

Autism Schools Trust

(A Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 August 2016

Company Registration Number:
8335297 (England and Wales)

Autism Schools Trust
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Year ended 31 August 2016

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Autism Schools Trust
Reference and Administrative Details
Year ended 31 August 2016

Members	Ambitious About Autism Dimensions (UK) Ltd Helen Baker (until January 2016) Neil Goulden (from January 2016)
Trustees	Neil Goulden (Chair from January 2016) (appointed 28 September 2015) Helen Baker * (Chair of meeting on 23 November; handed over to Neil Goulden in January 2016 and became Vice Chair) Charlotte E Warner Mark E Paulson * (accounting officer) Jolanta Lasota * Stephen W Scown Jennifer L A Nutt Kevin R Oakhill Joanna Healey * (appointed 23 November 2015) Lisa Hopkins (resigned 28 September 2015) Isabelle M N Morhall (resigned 2 November 2015) * members of the Finance and Resources Committee
Company Secretary	Jacqueline L Fletcher
Senior Management Team:	
- Head Teacher	Sarah Roscoe
- Interim Operations Director	Philip Moss
- Deputy Head Teacher	Helen Ralston
- Assistant Head Teacher	Julian Ruddick
- Head of Behaviour & Welfare	Hannah Clements
Company Name	Autism Schools Trust
Principal and Registered Office	1430 Arlington Business Park, Theale, Reading, RG7 4SA
Company Registration Number	8335297 (England and Wales)
Independent Auditor	KPMG LLP Arlington Business Park Theale, Reading, RG7 4SD
Banker	National Westminster Bank Plc 13 Market Place Reading, Berkshire, RG1 2EP
Solicitor	Stone King LLP 16 St John's Lane London, EC1M 4BS

Autism Schools Trust

Trustees' Report

Year ended 31 August 2016

The trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the period 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016. The annual report serves the purposes of both the trustees' report, and a directors' report under company law.

The academy trust's principal object is to advance, for the public benefit, education in the United Kingdom by developing schools specially organised to make special educational provisions for pupils with special educational needs, or 16-19 Academies offering curricula appropriate to the needs of their students. The academy trust opened its first school, The Rise School, in September 2014.

The Rise School (the "School"), located in Hounslow, West London, is an academy for pupils aged 4 to 18, who have autism. The construction and fit out of the School building was completed in March 2016 (temporary buildings were used in the interim). The School has a capacity of 96 pupils in the age range 4-19, including a sixth form of 16, and had a roll of 49 in the school census on 6 October 2016.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

The academy trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's memorandum and articles of association are the primary governing documents of the academy trust. The trustees of Autism Schools Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company is known as Autism Schools Trust or AST.

Details of the trustees who served during the year are included in the Reference and Administrative Details on page 4.

Members' Liability

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

Trustees' Indemnities

Indemnity insurance for trustees has been procured from Zurich insurance.

Method of Recruitment and Appointment or Election of Trustees

The Articles of Association provide that the sponsor organisations, Ambitious about Autism and Dimensions (UK), may each nominate and appoint up to three trustees.

A skills audit approach is used to ensure that the board of the academy trust has a breadth of appropriate skills and experience. Two of the most recent appointees were appointed for their skills and experience in education and contracts/legal matters. Both skill sets complemented the existing make-up of the board.

All appointments are made either by the sponsor organisations acting as corporate members or the trustees themselves.

Policies and Procedures Adopted for the Induction and Training of Trustees

Prospective new trustees are invited to a board meeting prior to taking a final decision to join the board. On joining they are provided with background information about the academy trust (including copies of the minutes of previous meetings and other relevant documentation about the School (such as newsletters, the handbook, the prospectus, etc.).

Autism Schools Trust
Trustees' Report (continued)
Year ended 31 August 2016

Trustees are also offered an opportunity to meet with the senior leadership team at the School, and to spend time at the School to gain an understanding of how the School operates.

Arrangements are made on an ongoing basis to ensure that trustees receive up to date information and training. Activities this year have included information sessions on changes to the Ofsted Inspection framework and an overview of the changes to performance measures at Key Stages 2 and 4. Trustees have also been encouraged to undertake online training in relation to Safeguarding and the Government's Prevent Strategy.

Organisational Structure

The academy trust comprises a governance structure of a Board plus a Finance and Resources Committee, a Rapid Improvement Group, a Wellbeing and Engagement Committee and a Governance Committee. During the year the academy trust also maintained an Education Committee however this was disbanded in November 2015 in order to create the simpler and more efficient academy trust structure outlined above. The board includes representation from both sponsors, the founding parents and other trustees appointed for their skills and experience. All decisions relating to the academy trust and decisions for the School relating to its overall strategic direction, the approval of decisions reserved to directors and the appointment of key members of staff, were taken at one of these meetings.

One of the founding parents (and trustee) is also the accounting officer of the academy trust.

The head teacher has delegated authority to make decisions for the School, as long as they are consistent with the organisational strategy and are within budgetary expectations. The day-to-day management of the School rests with the head teacher who has overall responsibility for the School.

The academy's senior leadership team consists of a head teacher, an interim operations director, a deputy head teacher, an assistant head teacher and a head of behaviour and welfare. The senior leadership team support the head teacher in carrying out the day-to-day management of the School.

A formal performance management process is in place to consider the performance of the head teacher and to make any recommendations regarding remuneration. An ad hoc group of two trustees, supported by an external consultant, oversees this process and makes recommendations to the board.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

Pay for key management personnel is set by the board on recommendations from the head teacher. Whilst the academy trust does not follow the provisions of the School Teachers Pay and Condition Document, it does use it as a benchmark in order to set appropriate and competitive pay rates. Other factors taken into account include market conditions and the fact that the School is still growing and so pay rates may need to reflect the fact that the School will soon be twice its current size.

The trustees do not receive any remuneration for their services as Academy Trustees. Expenses incurred by trustees in fulfilling their duties as trustees are reimbursed to them at cost.

