisted of interviews with colleagues from all layers of governance, documentation from previous years, plus the documentation for the proposed new local governance structure, scheme of delegation and governance suite of documents.

The review was broad and looked at building and strengthening governance and roles and responsibilities and local academy board. The findings from the report include:

- alignment to the governance handbook to make sure there is appropriate coverage versus what the handbook promoted.
- observations of interviews and surveys, eg training and induction, communication of information at each level and accountability at each level.
- making sure that there is no duplication or ambiguity about roles and responsibility in the scheme of delegation and terms of reference.
- delays in producing the minutes by the outsourced clerking service and how to ensure they are held to account.

The trustees have taken the findings on board and have put actions in place to address the above points.

#### **Review of value for money**

As accounting officer, the chief executive officer has responsibility for ensuring that our 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 our trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during each academic year and reports to our trust board where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data or by using a framework where appropriate. The Accounting Officer of our trust has continued to deliver improved value for money during the year by further developing procurement initiatives, and improving centralisation of support functions, where appropriate.

#### **Financial governance and oversight**

The Trust benefits from the provision of an independent internal audit service provided by BDO. BDO reports directly to the Audit and Risk Committee on all systems and procedures together with other areas identified in the 3-year Internal Audit Programme e.g. Governance, Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Risk Management etc.

Our trust receives support throughout the year from its external auditors on compliance and accounting practices.

The Finance Committee receives monthly management accounts and balance sheet reports, including cashflow statements and working capital analysis, together with a detailed analysis of all significant variances. Compliance with the Scheme of Delegation is also monitored by the Finance and Audit and Risk Committees, which reviews the Scheme annually.

Our trust board approves the budget each year bearing in mind the requirement to achieve a balanced budget and to ensure that our trust remains a "going concern". Our trust board also receives and approves the trustees' annual report and accounts together with external auditor's management letter.

#### **Better purchasing – ensuring value for money**

Contracts and services are regularly appraised and renegotiated when appropriate to ensure value for money. Our trust takes advantage of consortia, when appropriate, to obtain economies of scale. During COVID-19, our trust followed the guidance given in PPN 02/20 and PPN 04/20. Our trust is working with Tenet Education Services who has developed a three-year procurement plan and a register of contracts to support better purchasing across our trust and ensuring we are compliant with the public contract regulations 2015. During the year Tenet has worked closely with various departments within our trust on several tenders resulting in 22 new contracts being awarded, with an overall contract value of £5,437,297. The tenders were carried out due to existing contracts coming to an end and to support our trust with delivering better value for money to our trust as well as to ensure the Trust remains compliant with regulations. The new contracts will deliver savings to our trust.

There are 20 planned procurement projects in place already for the next 12-month period with a current contract value of £3,000,000. Tenet will continue to work with the Trust making sure the most appropriate procurement route is recommended to help safeguard best value whilst ensuring compliance with Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Trusts Financial Regulations.

## **Dixons Academies Trust**

### **Governance Statement for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

#### **Reviewing controls and managing risk**

Monthly budget monitoring reports are prepared for review by our trust's head of finance and academy Principals; appropriate action is taken to address any variances that may have an impact on the budget out-turn. Our trust ensures that all surplus cash balances are invested in interest bearing accounts to maximise interest earning potential. Investment institutions are selected carefully to provide the most acceptable balance of return and risk.

#### **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 our trust's 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. Our trust's system of internal control has been in place for the year ended 31 August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

#### **Capacity to handle risk**

Our trust board has reviewed the key risks to which our trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. Our trust board is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating, and managing our trust's significant risks that has been in place for the year ending 31 August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by our trust's audit and risk committee and our trust board.

#### **The risk and control framework**

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

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems, with an annual budget and periodic financial reports, which are reviewed and agreed by our trust board
- regular reviews by the Finance Committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the budget/forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes in line with the Scheme of Delegation
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties
- identification and management of risks

#### **The risk and control framework**

Our trust board has considered the need for a specific Internal Audit function and has appointed BDO after a successful tender process to carry out internal scrutiny and the nature of work that they have been engaged to perform. The Internal Audit function reports directly to the Audit and Risk Committee.

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

- Capital expenditure (capex)
- Follow up of previous finance, estates and IT audits.
- Risk management advisory
- Governance advisory
- New academies onboarding and due diligence advisory

On a regular basis, the internal auditor reports to our trust board, through the audit and risk committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of our trust board's financial responsibilities. On an annual basis the 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.

## Dixons Academies Trust

### Governance Statement for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

#### 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
- the work of the executive directors within our trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

Based on the internal auditor's annual statement of assurance, the capex process examined highlights areas of good practice and that the 5-year plan is discussed on a periodic basis and approvals were in line with the scheme of delegation.

Based on the sample testing, capex requests in all 10 instances, approvals were in line with the scheme of delegation and monthly capex reconciliations are performed and these are reported to the finance committee bi-monthly. The financial and internal control frameworks and governance arrangements were operating with sufficient effectiveness to provide substantial assurance over the design and substantial assurance over the operational effectiveness of the controls in place.

The Accounting Officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the Finance and Audit and Risk Committee, and as detailed above and the ensuring continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Approved by order of the members of our trust Board on 12 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



**Mike Blackburn OBE**  
Chair, Trust Board



**Luke Sparkes**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Accounting Officer



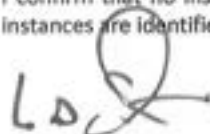
## Dixons Academies Trust

### Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

As Accounting Officer of Dixons Academies Trust, I have considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust board and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of funding, including for estates safety and management, under the funding agreement between the academy trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration, I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academies Trust Handbook 2022 including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

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

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



**Luke Sparkes**  
Accounting Officer

**12 December 2023**



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

Our 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 Annual Accounts Direction published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires our trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, our 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, our trustees are required to:

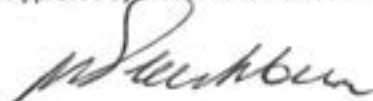
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards 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.

Our 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.

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

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

Approved by order of the members of our trust board on 12 December 2023 and signed on its behalf by:



**Mike Blackburn OBE**  
Chair, Trust Board



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Dixons Academies Trust

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Dixons Academies Trust (the 'academy') for the year ended 31 August 2023 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 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

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

#### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the academy 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 academy trust's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

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

#### Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

#### Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

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

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

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the academy 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 academy trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

### **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:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the academy trust through discussions with management, and from our knowledge and experience of the sector
- we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the accounts or the operations of the academy trust, including the Charities Act 2011 and the guidance issued by the ESFA
- we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting correspondence with the regulators
- we identified laws and regulations were communicated within the audit team and the team remained alert to instances of non-compliance throughout the audit.