Autism Schools Trust
Trustees' Report (continued)
Year ended 31 August 2016

Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

Autism Schools Trust has been established through a collaboration agreement between Ambitious about Autism and Dimensions (UK) Limited. Both sponsors provide a significant level of support to the academy trust through financial contributions and advice. Each sponsor appoints up to three trustees who act as governors of the School through attending board meetings, committee meetings and making monitoring visits to the School.

In addition to this the sponsors provide a range of business and support services to the academy trust through contractual arrangements (as outlined in the accounts below).

Objectives and Activities

Objects and Aims

The Autism Schools Trust is governed by a set of Articles of Association whose charitable object is to develop and maintain free schools that provide education for pupils with autism. This will help the academy trust to meet its core aim of providing children and young people with the experiences and skills that they need in order to make a successful transition to adulthood and lead fulfilling and happy lives in which they are able to contribute effectively to society.

Objectives, Strategies and Activities

The public will benefit from the activities of the academy trust through the provision of education to pupils with special educational needs. The School has opened and is co-located with Springwest Academy (previously called Feltham Community College).

During 2015/16 the key aims of the academy trust have been to:

- oversee the School's move into its purpose built premises,
- oversee the growth of the School,
- embed secure processes, curriculum and teaching to meet the learning needs of the pupils on roll and lead to a successful Ofsted inspection outcome, and to
- ensure financial security.

Trustees have put in place a governance structure, which has enabled scrutiny and oversight of these aims and objectives as well as hold the senior leadership at the School to account.

At the end of 2015/16 the academy trust was able to report:

- a successful move of the School into its new building,
- positive growth in pupil numbers in line with its growth targets,
- the positive report received by the Education Adviser from the Department for Education confirming the positive progress that the School was making in terms of the quality of its provision, and
- the setting of a balanced budget for 2016/17 reflecting both pupil and staffing growth without recourse to contributions from the sponsors.

Public Benefit

In overseeing the provision of education and the support of children, young people and their families the trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers and duties.

Autism Schools Trust Trustees' Report (continued) Year ended 31 August 2016

Achievements and Performance

The School is the first school to be opened by the academy trust. It supports children and young people with autism aged 4-19 to access a broad and challenging curriculum alongside mainstream pupils. Based in West London, the School is located on the site of a mainstream school (Springwest Academy). This enables pupils to access a wide range of learning and social opportunities whilst still receiving the specialist support they need.

The School was established under the Government's Free School Programme and opened in September 2014. At the end of August 2016 it had 48 pupils on roll organised across six classes. The youngest pupils on roll were in Reception while the oldest were in Year 9. The School did not have any sixth form pupils. All of the pupils on roll have a statement of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan and are placed at the School by local authorities including the London Boroughs of Hounslow, Ealing, Hillingdon, Kingston upon Thames, Richmond and Surrey County Council.

At the end of the 2015/16 academic year the School employed forty permanent members of staff made up of a head teacher and senior leadership team, teachers, teaching assistants, specialist staff (behaviour specialists and speech and language therapists) and administration staff. The School also used a number of agency staff to support the capacity of the teachers and teaching assistants. Use of agency staff was however reduced considerably over the year and, by the end of the 2015/16 academic year, only one agency post was being utilised by the School with plans in place to replace that post with a permanent member of staff.

The key objective for 2015/16 was to successfully move the School from its temporary site to permanent buildings and this was achieved in March 2016.

The partnership with Springwest Academy developed positively during the year with the School making use of its facilities (for example, the sports hall and gym). A small number of secondary pupils joined classes in Springwest Academy for maths.

The academy trust has worked, and continues to work, with local authorities and the local communities to assess the demand for school places and the provision for children and young people with autism and it has seen referrals and pupil numbers grow.

Key Financial Performance Indicators

The key financial performance indicator during the year was the maintenance of a positive cash balance. This was achieved through the donations from the sponsoring organisations and the grant income received.

Other key indicators of performance for the academy trust were:

Pupil performance

The nature of the pupils and the small number of them makes the reporting of progress data at the level of "cohort" difficult. Individual progress of pupils is assessed, tracked and reported regularly.

Nevertheless pupils at the School do take statutory and end of key stage tests. During 2015/16:

- Eight pupils took the KS1 phonics screening test, with 63% of these pupils achieving the threshold levels.
- Eight pupils took the end of KS1 teacher assessment with 25% of pupils working at the expected standard or beyond.
- Four pupils took KS2 SATs with one pupil meeting the expected standard in both English and Maths.

**Autism Schools Trust
Trustees' Report (continued)
Year ended 31 August 2016**

Pupil Attendance

Pupil attendance is a key indicator of how well the School is meeting the needs of pupils and engaging them in their learning.

During 2015/16 there was a significant improvement in attendance rates:

	2014/15	2015/16
Whole School	84.0%	92.8%
Primary	89.2%	94.5%
Secondary	69.3%	90.0%

Ofsted Inspection

During 2015/16 the School received an unannounced s.8 inspection which confirmed that the School's safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

The School has not yet received a full Ofsted inspection. It has, however, received a number of Department for Education monitoring visits from an Education Adviser. The last of these visits was in June 2016. The education adviser identified a range of strengths including the quality of the teaching and the positive outcomes being achieved by pupils.

Going Concern

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

Financial Review

During the year the academy trust worked on completing the construction of the School's own permanent building and this was completed in March 2016.

Autism Schools Trust's finance and resource committee met regularly during the year providing close scrutiny and monitoring of the financial position of the School and overseeing its move into the new building.

As a growing school, close management of the School budget was necessary to ensure the operational flexibility required in the first few years as well as to ensure that its existence was financially sustainable. The School finished the year comfortably within its budget which was a positive result given the move into the new building and the associated cost of that process.

Members of the finance and resource committee also provided close scrutiny and challenge during the budget building process for 2016/17.

The vast majority of the School's income is dependent on a) the pupil places funded by the Education Funding Agency and b) "top up" fees from the local authorities who commission places at the School. Pupil places are therefore the key driver of income. The largest proportion of expenditure within the school is directed towards staffing with the vast majority of the staffing supporting direct pupil provision (teachers, teaching and learning assistants and therapists). The staffing structure and deployment of staff is reviewed regularly to ensure that it is supporting pupils' learning and progress most effectively.

Autism Schools Trust Trustees' Report (continued) Year ended 31 August 2016

While the School received sponsor contributions to support its revenue budget in 2015/16, the growth of the School over the year has meant that a budget has been set for 2016/17 that does not require any further sponsor contributions.

Reserves Policy

The academy trust's policy is to hold reserves sufficient to provide a working balance to mitigate the impact of uneven cash flows, to provide a contingency in respect of unexpected events and to plan for potential major items of expenditure.

Fund balances as at 31 August 2016 totalled £6,322k (2015: £3,721k). This comprised £254k (2015: £267k) of unrestricted funds, which equates to 44-days of expenses, a £292k deficit (2015: £48k deficit) on restricted funds and £6,360k (2015: £3,502k) of restricted fixed asset funds.

The funds balance at 31 August 2016, excluding the pension deficit, totalled £6,614k (2015: £3,771k).

Investment Policy

The academy trust's governing document allows it, on the basis of appropriate financial advice, to invest any funds not immediately required for the furtherance of its object. At 31 August 2016, no investments were held.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

Risk management has been assessed through the academy trust's risk map. This is reviewed by the academy trust's board and necessary steps are taken to mitigate risks as appropriate. The trustees have examined the major risks to the academy trust and are satisfied that the risks are adequately managed.

The principal uncertainties that exist relate to the growth of pupil numbers. Sensitivity analysis based upon 70% pupil numbers has shown that the academy trust would be able to manage the financial impact of short-term fluctuations.

Other identified risks being monitored and managed by the trustees regularly at their various committee meetings include the negative impact that an adverse Ofsted judgement (and/or other statutory inspection process) would bring and the significant pressure on local authority budgets which has the potential to result in lower top-up fee income for the academy trust.

Donors

The academy trust is grateful for the support of the companies, sponsors, charitable trusts and individuals who have supported it during the year, including the Heathrow Community Fund.

Plans for Future Periods

The key objectives for 2016/17 are to continue to improve the quality of the academy trust's provision, to grow the School roll and to prepare for the School's first Ofsted inspection.

The academy trust will continue to work with local authorities and the local communities to assess the demand for school places and the provision for children and young people with autism. Where appropriate, the academy trust will develop proposals for new free schools that meet the growing demand for school places and achieve the best outcomes for pupils.

The trustees have taken advantage of the small companies' exemption from the requirement to prepare a strategic report in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

Autism Schools Trust
Trustees' Report (continued)
Year ended 31 August 2016

Funds Held as Custodian Trustee on Behalf of Others

Although the charitable company maintains restricted funds to deal with incoming resources that are earmarked for a particular purpose by donors, sponsors and other funders, Autism Schools Trust does not hold, and the trustees do not anticipate that it will in the future hold, any funds as custodian for any third party.

Auditor

Insofar as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware, and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The Trustees' report was approved by order of the board of trustees, as the company directors, on 15 December 2016 and signed on the board's behalf by:


.....
Neil Goulden
Chair of Trustees
15 December 2016

**Autism Schools Trust
Governance Statement
Year ended 31 August 2016**

Scope of Responsibility

As trustees we acknowledge that we have overall responsibility for ensuring that Autism Schools 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.

The board of trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to Mark Paulson, 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 Autism Schools Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. He is also responsible for reporting to the board of trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the trustees' report and in the statement of trustees' responsibilities. The board of trustees has formally met seven times during the year.

Attendance during the year at meetings of the board of trustees was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
C Warner	6	7
H Baker (Chair to January 2016)	7	7
J Lasota	7	7
L Hopkins (resigned 28 September 2015)	1	1
M Paulson (accounting officer)	5	7
S Scown	6	7
I Morhall (resigned 2 November 2015)	2	2
L Nutt	7	7
K Oakhill	3	7
N Goulden (appointed 28 September 2015, Chair from January 2016)	6	7
J Healey (appointed 23 November 2015)	4	5

During 2015/16 the academy trust reviewed its governance structure to ensure that it was fit for purpose and was able to deliver sufficient, high quality information to the trustees in order for them to fulfil their responsibilities. At the start of the year the governance structure consisted of an Academy Trust Board, a Finance and Resources Committee, a Governance Committee and a Local Governing Body.

The trustees concluded that this structure was overly bureaucratic and therefore adopted a more streamlined system of an Academy Trust Board and three main committees: a Finance and Resources Committee, a Wellbeing and Engagement Committee and a Rapid Improvement Group.

The rapid improvement group was established in order to oversee the improvements that were taking place in relation to teaching and learning with the intention that it will become a fully formed Teaching and Learning Committee in time.

Autism Schools Trust
Governance Statement (continued)
Year ended 31 August 2016

The governance committee remained as an ad hoc committee. A new scheme of delegation was developed to reflect this new structure. Over the course of the year the structure has proved successful in a) engaging trustees in specific areas of the School's work and b) ensuring clear reporting lines from each committee to the main board. Trustees also undertook regular visits to the School in line with their individual responsibilities (safeguarding, Health and Safety, etc.)

As the academy trust grows and adds further schools it will review its governance structure, however, for 2016/17 it does not anticipate making any changes to the current structure.

Finance and Resources Committee (FRC)

The finance and resources committee is a sub-committee of the main board of trustees. Its purpose is to provide detailed scrutiny of the academy trust's finances and its use of resources, to establish budgets and future year forecasts and to ensure that adequate systems and processes are in place to support financial and operational requirements. All operational contracts are established and comply with all necessary statutory requirements. During the year ended 31 August 2016 the committee considered the financial information included in the application for funding and the actual performance against these, as well as staffing issues, including recruitment and pension provisions.