We assessed the susceptibility of the academy trust's accounts to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to where they considered there was susceptibility to fraud, their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls, we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships
- tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions

## Dixons Academies Trust

### Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Dixons Academies Trust

- assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates set out in the accounting policies were indicative of potential bias
- investigated the rationale behind significant or unusual transactions.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:

- agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation
- reviewing correspondence with regulators and reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance
- enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims

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 occurring 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](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our Auditors' report.

#### Use of our report

This report is made solely to the academy 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 academy 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 academy trust and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



**Lesley Kendrew (Senior statutory auditor)**

for and on behalf of

**BHP LLP**

Chartered Accountants

New Chartford House

Centurion Way

Cleakheaton

BD19 3QB

Date: 14 December 2023

## Dixons Academies Trust

### Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance report on Regularity to Dixons Academies Trust and the Education & Skills Funding Agency for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 18 October 2023 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Dixons Academies Trust during the year 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

#### Respective responsibilities of Dixons Academies Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Dixons Academies Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 1 December 2016 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2022, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

#### Approach

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

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw our conclusion includes:

- checking that the academy trust's activities are consistent with its framework and its charitable objectives
- checking that the governors and key staff have disclosed their interest in related parties, discussing the same with management and reviewing transactions during the period for undisclosed related party transactions
- checking that any related party transactions during the period are conducted at normal commercial rates
- checking that academy trust expenditure is permitted by its funding agreement
- checking that any borrowings entered into, including leases, are in accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook
- checking that any land and building transactions are in line with the funding agreement and Academy Trust Handbook

## Dixons Academies Trust

### Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance report on Regularity to Dixons Academies Trust and the Education & Skills Funding Agency for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

#### Conclusion

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



**Lesley Kendrew (Reporting Accountant)**

for and on behalf of

**BHP LLP**

Chartered Accountants

New Chartford House

Centurion Way

Cleackheaton

BD19 3QB

Date:

14 December 2023



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

*(Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses)*

	Note	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted general funds £000	Restricted fixed asset funds £000	<b>Total 2023 £000</b>	<b>Total 2022 £000 Reclassified</b>
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>						
Donations and capital grants	3	86		3,694	<b>3,780</b>	2,227
Transfer from Local Authority and single academy trust	32	739	(788)	5,807	<b>5,758</b>	16,861
Charitable activities:						
- Funding for the trust's						
- educational operations	4	2,043	99,182		<b>101,225</b>	83,808
Other trading activities	5	590			<b>590</b>	471
Investments	6	25			<b>25</b>	8
<b>Total</b>		<b>3,483</b>	<b>98,394</b>	<b>9,501</b>	<b>111,378</b>	103,375
<b>Expenditure on:</b>						
Charitable activities: trust educational operations	7	3,436	98,050	5,250	<b>106,736</b>	93,582
<b>Total</b>		<b>3,436</b>	<b>98,050</b>	<b>5,250</b>	<b>106,736</b>	93,582
<b>Net income</b>		<b>47</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>4,251</b>	<b>4,642</b>	9,793
<b>Transfers between funds</b>	19	-	(1,471)	1,471	-	-
<b>Other recognised gains/(losses):</b>						
Actuarial (losses)/gains on defined benefit pension schemes	19,29	-	4,864	-	<b>4,864</b>	34,974
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>47</b>	<b>3,737</b>	<b>5,722</b>	<b>9,506</b>	44,767
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
Total funds brought forward		1,371	2,237	134,273	<b>137,881</b>	93,114
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>1,418</b>	<b>5,974</b>	<b>139,995</b>	<b>147,387</b>	<b>137,881</b>

All our Trusts' activities derive from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.



# Dixons Academies Trust

## Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2023 – Company Number 02303464

		2023 £000	2023 £000	2022 £000	2022 £000
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Intangible assets	13		38		42
Tangible assets	14		138,989		134,231
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stock	15	129		240	
Debtors	16	6,672		6,489	
Cash at bank and in hand		12,781		10,367	
		<u>19,582</u>		<u>17,096</u>	
<b>Liabilities</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(10,743)		(10,044)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<u>8,839</u>		<u>7,052</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<u>147,866</u>		<u>141,325</u>
<b>Net assets excluding pension asset/ liability</b>			<u>147,866</u>		<u>141,325</u>
Defined benefit pension scheme asset/(liability)	19,29	(479)		(3,444)	
<b>Total net assets</b>			<u>147,387</u>		<u>137,881</u>
<b>Funds of the trust:</b>					
<b>Restricted funds</b>					
- Fixed asset fund	19	139,995		134,273	
- Restricted income fund	19	6,453		5,681	
- Pension reserve	19,29	(479)		(3,444)	
<b>Total restricted funds</b>			<u>145,969</u>		<u>136,510</u>
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>	19		<u>1,418</u>		<u>1,371</u>
<b>Total funds</b>			<u>147,387</u>		<u>137,881</u>

The financial statements on pages 28 to 52 were approved by our trustees and authorised for issue on 12 December 2023 and are signed on their behalf by:



**Mike Blackburn OBE**  
Chair, Trust Board



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Cash Flow Statement for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

	Notes	2023 £000	2022 £000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	23	2,890	3,748
Net Cash flows from investing activities	24	(476)	(1,865)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		2,414	1,883
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September 2022		10,367	8,484
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August 2023	25	12,781	10,367



# Dixons Academies Trust

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

### 1 Accounting policies

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

#### 1.1 Basis of preparation

Dixons Academies Trust is a private limited company limited by guarantee incorporated in England. The address of the registered office is given in the reference and administrative Details given on page 3 of these financial statements. The nature of our trust's operations and principal activities are set out in our Trustees' Report on page 5.

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

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of our trust. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £1,000.

#### 1.2 Fund accounting

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

Restricted General funds are resources subject to specific restrictions imposed by funders or donors and include grants from the Education and Skills Funding Agency / Department for Education.

Restricted Fixed Assets Funds are resources which are to be applied to specific capital purposes imposed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and other funders, where the asset acquired or created is held for a specific purpose on a continuing basis.

#### 1.3 Incoming resources

All incoming resources are recognised when our trust has entitlement to the funds, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured reliably.

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 is included in creditors as deferred income until the performance-related conditions are met. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued and is included in debtors as accrued income.

The general annual grant ('the GAG') 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 period is deducted from income and is recognised as a liability.