During the year J Healey, who is a practising lawyer, and H Baker, who is the vice chair of the board of trustees, joined the committee. Attendance at meetings during the year was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
J Lasota	6	6
L Hopkins (resigned 28 September 2015)	1	1
M Paulson	6	6
J Healey (appointed 23 November 2015)	4	4
H Baker (appointed 22 February 2016)	4	4

The Governance Committee

The governance committee is a sub-committee of the main board of trustees. Its purpose is to carry out a review of governance and make appropriate recommendations to the board.

The committee did not meet formally during the year ended 31 August 2016 as all governance issues were covered at the board of trustee meetings, as a full board.

It is planned that the governance committee will meet again regularly post April 2017.

The Local Governing Body (LGB)

The LGB was also a sub-committee of the main board of trustees and was made up of several members including parent, staff, community and partnership governors. Trustees undertook an open recruitment process in order to appoint a chair for the LGB. On appointment the chair became a trustee. The vice-chair of the LGB was also a Trustee. The full local governing body met half-termly to approve decisions, policies, school development and financial status and to hold the head teacher and senior leaders to account when monitoring school performance. The LGB also had two sub-committees: the teaching and learning committee and the pupil wellbeing committee. The LGB and its sub-committees were disbanded in November 2015 following a governance restructure and the formation of a Well-being & Engagement Committee (W&EC) and a Rapid Improvement Group (RIG).

Autism Schools Trust
Governance Statement (continued)
Year ended 31 August 2016

The Rapid Improvement Group (RIG)

The RIG is a sub-committee of the main board of trustees. It was set up following a governance restructure and meetings commenced in September 2015. The group is responsible for the quality of teaching & learning, pupil progress and leadership & management.

Attendance at meetings of the RIG during the year was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
H Baker (appointed 19 November 2015)	4	4
L Nutt	5	5
I Morhall (resigned 2 November 2015)	1	2

The Wellbeing and Engagement Committee (W&EC)

The wellbeing and engagement committee is a sub-committee of the main board of trustees. It was also set up following the governance restructure and meetings commenced in November 2015. The committee is responsible for the wellbeing of pupils, health & safety, safeguarding and family & community engagement.

Attendance at meetings of the wellbeing and engagement committee during the year was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
K Oakhill	1	3
J Lasota	2	3
S Scown	-	3
C Warner	1	3

Autism Schools Trust

Governance Statement (continued)

Year ended 31 August 2016

Review of Value for Money

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

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

The academy trust's activities in the year were focused on continuing to establish the School securely and ensuring a successful transition from temporary accommodation to its new building. By the end of August 2016 the School had 48 pupils on roll and was receiving Education Funding Agency ("EFA") place-led funding and top-up funding from the relevant local authority for each pupil on roll. The academy trust also received tranches of post-opening grant plus donations from the two sponsoring organisations. The majority of expenditure in the year related to staff payroll costs. Salaries offered remain aligned with market salary scales. The majority of non-staff costs were in respect of resources to support children's learning as well as off-site activities (including fees to Springwest Academy for off-site trips and visits). Information technology equipment has continued to be procured through the EFA's procurement model and all spending was agreed and signed off by the board under this framework.

An operating budget for the year to 31 August 2017 has been agreed by the trustees.

A system of financial governance has been maintained through the year. This includes:

- the finance and resources committee providing oversight and guidance;
- documenting key financial controls through appropriate policies. These include the financial regulations and delegations of authority;
- financial systems for receiving, authorising and paying supplier invoices, customer invoicing and collection and the production of financial reports; and
- budgeting and forecasting controls.

Educational standards have been the focus of close scrutiny over the year.

The partnership with Springwest Academy has grown and strengthened over the year and provides a good example of how the academy trust is securing value for money. Specifically, making use of curriculum time in Springwest Academy as well as using its specialist facilities (for example, for sports and games) is an efficient way to provide opportunities to the pupils at the School that they would otherwise not have had or that would have cost considerably more to provide outside Springwest Academy.

The two sponsors of the academy trust also provide high-quality advice and support, some of which would otherwise need to be procured or commissioned commercially.

Autism Schools Trust

Governance Statement (continued)

Year ended 31 August 2016

Review of Value for Money (continued)

During 2015/16 the academy trust has worked with the EFA to complete the construction of the new building. As this work is funded by the Department for Education ("DfE"), the academy trust operates within its procurement framework.

The academy trust provides a powerful opportunity for improving the life chances of children with autism. Its schools will, at full capacity, each be able to educate 96 pupils in the age range 4-19, including a sixth form of 16, with plans in place to further increase this capacity at feasible schools in areas with sustainable demand.

The National Audit Office (2009) reported that autism costs the UK £28.2 billion per year, 36% of which is due to lost employment of the individual. It is estimated that, if the cumulative impact of service use is included then with the need for accommodation, support and low employment rates:

- someone with high functioning autism or Asperger's syndrome represents a potential lifetime cost of £3.1m, and
- someone with autism and a learning disability incurs a cost which is 50% higher at £4.6m.

A key aim of the academy trust is to offer job coaching from year 9 to support pupils into paid employment in adulthood. Having employment as an integral part of the curriculum is rarely seen in other schools and will significantly reduce the cost of individuals with autism to the public purse as well as dramatically improving their life chances.

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 ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the academy 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. The system of internal control has been in place for Autism Schools Trust for the period 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The board of trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the academy trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The board of trustees is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the academy trust's significant risks that have been in place for the period 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the board of trustees.

**Autism Schools Trust
Governance Statement (continued)
Year ended 31 August 2016**

The Risk and Control Framework

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

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the board of trustees;
- regular reviews by the finance and resources committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines;
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties; and
- identification and management of risks.