Capital grants are recognised in full when there is an unconditional entitlement to the grant. Unspent amounts of capital grant are reflected in the balance sheet on 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.

Other grants from government agencies and other bodies are recognised in the period in which they are receivable to the extent the conditions of funding have been met. Where income is received in advance of entitlement of receipt, its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

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

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

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

## Dixons Academies Trust

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

#### 1.3 Incoming resources (continued)

The value of donated services and gifts in kind provided to our trust are recognised at their open market value in the period in which they are receivable in incoming resources, where the benefit to our trust can be reliably measured. An equivalent amount is included as expenditure under the relevant heading in the Statement of Financial Activities, except where the gift in kind was a fixed asset in which case the amount is included in the appropriate category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with our trust policies.

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

#### 1.4 Resources expended

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 benefit 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 shared 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 assets' use.

Charitable activities and Governance costs are incurred on our trusts' educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of our trust apportioned to charitable activities.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

#### 1.5 Going concern

Our 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 our trust to continue as a going concern. Our 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 our trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and there are no material uncertainties about our trust to continue as a going concern, thus they continue to adopt a going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

#### 1.6 Intangible fixed assets and amortisation

Intangible assets costing £500 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably. Intangible assets are initially recognised at cost and are subsequently measured at cost net of amortisation and any provision for impairment.

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

- Purchased computer software 25%

#### 1.7 Tangible fixed assets

Assets costing £500 or more and with a useful life of more than three years 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 asset, the related grants are credited to a restricted fixed asset fund in the Statement 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 freehold land and 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:

- Freehold land Nil
- Freehold buildings 1.67% – 10% straight line
- Leasehold Property 2% – 10% straight Line
- Plant and machinery 10% – 20% straight line



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

- Furniture and equipment 10% – 20% straight line
- Computer equipment 25% – 33% straight line
- Motor Vehicles 25% straight Line

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

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 a fixed asset and their realisable value are recognised as impairments. Impairment losses are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Software purchased independently of computers is included in Intangible fixed assets in accordance with FRS 102.

#### 1.8 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by our trust, this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

#### 1.9 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost or net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete or slow-moving stock.

#### 1.10 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 discount.

#### 1.11 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and highly liquid investments with a short maturity of 12 months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

#### 1.12 Liabilities and provisions

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 our trust anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advance payments for the goods or services it must provide.

Provisions are recognised when our trust has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event which is likely to result in the transfer of economic benefits and the obligation can be estimated reliably.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risk specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised within interest payable and similar charges.

#### 1.13 Leased assets

Rentals under operating leases are charged on a straight-line basis over the lease term. There were no benefits received as an incentive to sign an operating lease contract.

Our trust has four academies where the buildings are subject to a contract under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). This transaction is accounted for as a leasing transaction as our trust only enjoys the benefit of the premises subject to the restrictions under the PFI agreement. Our trust does not hold substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership of the premises and the property is, therefore, accounted for as an operating lease. Consequently, the premises are not recognised as assets in the financial statements of our trust.

The annual charges under the PFI agreement are subject to a fixed formula but will vary over time, therefore, the annual charges are expensed to the income and expenditure account in the year they relate to as this treatment is considered more appropriate than recognition on a straight-line basis.

#### 1.14 Financial instruments

Our trust only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.



## **Dixons Academies Trust**

### **Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

#### **1.15 Investments**

Investments are carried at cost. Our trustees' investment powers are governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association and allow our trust to invest in a wide range of investment vehicles without restriction.

#### **1.16 Taxation**

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

#### **1.17 Pensions**

Retirement benefits to employees of our 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 to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with our trust in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary based on quadrennial valuations using a prospective unit credit method. 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 our 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 date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs, and the cost 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 incorporating income and expenditure accounts and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in other recognised gains and losses.

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

#### **1.18 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement**

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

##### **Critical accounting estimates and assumptions**

Our trust makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates and assumptions will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual result. 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 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 (income) for pensions include the discount factor rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 29, 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 2023. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

#### **1.19 Reserves and investment policy**

Our trustees have accepted the need for general long-term reserves to be maintained at a level approximately equal to 5% of turnover.

To help fund short and medium-term investment, our trustees may transfer to restricted funds an annual variable sum up to a maximum of 12% of government funds. This has not been necessary for the year ending 31 August 2023.

#### **1.20 Redundancy and severance payments**

Where our trust has a constructive liability to make a redundancy payment, this is recognised as and when the liability arises.



# Dixons Academies Trust

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

Where our trustees have agreed that it is in the interest of our trust to make a severance payment which is not contractual, this is recognised as a liability once the decision to make a payment has been ratified at a meeting of our trust board.

### 1.21 Agency arrangements

Our trust acts as an agent in distributing 16-19 bursary funds from ESFA. Payments received from ESFA and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the statement of financial activities as our trust does not have control over the charitable application of the funds. Our trust can use up to 5% of the allocation towards its own administration costs and this is recognised in the statement of financial activities. The funds received and paid and any balances held are disclosed in note 31.

## 2 General Annual Grant (GAG)

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, our trust is not subject to limits on the amount of GAG that can be carried forward from one year to the next.

## 3 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	Total 2023 £000	Total 2022 £000
Capital grants	-	3,694	3,694	2,192
Other donations	86	-	86	35
	<u>86</u>	<u>3,694</u>	<u>3,780</u>	<u>2,227</u>

The income from donations and capital grants, excluding transfer from local authority and single academy trust, defined pensions obligation inherited and donated assets, was £3,780k (2022: £2,227k) of which £86k was unrestricted (2022: £35k) and £3,694k was restricted fixed assets (2022: £2,192k).

## 4 Funding for our trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	Total 2023 £000	Total 2022 £000 Reclassified
<b>DfE/ESFA grants</b>				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	83,871	83,871	70,618
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	-	-	-
Start-up grants	-	89	89	444
UIFSM	-	305	305	293
Pupil Premium	-	4,990	4,990	4,161
MSAG	-	1,120	1,120	-
Others	-	4,734	4,734	3,109
	<u>-</u>	<u>95,109</u>	<u>95,109</u>	<u>78,625</u>
<b>Other Government grants</b>				
Local authority grants	-	2,548	2,548	2,027
<b>COVID-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA)</b>				
COVID-19 recovery premium	-	1,220	1,220	612
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	165	165	332
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>COVID-19 additional funding (non-DfE/ESFA)</b>				
Other COVID-19 funding	-	-	-	111
Other income from our academy trust's educational operations	2,043	140	2,183	2,101
<b>Total</b>	<u>2,043</u>	<u>99,182</u>	<u>101,225</u>	<u>83,808</u>



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

**4 Funding for our trust's educational operations (continued)**

The income from funding for educational operations was £101,225k (2022: reclassified £83,808k) of which £2,043 was unrestricted (2022: reclassified £2,101k) and £99,182k was restricted (2022: reclassified £81,707k).