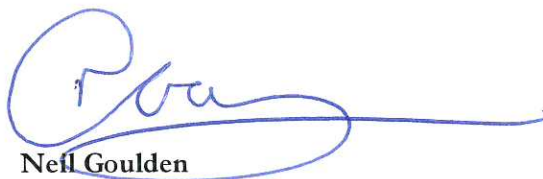
The board of trustees will consider the need for a specific internal audit function when income exceeds £10m per annum.

Review of Effectiveness

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

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 15 December 2016 and signed on its behalf by:



Neil Goulden
Chair of Trustees

Mark Paulson
Accounting Officer



Autism Schools Trust
Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance
Year ended 31 August 2016

As accounting officer of Autism Schools Trust I have considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust's board of trustees and the Education Funding Agency (EFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with EFA terms and conditions of funding, under the funding agreement in place between the academy trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook 2015.

I confirm that I and the academy trust board of trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds by the academy trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the academy trust's funding agreement and the Academies Financial Handbook 2015.

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



Mark Paulson
Accounting Officer
15 December 2016

Autism Schools Trust Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities Year ended 31 August 2016

The trustees (who act as governors of Autism Schools Trust and 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 Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

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

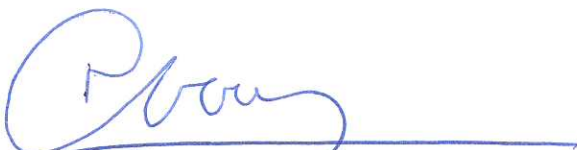
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2015 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2015 to 2016;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

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

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

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 15 December 2016 and signed on its behalf by:



Neil Goulden
Chair of Trustees

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Board of Trustees of Autism Schools Trust

We have audited the financial statements of Autism Schools Trust ('the charitable company') for the year ended 31 August 2016, set out in pages 24 to 45. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, the Academies Accounts Direction 2015 to 2016 and UK Accounting Standards (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and in respect of the separate opinion in relation to compliance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2015 to 2016 (SORP 2015) issued by the Education Funding Agency ('EFA') on terms that have been agreed. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and, in respect of the separate opinion in relation to compliance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2015 to 2016 issued by the EFA, those matters that we have agreed to state to them in our report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the Directors and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities set out on page 19, the trustees (who act as directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. Our responsibility is to audit, and express an opinion on, the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those auditing standards require us to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

A description of the scope of an audit of financial statements is provided on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditscopeukprivate.

Opinion on financial statements

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs at 31 August 2016, and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2016 to 2016 issued by the EFA.

Opinion on other matter prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, the information given in the Trustees' Annual Report, which constitutes the Directors' Report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Board of Trustees of Autism Schools Trust (continued)

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

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

- the academy trust has not kept adequate accounting records; 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; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies' exemption from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Jonathan Brown

Jonathan Brown (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of KPMG LLP, Statutory Auditor
Chartered Accountants
Arlington Business Park, Theale, Reading, RG7 4SD

Date: 15 December 2016

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to Autism Schools Trust and the Education Funding Agency

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 5 December 2013 and further to the requirements of the Education Funding Agency (EFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2015 to 2016, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Autism Schools Trust during the period 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016 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 Autism Schools Trust (the academy trust) and EFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to Autism Schools Trust and EFA 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 Autism Schools Trust and EFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of Autism Schools Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Autism Schools Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 30 September 2014 and the Academies Financial Handbook, extant from 1 September 2015, 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 2015 to 2016. We report to you whether anything has come to our attention in carrying out our work which suggests that in all material respects, expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016 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 Academies Accounts Direction 2015 to 2016 issued by EFA. 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.

Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to Autism Schools Trust and the Education Funding Agency (continued)

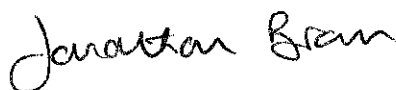
The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- Documenting the framework of authorities which govern the activities of the academy trust;
- Reviewing the evidence supporting the representations included in the accounting officer's statement on regularity, propriety and compliance with the framework of authorities;
- Undertaking a risk assessment based on our understanding of the general control environment and any weaknesses in internal controls identified by our audit of the financial statements;
- Reviewing the output from the self-assessment questionnaires completed by all staff with budget holder responsibility and the head teacher on behalf of the Governing Body;
- Testing compliance with delegated authorities for a sample of material transactions;
- Testing transactions with connected parties to determine whether the academy trust has complied with the 'at cost' requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook 2015;
- Confirming through enquiry and sample testing that the academy trust has complied with its procurement policies and that these policies comply with delegated authorities; and
- Reviewing any evidence of impropriety resulting from our work and determining whether it was significant enough to be referred to in our regularity report.

This list is not exhaustive and we performed additional procedures designed to provide us with sufficient appropriate evidence to express a negative conclusion on regularity consistent with the requirements of Part 9 of the Academies Accounts Direction 2015 to 2016.

Conclusion

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2015 to 31 August 2016 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.



Jonathan Brown
Reporting Accountant
for and on behalf of KPMG LLP
Chartered Accountants
Arlington Business Park, Theale, Reading, RG7 4SD

Date: 15 December 2016

Autism Schools Trust
Statement of Financial Activities
for the year ended 31 August 2016
(including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £'000	Total 2016 £'000	Total 2015 £'000
Income from:						
Donations and capital grants	2	101	95	2,968	3,164	3,826
Charitable activities:						
Funding for the academy trust's educational operations	3	3	1,761	-	1,764	1,566
Total		104	1,856	2,968	4,928	5,392
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds		-	-	-	-	(16)
Charitable activities:						
Academy trust educational operations	5	(5)	(2,024)	(110)	(2,139)	(1,845)
Total	4	(5)	(2,024)	(110)	(2,139)	(1,861)
Net income / (expenditure)		99	(168)	2,858	2,789	3,531
Transfer between funds	12	(112)	112	-	-	-
Other recognised losses						
Actuarial losses on defined benefit pension schemes	12,20	-	(204)	-	(204)	(2)
Return on the defined benefit pension scheme assets in excess of interest	12,20	-	16	-	16	-
Net movement in funds	12	(13)	(244)	2,858	2,601	3,529
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward	12	267	(48)	3,502	3,721	192
Total funds carried forward	12,13	254	(292)	6,360	6,322	3,721

All of the academy trust's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two financial periods.