The other grants above include PE and Sports Grant, Teacher's pay grant, Teacher's pension grant, Rates relief, non-recoverable funding, Redundancy grant, Academies pre-opening grant, academy lease rental and School Supplementary Grant.

Our trust has been eligible to claim additional funding in year from government support schemes in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The funding received is shown above under 'COVID-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA)'.

- The Academy Trust did not receive any catch-up premium funding in-year as this was replaced with the recovery premium funding. However, the brought forward balance of £18k was fully expended in the year.
- The Academy Trust received £1,220k of recovery premium funding during the year and was fully expended with the brought forward balance of £434k.
- The other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding includes National Tutoring Programme, 16-19 tuition funding and school led tutoring fund totalling £165k and was fully expended in the year. These costs are included in note 7 below as appropriate.
- The Trust has not furloughed any of its staff during the pandemic and, therefore, no claim was made under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

**5 Other trading activities**

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	Total 2023 £000	Total 2022 £000 Reclassified
Letting's Income	347	-	347	269
Music Income	27	-	27	24
Other income	216	-	216	178
	<u>590</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>590</u>	<u>471</u>

The income from other trading activities was £590k (2022: reclassified: £664k) of which £590k was unrestricted (2022: reclassified: £471k) and £nil was restricted (2022: £nil).

**6 Investment income**

	Unrestricted funds £000	Restricted funds £000	Total 2023 £000	Total 2022 £000
Short term deposits	25	-	25	8
	<u>25</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>8</u>

The income from investment income was £25k (2022: £8k) of which £25k was unrestricted (2022: £8k) and £nil was restricted (2022: £nil).



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

**7 Expenditure**

	Non-Pay Expenditure				
	Staff costs £000	Premises £000	Other £000	Total 2023 £000	Total 2022 £000
Trust's educational operations:					
- direct costs	62,087	-	8,882	70,969	59,816
- allocated support costs	12,971	915	21,881	35,767	33,766
	75,058	915	30,763	106,736	93,582

Net income/(expenditure) for the period includes:

	2023 £000	2022 £000
Operating lease rentals:		
PFI	4,642	3,575
Other operating leases	384	294
Depreciation	5,224	4,535
(Gain)/loss on disposal of fixed assets	(2)	(7)
Amortisation of intangible fixed assets (included within charitable activities – trust's educational operations)	26	35
Fees payable to auditor for:		
- audit	42	37
- other services	11	8

	Total 2023 £000	Total 2022 £000
Direct costs – educational operations	70,969	59,816
Support costs – educational operations	35,683	33,683
Support costs – governance	84	83
	<u>106,736</u>	<u>93,582</u>

Direct costs – educational operations

	Total 2023 £000	Total 2022 £000
Wages and salaries	46,250	40,106
National insurance	4,783	4,225
Pensions costs	9,170	8,092
Supply teachers	1,429	1,129
Staff development	455	356
Educational supplies	7,239	4,799
Examination fees	1,258	1,024
Other costs	385	85
<b>Total</b>	<u>70,969</u>	<u>59,816</u>

**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

**7 Expenditure on charitable activities (continued)**

	<b>Total 2023 £000</b>	<b>Total 2022 £000</b>
<b>Support costs – educational operations</b>		
Wages and salaries	10,068	8,863
National Insurance	820	708
Pensions costs	1,406	1,180
Supply staff	523	523
Recruitment and other staff costs	154	376
Technology costs	1,044	944
Maintenance of premises and equipment	915	900
Cleaning	559	384
Rent and rates	767	890
Heat and light	2,800	1,015
Insurance	314	256
Security and transport	353	185
Catering	2,231	1,908
Operating leases	5,026	3,869
Office overheads	1,191	1,255
Depreciation and amortisation	5,250	4,570
Education supplies	1,129	678
FRS102 pension costs	1,111	5,155
Bank charges	22	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>35,683</b>	<b>33,683</b>
	<b>2023 £000</b>	<b>2022 £000</b>
<b>Support costs – Governance</b>		
Auditors' remuneration	53	45
Other costs	31	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>83</b>

**8 Staff and Staff Costs**

**Staff costs**

<b>Staff costs during the period were:</b>	<b>Total 2023 £000</b>	<b>Total 2022 £000</b>
Wages and salaries	55,827	48,913
Social security costs (Includes Apprenticeship Levy)	5,603	4,933
Pension costs	10,576	9,272
	<b>72,006</b>	<b>63,118</b>
Supply staff costs	1,952	1,652
Staff restructuring costs	491	56
FRS102 pension adjustment	99	534
	<b>74,548</b>	<b>65,360</b>
<b>Staff restructuring costs comprise:</b>		
Redundancy payments	407	29
Severance payments	84	27
	<b>491</b>	<b>56</b>



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

**8 Staff and staff costs (continued)**

**Severance payments**

Our trust paid 10 severance payments in the year, disclosed in the following bands:

£0 – £25,000	10
£25,001 – £50,000	0
£50,001 – £100,000	0
£100,000 – £150,000	0
£150,000+	0

**Staff numbers**

The average number of persons employed by our trust during the period was as follows:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Teachers	920	822
Administration and support	838	76
Management	33	28
	<b>1,791</b>	<b>1,626</b>
	2023 FTE	2022 FTE
Teachers	890	814
Administration and support	653	583
Management	33	28
	<b>1,576</b>	<b>1,425</b>

**Higher paid staff**

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

	2023 No.	2022 No.
£60,001 – £70,000	45	24
£70,001 – £80,000	12	15
£80,001 – £90,000	13	5
£90,001 – £100,000	5	2
£100,001 – £110,000	2	3
£110,001 – £120,000	5	4
£120,001 – £130,000	1	-
£130,001 – £140,000	3	-
£140,001 – £150,000	-	1
£190,001 – £200,000	2	1

**Key management personnel**

The key management personnel of our trust comprise the trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 3. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and NI) received by key management personnel for their services to the Trust was £4.726 million (2022 £3.405 million).



# Dixons Academies Trust

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

### 9 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

The chief executive officer only receives remuneration in respect of services he provides undertaking his role of chief executive officer. Trustees did not receive any payments other than reimbursed expenses from Dixons Academies Trust in respect of their role as trustees.

During the year ended 31 August 2023, travel and subsistence expenses totalling £134 were reimbursed to 1 trustee (2022: £118). No remuneration was paid to any trustee in the year nor in the prior year.

### 10 Trustees and officers insurance (RPA)

Our trust has opted into the Department for Education's risk protection arrangement (RPA), an alternative to insurance where the 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 trust business, and provides cover up to £10,000,000. It is not possible to quantify the trustees and officers' indemnity element from the overall cost of the RPA scheme membership.

### 11 Central services

Our trust has provided the following central services to our schools during the year:

- Chief executive officer
- Deputy chief executive officers
- School improvement
- Finance, HR and payroll services
- Procurement services
- ICT network and services
- Estate and site management
- Marketing, communications, design services, website management and compliance
- Admissions management and appeals management
- Legal services
- Governance services

Our trust charges for these services at 8.5% of GAG income, MSAG and supplementary grant and 7.5% for PFI academies (2022 – 7%). The actual amounts charged during the year were:

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Dixons City Academy	479	361
Dixons Allerton Academy	966	737
Dixons Trinity Academy	342	254
Dixons McMillan Academy	347	259
Dixons Kings Academy	456	347
Dixons Music Primary	162	127
Dixons Marchbank Primary	185	144
Dixons Trinity Chapeltown Academy	495	308
Dixons Manningham Primary	169	124
Dixons Cottingley Academy	508	371
Dixons Sixth Form Academy	529	352
Dixons Unity Academy	499	409
Dixons Brooklands Academy	720	360
Dixons Broadgreen Academy	700	447
Dixons Fazakerley Academy	455	387
Dixons Croxteth Academy	196	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,208</b>	<b>4,987</b>



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

A summarised Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31 August 2023 in respect of the above is as follows:

	2023 £000	2022 £000
<b>Income</b>		
Recharge to academies	7,208	4,987
Pre-opening grant	270	100
Emergency support grant	-	235
Other DfE grant	312	4
Trust development grant and appeals	54	53
Other income	334	128
Funds inherited on transfer of single academy trust	739	2,095
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,917</b>	<b>7,602</b>

	£000	£000
<b>Staff costs</b>	<b>7,333</b>	<b>5,595</b>
Consultancy	80	26
HR and legal services	223	35
Audit and accountancy	80	56
IT licensing and software	429	277
Recruitment and advertising	207	288
Admissions	24	31
Capital purchase	77	605
Other	256	295
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,709</b>	<b>7,208</b>

**12 Other financial income**

	2023 £000	2022 £000
Investment income on pension scheme assets	2,000	723
Interest on pension scheme liabilities	(2,099)	(1,257)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(99)</b>	<b>(534)</b>

**13 Intangible fixed assets**

	Computer software £000
<b>Cost</b>	<b>2023</b>
At 1 September 2022	581
Additions	22
At 31 August 2023	603
<b>Amortisation</b>	
At 1 September 2022	539
Charged in year	26
At 31 August 2023	565
<b>Carrying amount</b>	
At 31 August 2022	42
At 31 August 2023	38



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

**14 Tangible fixed assets**

	Freehold land and buildings	Leasehold land and buildings	Plant and machinery	Motor vehicles	Fixtures and fittings
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Cost</b>					
At 1 September 2022	36,499	113,725	2,288	57	9,224
Transfer from single academy trust	5,777	-	-	-	18
Additions	527	382	-	-	1,301
Transfer between classes	497	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	(4)	-
At 31 August 2023	43,300	114,107	2,288	53	10,543
<b>Depreciation</b>					
At 1 September 2022	10,168	13,365	2,245	42	5,496
Charged in year	835	2,280	43	8	620
Disposals	-	-	-	(4)	-
At 31 August 2023	11,003	15,645	2,288	46	6,116
<b>Net book values</b>					
At 31 August 2022	26,331	100,360	43	15	3,728
At 31 August 2023	32,297	98,462	-	7	4,427

Our trust's freehold properties are subject to charges held by the Secretary of State for Education. Leasehold Properties are held on a 125-year lease from the Local Authority and/or Department for Education.

	Assets under construction	Computer equipment	Total
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 September 2022	497	12,320	174,610
Transfer from single academy trust	-	12	5,807
Additions	684	1,281	4,175
Transfer between classes	(497)	-	-
Disposals	-	-	(4)
At 31 August 2023	684	13,613	184,588
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 September 2022	-	9,063	40,379
Charged in year	-	1,438	5,224
Disposals	-	-	(4)
At 31 August 2023	-	10,501	45,599
<b>Net book values</b>			
At 31 August 2022	497	3,257	134,231
At 31 August 2023	684	3,112	138,989

**15 Stock**

	2023 £000	2022 £000
Finished goods and goods for resale	129	240
	129	240

The stock of goods consists of books, stationery, teaching consumables etc. purchased in 2022/23 for use in 2023/24.



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

**16 Debtors**

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Trade debtors	145	106
VAT recoverable	1,256	1,199
Other debtors	69	117
Prepayments and accrued income	5,202	5,067
	<u>6,672</u>	<u>6,489</u>

**17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Trade creditors	2,382	2,235
Other taxation and social security	1,432	1,296
Other creditors	2,527	2,057
Accruals and deferred income	4,402	4,456
	<u>10,743</u>	<u>10,044</u>

**18 Deferred income**

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Deferred income at 1 September 2022	529	480
Released from previous years	(529)	(480)
Resources deferred in the year	598	529
Deferred Income at 31 August 2023	<u>598</u>	<u>529</u>

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Rates	134	157
UIFSM	187	173
Post 16 bursary	100	102
GAG clawback	-	65
Uniform	-	22
SEN	-	3
Music	-	1
LCC – salary	14	-
Union fee	18	-
Growth funding	139	-
Emergency funding	6	6
	<u>598</u>	<u>529</u>

Deferred income held at 31 August 2023 relates to 2023/24 Rates, Universal Infant Free School Meals, P16 bursary etc. as shown above.