Autism Schools Trust
Balance Sheet
as at 31 August 2016
Company Number 8335297

	<i>Note</i>	2016 £'000	2016 £'000	2015 £'000	2015 £'000
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	9		6,646		3,761
Current assets					
Debtors	10	387		2,779	
Cash at bank and in hand		471		256	
		858		3,035	
Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(890)		(3,025)	
Net current (liabilities) / assets			(32)		10
Net assets excluding pension liability			6,614		3,771
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	20		(292)		(50)
Total net assets			6,322		3,721
Funds of the academy trust:					
Restricted funds					
Fixed asset fund	12	6,360		3,502	
Restricted income fund	12	-		2	
Pensions reserve	12	(292)		(50)	
Total restricted funds			6,068		3,454
Unrestricted income funds	12		254		267
Total Funds			6,322		3,721

The financial statements on pages 24-45 were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 15 December 2016 and signed on their behalf by:



 Neil Goulden
 Chair of Trustees

Autism Schools Trust
Statement of Cash Flows
for the year ended 31 August 2016

	<i>Note</i>	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	16	247	308
Cash flows from investing activities			
	17	(32)	(259)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period			
	18	215	49
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September 2015			
		256	207
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August 2016			
	18	471	256

Autism Schools Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016

1 Statement of 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, are set out below.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements of the academy trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2015 to 2016 issued by EFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

Autism Schools Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Going Concern

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis notwithstanding the net current liabilities due to the commitment of the sponsors to support the academy trust during its initial growth phase and the planned growth which will improve the balance sheet further.

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

Income

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

- **Grants**

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

General Annual Grant is recognised in full in the Statement of Financial Activities in the year for which it is receivable.

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

- **Sponsorship Income**

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

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Income (continued)

- **Donations**
Donations are recognised on a receivable basis (where there are no performance-related conditions) where the receipt is probable and the amount can be reliably measured.
- **Other income**
Other income, including the hire of facilities, is recognised in the period it is receivable and to the extent the academy trust has provided the goods or services.
- **Donated goods, facilities and services**
The value of donated services and gifts in kind provided to the academy trust are recognised at their open market value in the period in which they are receivable as incoming resources, where the benefit to the academy 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 fixed asset category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the academy trust's accounting policies.

Expenditure

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

- **Expenditure on Raising Funds**
This includes all expenditure incurred by the academy trust to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities, events and non-charitable trading.
- **Charitable Activities**
These are costs incurred on the academy trust's educational operations, including support costs and costs relating to the governance of the academy trust apportioned to charitable activities.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Tangible Fixed Assets

Assets costing £1k or more are capitalised as tangible fixed assets and are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment.

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

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

• Freehold Buildings	2%
• Long leasehold buildings	2%
• Fixtures, fittings and equipment	20%
• ICT equipment	33%

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use.

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

Liabilities

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

Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the academy trust has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event which it is probable will 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 risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised within interest payable and similar charges.

Leased Assets

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

Autism Schools Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016

(continued)

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Taxation

The academy trust is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes.

Accordingly, the academy trust is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by part 11, chapter 3 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.

Pensions Benefits

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

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and contributions are calculated so as to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the academy trust in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary on the basis of quadrennial valuations using a prospective unit credit method. As stated in note 20, the TPS is a multi-employer scheme and there is insufficient information available to use defined benefit accounting. The TPS is therefore 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 scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the academy trust in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to operating surplus are the current service costs and the costs of scheme introductions, benefit changes, settlements and curtailments. They are included as part of staff costs as incurred. Net interest on the net defined benefit liability is also recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in other recognised gains and losses.

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

Fund Accounting

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

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

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

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

1 Statement of accounting policies (continued)

Critical accounting estimates

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit liability depends on a number of factors that are determined on an actuarial basis using a variety of assumptions. The assumptions used in determining the net cost (income) for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 20, 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 2013 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2016. 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.

First time adoption of FRS 102

These financial statements are the first financial statements of Autism Schools Trust prepared in accordance with Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (FRS 102) and the Charities SORP 2015 (SORP 2015). The financial statements of Autism Schools Trust for the year ended 31 August 2015 were prepared in accordance with previous Generally Accepted Accounting Practice ('UK GAAP') and SORP 2005.

There were no adjustments to either opening reserves at 1 September 2014 or to the results for the year ended 31 August 2015.

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

2 Donations and capital grants

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Restricted Asset Funds £'000	Total 2016 £'000	Total 2015 £'000
Capital grants	-	-	2,968	2,968	3,489
Other donations	101	95	-	196	337
	<u>101</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>2,968</u>	<u>3,164</u>	<u>3,826</u>
2015 total	<u>251</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>3,489</u>	<u>3,826</u>	

3 Funding for the Academy Trust's educational operations

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Total 2016 £'000	Total 2015 £'000
DfE/EFA Grants				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	742	742	557
Other DfE/EFA grants	-	14	14	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>756</u>	<u>756</u>	<u>557</u>
Other Government Grant				
Local authority grants	-	1,005	1,005	1,007
Other Income from the academy trust's educational operations	3	-	3	2
	<u>3</u>	<u>1,761</u>	<u>1,764</u>	<u>1,566</u>
2015 total	<u>2</u>	<u>1,564</u>	<u>1,566</u>	

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

4 Expenditure

	Staff Costs £'000	Non Pay Expenditure		Total 2016 £'000	Total 2015 £'000
		Premises £'000	Other £'000		
Expenditure on raising funds	-	-	-	-	16
Academy's educational operations:					
• Direct costs	1,228	107	189	1,524	1,237
• Allocated support costs	250	127	238	615	608
	<u>1,478</u>	<u>234</u>	<u>427</u>	<u>2,139</u>	<u>1,861</u>
2015 total	<u>1,401</u>	<u>122</u>	<u>338</u>	<u>1,861</u>	