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

**19 Statement of funds**

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Gains and (losses) £000	Transfers £000	Balance at 31 August 2023 £000
<b>Restricted general funds</b>						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	4,003	83,871	(81,392)	-	(1,471)	5,011
Start-up grant	-	89	(89)	-	-	-
UIFSM	-	305	(305)	-	-	-
Pupil Premium	-	4,990	(4,990)	-	-	-
Recovery premium	434	1,220	(1,654)	-	-	-
Catch-up premium	18	-	(18)	-	-	-
MSAG	-	1,120	(1,120)	-	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	165	(165)	-	-	-
Other grants	1,226	7,422	(7,206)	-	-	1,442
Pension reserve	(3,444)	(788)	(1,111)	4,864	-	(479)
	<b>2,237</b>	<b>98,394</b>	<b>(98,050)</b>	<b>4,864</b>	<b>(1,471)</b>	<b>5,974</b>
<b>Restricted fixed asset funds</b>						
Transfer of building/FFE	37,839	-	(873)	-	-	36,966
Transfer on conversion	68,909	5,807	(1,719)	-	-	72,997
DfE/ESFA capital grants	24,441	3,694	(2,322)	-	-	25,813
Transfers in on joining trust	1,000	-	-	-	-	1,000
Private sector capital sponsorship	198	-	(16)	-	-	182
Capital expenditure from GAG	1,886	-	(320)	-	1,471	3,037
	<b>134,273</b>	<b>9,501</b>	<b>(5,250)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,471</b>	<b>139,995</b>
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>136,510</b>	<b>107,895</b>	<b>(103,300)</b>	<b>4,864</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>145,969</b>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>1,371</b>	<b>3,483</b>	<b>(3,436)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,418</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>137,881</b>	<b>111,378</b>	<b>(106,736)</b>	<b>4,864</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>147,387</b>

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

**Restricted funds**

Restricted funds represent the cumulative unspent General Annual Grant, other government grants/income and sponsorship income carried forward from previous years in respect of funding received for the specific purpose of our trust's running costs excluding fixed asset. Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the academies are not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that can be carried forward as at 31 August 2023.

**Unrestricted fund**

Unrestricted funds represent surpluses generated from other trading activities and are to be used to support future general educational purposes either of a revenue or capital nature at the discretion of our trust board. This includes the net income transferred from Dixons Brooklands Academy.

**Restricted fixed asset fund**

This fund represents the cumulative net book value carried forward in respect of our trust's tangible and intangible fixed assets plus any capital funding received from central/local government and other donors which has not been expended by the balance sheet date. The capital funding may be used to complete capital projects or undertake maintenance works on existing tangible fixed assets. The fund balance also includes the carrying value of fixed assets of an academy joining our trust from another trust and all other assets donated to the Trust.

**Pension reserve**

This fund includes the pension reserve which identifies the pension deficit of schools joining our trust from another trust and through which the pension scheme movements are recognised. Where a pension valuation report is received and a surplus or a deficit on the defined benefit pension scheme is reported, the movement is recognised where an asset or liability occurred. The reserve above is negative because it constitutes a liability.



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

**Comparative information in respect of the preceding period**

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £000	Income £000	Expenditure £000	Gains and losses £000	Transfers £000	Balance at 31 August 2022 £000
<b>Restricted general funds</b>						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	4,295	70,618	(69,209)	-	(1,701)	4,003
Start-up grant	-	444	(444)	-	-	-
UIFSM	-	293	(293)	-	-	-
Pupil Premium	-	4,161	(4,161)	-	-	-
Recovery premium	-	612	(178)	-	-	434
Catch-up premium	364	-	(346)	-	-	18
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	77	332	(409)	-	-	-
Other COVID-19 funding	34	111	(145)	-	-	-
Other grants	528	5136	(4,438)	-	-	1,226
Pension reserve	(24,225)	(9,038)	(5,155)	34,974	-	(3,444)
	<b>(18,927)</b>	<b>72,669</b>	<b>(84,778)</b>	<b>34,974</b>	<b>(1,701)</b>	<b>2,237</b>
<b>Restricted fixed asset funds</b>						
Transfer of building/FFE	38,712	-	(873)	-	-	37,839
Transfer on conversion	46,642	23,804	(1,537)	-	-	68,909
DfE/ESFA capital grants	24,342	2,113	(2,014)	-	-	24,441
Transfers in on joining trust	1,000	-	-	-	-	1,000
Private sector capital sponsorship	134	79	(15)	-	-	198
Capital expenditure from GAG	316	-	(131)	-	1,701	1,886
	<b>111,146</b>	<b>25,996</b>	<b>(4,570)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,701</b>	<b>134,273</b>
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<b>92,219</b>	<b>98,665</b>	<b>(89,348)</b>	<b>34,974</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>136,510</b>
<b>Total unrestricted funds</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>4,710</b>	<b>(4,234)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,371</b>
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>93,114</b>	<b>103,375</b>	<b>(93,582)</b>	<b>34,974</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>137,881</b>
<b>Total trust reserves balances</b>						
				<b>2023</b>		<b>2022</b>
				<b>£000</b>		<b>£000</b>
Centrally held reserves – restricted and unrestricted funds (MAT)				<b>7,871</b>		7,052
Restricted fixed asset fund				<b>139,995</b>		134,273
Pension reserve				<b>(479)</b>		(3,444)
<b>Total</b>				<b>147,387</b>		<b>137,881</b>

Our trustees approved that all reserves held by our trust would be centralised. This decision has been taken so that all academies within our trust are supported. Consequently, our trustees have decided to pool all reserves. Accordingly, no surpluses or deficits are attributed to particular schools, but all are held centrally. Our trustees are committed to ensuring that the balance of reserves (£7,871m as at 31 August 2023) will be used effectively for the benefit of each child who is educated within a Dixons academy.



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

**19 Statement of funds (continued)**

**Analysis of academies by cost**

	Teaching and educational support staff costs	Other support staff costs	Educational supplies	Other costs excluding depreciation	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Dixons City Academy	3,710	953	356	825	5,844	5,395
Dixons Kings Academy	3,704	807	332	1,036	5,879	5,801
Dixons Allerton Academy	7,914	1,391	905	1,520	11,730	11,139
Dixons Music Primary	1,489	255	115	286	2,145	2,121
Dixons Marchbank Primary	1,815	261	136	422	2,634	2,479
Dixons Trinity Academy	2,720	629	327	557	4,233	4,151
Dixons McMillan Academy	2,579	788	327	636	4,330	4,054
Dixons Manningham Primary	1,617	324	79	253	2,273	2,170
Dixons Trinity Chapeltown	3,952	850	477	765	6,044	4,663
Dixons Cottingley Academy	3,951	660	450	1,025	6,086	5,363
Dixons Unity Academy	3,947	650	805	2,008	7,410	6,553
Dixons Sixth Form Academy	3,653	643	556	870	5,722	4,727
Dixons Central Services	2,366	4,855	825	1,697	9,743	11,760
Centre for Growth	258	124	78	7	467	351
Dixons Fazakerley Academy	3,611	485	778	1,646	6,520	5,839
Dixons Broadgreen Academy	5,053	646	1,612	2,089	9,400	6,757
Dixons Brooklands Academy	5,326	730	931	1,547	8,534	5,689
Dixons Croxteth Academy	1,244	488	263	497	2,492	-
	<b>58,909</b>	<b>15,539</b>	<b>9,352</b>	<b>17,686</b>	<b>101,486</b>	<b>89,012</b>

**20 Analysis of net assets between funds**

Fund balances at 31 August 2023 are represented by:

	Unrestricted Funds £000	Restricted General Funds £000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £000	2023 Total Funds £000	2022 Total Funds £000
Intangible fixed assets	-	-	38	38	42
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	138,989	138,989	134,231
Current assets	1,418	17,196	968	19,582	17,096
Current liabilities	-	(10,743)	-	(10,743)	(10,044)
Non-current liabilities	-	-	-	-	-
Pension scheme liability	-	(479)	-	(479)	(3,444)
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>1,418</b>	<b>5,974</b>	<b>139,995</b>	<b>147,387</b>	<b>137,881</b>

**21 Capital commitments**

	2023 £000	2022 £000
Contracted for, but not provided in the financial statements	<b>599</b>	<b>283</b>

This commitment is a capital project funded by the ESFA through SSICB. This relates to the internal refurbishment and construction of new build canteen extension at Dixons Croxteth Academy.



**Dixons Academies Trust**  
**Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023**

**22 Long-term commitments, including operating leases**

**Operating Lease**

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

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Amounts due within one year	519	544
Amounts due between one and five years	1,598	1,542
Amounts due after five years	1,159	1,490
	<u>3,276</u>	<u>3,576</u>

**Other contractual commitments**

At 31 August 2023, the total of our trust's future minimum payments under other contractual commitments was:

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Amounts due within one year	3,966	3,557
Amounts due between one and five years	17,199	15,307
Amounts due after five years	27,829	28,887
	<u>48,994</u>	<u>47,751</u>

Our trust occupies premises which are subject to a private finance initiative (PFI) contract. Our trust itself is not party to this service concession contract, however our trust has entered into a supporting agreement towards the costs of the local authority. The above relates to commitments to operating payments including costs for catering, cleaning, utilities, and other ancillary services.

**23 Reconciliation of net income/(expenditure)**

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	4,642	9,793
Adjusted for:		
- Amortisation [note 13]	26	35
- Depreciation [note 14]	5,224	4,535
- Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(3,694)	(2,192)
- Transfer from single academy trust	(5,807)	(23,804)
- (Profit)/Loss on disposal of fixed asset	(2)	(7)
- Interest receivable [note 6]	(25)	(8)
- Defined benefit pension scheme obligation inherited	788	9,038
- Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable (note 30,31)	1,012	4,621
- Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost [note 30,31]	99	534
- (Increase)/decrease in stocks	111	(189)
- (Increase)/decrease in debtors	(183)	(3,933)
- Increase/(decrease) in creditors	699	5,325
<b>Net cash provided by/ (used in) operating activities</b>	<u>2,890</u>	<u>3,748</u>



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

#### 24 Cash flows from investing activities

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	25	8
Proceeds from sale of tangible fixed assets	2	7
Purchase of intangible fixed assets	(22)	(18)
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(4,175)	(4,054)
Transfer from single academy trust	(5,807)	(23,804)
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	3,694	2,192
Transfer from single academy trust	5,807	23,804
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities</b>	<b>(476)</b>	<b>(1,865)</b>

#### 25 Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	At 31 August	At 31 August
	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Cash in hand and at bank	10,258	8,855
Deposit account (12 months)	2,523	1,512
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>12,781</b>	<b>10,367</b>

#### 26 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 he/she is a member, or within one year after he/she ceases to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £10 for the debts and liabilities contracted before he/she ceases to be a member.

#### 27 Pension and similar obligations

Our 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 West Yorkshire Pension Fund, Greater Manchester Pension Fund and Merseyside Pension Fund. They are all multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2016 and of the LGPS to the period ended 31 March 2022.

Contributions amounting to £1,187,709 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2023 (2022: £1,088,662) and are included within creditors.

#### 28 Teachers' Pension Scheme

##### Introduction

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pensions Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for teachers. 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 the employer makes contributions, as a percentage of salary – these contributions are credited to the Exchequer. Retirement and other pension benefits are paid by public funds provided by Parliament.

##### Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 4 years. The aim of the review is to specify the level of future contributions. Actuarial scheme valuations are dependent on assumptions about the value of future costs, design of benefits and many other factors. The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2016. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 5 March 2019. The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- employer contribution rates set at 23.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy)
- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £218,100 million, and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £196,100 million giving a notional past service deficit of £22,000 million.



- the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, is used to determine the notional investment return. The current SCAPE rate is 2.4% above the rate of CPI, assumed real rate of return is 2.4% in excess of prices and 2% in excess of earnings. The rate of real earnings growth is assumed to be 2.2%. The assumed nominal rate of return including earnings growth is 4.45%

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

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the period amounted to £8.069 million (2022: £7.252 million).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the [Teachers' Pensions website](#).

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. Our trust has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme. Our trust has set out above the information available on the scheme.

## 29 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 2023 was £3,438k (2022: £2,626k) of which employer's contributions totalled £2,495k (2022: £1,897k) and employees' contributions totalled £943k (2022: £729k). The agreed contribution rates for future years are between 15.2% & 19.4% for employers and between 5.5% and 12.5% for employees.