Net income / (expenditure) for the period includes:

	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Operating lease rentals	2	-
Depreciation	115	30
Fees payable to auditor for:		
-Audit	11	7
-Audit-related assurance services	1	1

Included within expenditure are the following transactions:

	Total £	Individual items above £5,000	
		Amount £	Reason
Unrecoverable debts	8,820	7,800	Extra top-up fee dispute by the local authority

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

5 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted Funds £'000	Restricted Asset Funds £'000	Total 2016 £'000	Total 2015 £'000
Direct costs – educational operations	2	1,417	105	1,524	1,237
Support costs – educational operations	3	607	5	615	608
Total	5	2,024	110	2,139	1,845
2015 Total	1	1,814	30	1,845	

Analysis of support costs for educational operations

	Total 2016 £'000	Total 2015 £'000
Support staff costs	250	307
Depreciation	8	4
Premises costs	105	78
Other support costs	201	164
Governance costs	51	55
Total support costs	615	608

6 Staff

a. Staff costs

Staff costs during the period were:

	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Wages and salaries	955	796
Social security costs	84	68
Operating costs of defined benefit pension schemes	181	149
	1,220	1,013
Supply staff costs	250	307
Staff restructuring costs	8	81
Total (note 4)	1,478	1,401
Staff restructuring costs comprise:		
Severance payments	8	81

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

6 Staff (continued)

b. Non statutory/non-contractual staff severance payments

There were no non-statutory/non-contractual severance payments included in staff restructuring costs during the current reporting period.

Included in staff restructuring costs, during the previous period, were non-statutory/non contractual severance payments totalling £38,188. Individually payments were: £8,188 and £30,000.

c. Staff numbers

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

Charitable activities:	2016 No.	2015 No.
Teachers	9	7
Management	3	2
Administration and support	28	24
Total	<u>40</u>	<u>33</u>

The full time equivalent was 36 staff (2015: 29)

d. Higher paid staff

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

	2016 No.	2015 No.
£90,001-£100,000	1	-
£120,001-£130,000	-	1
	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>

e. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the academy trust comprise the trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 4. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £362k (2015: £418k).

7 Related party transactions – Trustees' remuneration and expenses

None of the trustees received any remuneration in respect of their services as trustees during the period (2015: £nil).

During the period ended 31 August 2016, travel and subsistence expenses totalling £603 was reimbursed to one trustee (2015: £nil).

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

8 Trustees' and officers' insurance

In accordance with normal commercial practice the academy has purchased insurance to protect trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy business. The insurance provides cover up to £5m on any one claim and the cost for the period ended 31 August 2016 was £2k (2015:£1k). The cost of this insurance is included in the total insurance cost.

9 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings £'000	Furniture and equipment £'000	Computer hardware £'000	Total £'000
Cost				
At 1 September 2015	3,643	38	110	3,791
Additions	2,907	28	65	3,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 August 2016	6,550	66	175	6,791
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Depreciation				
At 1 September 2015	-	(4)	(26)	(30)
Charged during the year	(58)	(8)	(49)	(115)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 August 2016	(58)	(12)	(75)	(145)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net book values				
At 31 August 2016	6,492	54	100	6,646
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 1 September 2015	3,643	34	84	3,761
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

The academy trust's transactions relating to land and buildings are for the new school building and playground with a cost of £6,550k (2015: included assets under construction of £3,643k). The School building was completed in March 2016.

A grant for a stage of the new school building works is receivable from the EFA (see note 10).

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

10 Debtors

	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Trade debtors	261	349
VAT recoverable	65	487
Other debtors	3	-
Prepayments and accrued income	58	1,943
	<u>387</u>	<u>2,779</u>

11 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Trade creditors	75	1,546
Other taxation and social security	44	36
Other creditors	132	69
Accruals and deferred income	639	1,374
	<u>890</u>	<u>3,025</u>

Deferred Income	Top-up fees £'000	Pupil premium £'000	Capital funding £'000	Total 2016 £'000	Total 2015 £'000
Deferred income at 1 September	341	-	-	341	227
Released from previous years	(341)	-	-	(341)	(227)
Resources deferred in the year	476	6	5	487	341
	<u>476</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>487</u>	<u>341</u>
Deferred income at 31 August	476	6	5	487	341
	<u>476</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>487</u>	<u>341</u>
2015	341	-	-	341	

At the balance sheet date the academy trust had raised invoices in advance for local authority top-up fees for the autumn term 2016, as well as received some 16/17 funding from the EFA.

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

12 Funds

	Balance at 1 September 2015 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Gains, Losses and Transfers £'000	Balance at 31 August 2016 £'000
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	-	742	(854)	112	-
Pupil premium	-	20	(20)	-	-
Pension reserve	(50)	-	(54)	(188)	(292)
Other grants	2	1,094	(1,096)	-	-
	<u>(48)</u>	<u>1,856</u>	<u>(2,024)</u>	<u>(76)</u>	<u>(292)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
DfE/EFA capital grants	3,502	2,849	(105)	-	6,246
Private sector capital sponsorship	-	119	(5)	-	114
	<u>3,502</u>	<u>2,968</u>	<u>(110)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,360</u>
Total restricted funds	<u>3,454</u>	<u>4,824</u>	<u>(2,134)</u>	<u>(76)</u>	<u>6,068</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>267</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>(5)</u>	<u>(112)</u>	<u>254</u>
Total funds	<u>3,721</u>	<u>4,928</u>	<u>(2,139)</u>	<u>(188)</u>	<u>6,322</u>

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

Private sector capital sponsorship from Prospero for works on the playground and audio visual equipment (£100k), from Prospero for a swing (£8k) and from the Heathrow Community Fund (£11k) for sensory equipment. At the balance sheet date this capital funding was fully spent with the exception of £5k from the Heathrow Community Fund which is to be spent on sensory equipment during the year ended 31 August 2017. The balance in the fund represents the capital income received less the depreciation cost.