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

### Principal actuarial assumptions

	At 31 August 2023	At 31 August 2022
	Range	Range
Rate of increase in salaries	3.75% - 4.30%	3.80% - 4.40%
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.60% - 2.95%	2.70% - 3.00%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.00% - 5.30%	4.10% - 4.30%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.60% - 2.95%	2.70% - 3.05%
Pension accounts revaluation rate	2.60%	2.70%
Commutation of pensions to lump sums		

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

	At 31 August 2023	At 31 August 2022
	Average	
<i>Retiring today</i>		
Males	20.6	21.0
Females	23.3	24.0
<i>Retiring in 20 years</i>		
Males	21.6	22.2
Females	24.9	25.7

### Sensitivity analysis

	At 31 August 2023	At 31 August 2022
	£000	£000
Discount rate +0.1%	(989)	(1,199)
Discount rate -0.1%	1,026	1,202
Mortality assumption – 1 year increase	(902)	(698)
Mortality assumption – 1 year decrease	905	701
CPI rate +0.1%	950	1,083
CPI rate -0.1%	(947)	(1,080)

# Dixons Academies Trust

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

### Our trust's share of the assets in the scheme

	Fair value at 31 August 2023	Fair value at 31 August 2022
	£000	£000
Equity instruments	36,418	33,800
Bonds	5,618	5,186
Property	2,601	2,492
Cash and other	4,395	4,120
<b>Total market value of assets</b>	<b>49,032</b>	<b>45,598</b>

The actual return on scheme assets was £524,000 (2022: £484,000)

### Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Current service cost (net of employee contributions)	(3,498)	(6,489)
Net interest cost	(99)	(534)
Past service cost	-	(25)
Administrative expenses	(9)	(4)
<b>Total operating charge</b>	<b>(3,606)</b>	<b>(7,052)</b>

### Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
<b>At 1 September</b>	<b>49,042</b>	<b>56,591</b>
Upon conversion	2,020	-
Current service cost	3,498	6,489
Past service cost	-	25
Interest cost	2,099	1,257
Employee contributions	943	729
Actuarial (gain)/loss	(7,388)	(35,213)
Benefits paid	(703)	30
Net increase in assets from disposals/acquisitions	-	19,134
<b>At 31 August</b>	<b>49,511</b>	<b>49,042</b>

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

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
<b>At 1 September</b>	<b>45,598</b>	<b>25,281</b>
Upon conversion	1,232	-
Interest income	2,000	723
Return on plan assets (excluding net interest on the net defined pension liability)	-	-
Actuarial gain/(loss)	(2,524)	(239)
Employer contributions	2,495	1,897
Employee contributions	943	729
Benefits paid	(703)	30
Administrative expenses	(9)	(4)
Net increase in assets from disposals/acquisitions	-	10,096
<b>At 31 August</b>	<b>49,032</b>	<b>45,598</b>

The workings of the net valuation of the combined pension schemes shows a deficit of £479k which includes a net asset valuation of £250k for Dixons Academies Trust (WYPF), £896k for Dixons Brooklands Academy (GMPF), £391k for Dixons Fazakerley Academy (MPF) and £457k for Dixons Broadgreen Academy (MPF). However, the trustees believe that in order to show a true and fair view the net asset should not be recognised (surplus restricted to nil) and as a result we have adjusted the actuarial gain on the defined benefit obligations so that the adjusted deficit of £479k is recognised on the balance sheet.



## Dixons Academies Trust

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

#### 30 Related party transactions

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

Exceed Academies Trust, a trust which Mr B Fitzpatrick is a trustee:

During the year, our trust received income of £2,500 (2022: £6,000) relating to support services provided and incurred expenditure of £4,382 (2022: nil) relating to placement funding and training.

Beckfoot trust, a trust which Sir Nick Weller is a trustee:

During the year, our trust received income of £nil (2022: £6,250) relating to subscription to our opensource platform and incurred expenditure of £5,000 (2022: nil) relating to Bradford Research Champions management for providing training to staff and leaders.

The transactions followed our trust's procurement process. Where services have exceeded £2,500, the element above is provided at no more than cost. Any transactions with the above organisations comply with the requirements set out in the Academy Trust Handbook.

#### 31 Agency arrangements

Our trust distributes 16-19 bursary funds to students as an agent for the ESFA. In the accounting period ending 31 August 2023, our trust received £600K (2022: £298K) and disbursed £412k (2022: £138K) from the fund. Each academy may retain up to 5% of the fund income to cover associated administration costs. Any unspent monies are retained for future years spending to a maximum of 2 years. The value of unspent funds as at 31 August 2023 and included in other creditors was £468k (2022: £280k).

	2023	2022
	£000	£000
Fund brought forward	280	120
Bursary funding received	600	298
<b>Total income</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>418</b>
Funds distributed	393	138
5% admin cost retention	19	-
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>138</b>
<b>Funds carried forward</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>280</b>

#### Collaborative arrangement

Our trust is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 3-year collaborative arrangement with large trusts across the Bradford district running early careers framework/national professional qualifications and education endowment research. Our trust through its centre for growth provide training and coaching of key BDAT senior leaders from all BDAT schools in phase 1 rolling out to other leaders in phase 2. Our trust has now completed phase 1 of the programme. During the year the trust received £20,000 from BDAT (2021/22: £29,240) for year 2 programmes and will receive £25,000 in 2023/24 to complete the project. The total funding for the 3 years is £74,240.

This work is being delivered at cost as it is collaborative work across multi academy trusts. As such there is no profit to this work and ESFA has been notified of this arrangement.



# Dixons Academies Trust

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

### 32 Transfer of newly converted academies and existing academy into our trust

#### Dixons Croxteth Academy

Dixons Croxteth Academy (formerly De La Salle Academy Trust) was a single academy trust transferred into Dixons Academies Trust on 1 November 2022. At the date of transfer in, the operations, assets and liabilities were transferred to our trust at Enil consideration. The transfer has been accounted for as a combination that is in substance a gift. The assets and liabilities transferred were valued at their historic cost and recognised in the balance sheet under the appropriate headings with a corresponding net amount recognised as a net (gain/loss) in the Statement of Financial Activities as Donations – transfer from single academy trust.

The table below set out the values of the identifiable assets and liabilities transferred and an analysis of their recognition in the SOFA.

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted General Funds £'000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £'000	2023 Total Funds £'000
<b>Tangible fixed assets</b>				
Leasehold land and buildings	-	-	5,777	5,777
Other tangible fixed assets	-	-	30	30
<b>Current assets</b>				
Cash and Bank	743	-	-	743
Debtors	86	-	-	86
Current liabilities	(90)	-	-	(90)
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>				
LGPS pension deficit	-	(788)	-	(788)
<b>Net assets/(liabilities)</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>(788)</b>	<b>5,807</b>	<b>5,758</b>

### 33 Post balance sheet events

Dixons Newall Green Academy is a new secondary free school that opened on 1 September 2023 serving students aged seven to sixteen in the Wythenshawe district of Manchester. The building is under construction and managed by the DfE project team. The site is in educational use but under temporary accommodation. When the building is completed, and control of the site is handed to the academy trust an opening value will be recognised in the financial statements in 2023/24. The accounting entry will be to recognise freehold buildings and to recognise the value within "donations and capital grants" in the statement of financial activities. The asset will be depreciated from this point in accordance with FRS102 (section 17) and the SORP (modules 6 and 10).