The DfE/EFA capital grants fund is for the new school building which completed in March 2016. The balance on the fund is the accumulated capital income received offset by the accumulated depreciation.

Other grants received are largely the top-up fees paid by local authorities for pupil places.

Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the Trust was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2016.

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

13 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 August 2016 are represented by:

	Unrestricted Funds £'000	Restricted General Funds £'000	Restricted Fixed Asset Funds £'000	Total Funds £'000
Tangible fixed assets	286	-	6,360	6,646
Current assets	(32)	840	50	858
Current liabilities	-	(840)	(50)	(890)
Pension scheme liability	-	(292)	-	(292)
Total net assets	254	(292)	6,360	6,322

14 Capital commitments

	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Contracted for, but not provided in the financial statements	37	2,617

15 Commitments under operating leases

At 31 August 2016 the total of the academy trust's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases was:

	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
Amounts due within one year	5	-
Amounts due between one and five years	7	-
	12	-

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

16	Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
	Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	2,789	3,531
	Adjusted for:		
	Depreciation (note 9)	115	30
	Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(2,968)	(3,489)
	Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions payable (note 20)	53	48
	Defined benefit pension scheme cost less contributions (note 20)	1	-
	Decrease/(increase) in debtors	2,392	(2,468)
	(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(2,135)	2,656
	Net cash provided by operating activities	247	308
17	Cash flows from investing activities	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
	Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(3,000)	(3,748)
	Capital grants from DfE/EFA	2,849	3,489
	Capital funding received from sponsors and others	119	-
	Net cash provided by investing activities	(32)	(259)
18	Analysis of cash and cash equivalents	At 31 August 2016 £'000	At 31 August 2015 £'000
	Cash in hand and at bank	471	256
	Total cash and cash equivalents	471	256

19 **Members' liability**

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

Autism Schools Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016 (continued)

20 Pension and similar obligations

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

The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2012 and of the LGPS 31 March 2013.

Contributions amounting to £18k (2015: £16k) were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2016 and are included within creditors.

Teachers' Pension Scheme

Introduction

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pensions Regulations (2010) and, from 1 April 2014, by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for full-time teachers in academies and, from 1 January 2007, automatic for teachers in part-time employment following appointment or a change of contract, although they are able to opt out.

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and members contribute on a 'pay as you go' basis – these contributions along with those made by employers are credited to the Exchequer. Retirement and other pension benefits are paid by public funds provided by Parliament.

Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

Not less than every four years 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. 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 2012 and in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 9 June 2014. The key elements of the valuation and subsequent consultation are:

- employer contribution rates set at 16.48% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% employer administration charge;
- total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £191,500 million, and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £176,600 million giving a notional past service deficit of £14,900 million;
- an employer cost cap of 10.9% of pensionable pay will be applied to future valuations; and
- the assumed real rate of return is 3.0% in excess of prices and 2% in excess of earnings. The rate of real earnings growth is assumed to be 2.75%. The assumed nominal rate of return is 5.06%.

Autism Schools Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016 (continued)

20 Pensions and similar liabilities (continued)

During the previous year the employer contribution rate was 14.1%. The TPS valuation for 2012 determined an employer rate of 16.48%, which was payable from September 2015. The next valuation of the TPS will be as at March 2016, whereupon the employer contribution rate is expected to be reassessed and will be payable from 1 April 2019.

The employer's pension costs paid to TPS in the period amounted to £65k (2015: £71k).

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

10 employees were members of the scheme at 31 August 2016 (2015: 11).

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contributions made for the year ended 31 August 2016 were £140k (2015: £132k), of which employer's contributions totalled £114k (2015: £107k) and employees' contributions totalled £26k (2015: £25k). Contribution rates for employees increase with salary and during the year ended 31 August 2016 employee contribution rates were between 5.5 per cent and 6.5 per cent of pensionable salary. The agreed contribution rates for future years are 13.5 per cent for employers, and for employees a minimum of 5.5 per cent to a maximum of 12.5 per cent. During the year ended 31 August 2016 no employees took advantage of the 50/50 option, where employees can pay 50 per cent of normal contributions to build up half the normal pension.

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of academy closure, outstanding Local Government Pension Scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013.

25 employees were members of the scheme at 31 August 2016 (2015: 28).

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

20 Pensions and similar liabilities (continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions	At 31 August 2016	At 31 August 2015
Rate of increase in salaries	4.10%	4.50%
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.30%	2.70%
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	2.20%	4.00%
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.30%	2.70%
Commutation of pensions to lump sums	50.00%	50.00%

Sensitivity analysis	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adjustment to discount rate	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	462	481	501
Projected service cost	208	216	225
Adjustment to long term salary increase	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	481	481	481
Projected service cost	216	216	216
Adjustment to pension increases and deferred revaluation	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Present value of total obligation	500	481	462
Projected service cost	225	216	208
Adjustment to life expectancy assumptions	+ 1 Year	None	- 1 Year
Present value of total obligation	493	481	469
Projected service cost	222	216	211

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 2016	At 31 August 2015
<i>Retiring today</i>		
Males	22.1	22.1
Females	26.7	26.6
<i>Retiring in 20 years</i>		
Males	24.4	24.2
Females	29.1	28.9

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

20 Pensions and similar liabilities (continued)

The estimated asset allocation for the School as at 31 August 2016 is as follows:

Employer asset share – bid value	31 Aug 2016		31 Aug 2015	
	£'000	%	£'000	%
Equities	125	66%	55	66%
Gilts	9	5%	5	6%
Other bonds	34	18%	13	16%
Property	9	5%	5	6%
Absolute return funds	7	4%	3	4%
Cash	5	3%	3	3%
Total market value of assets	189		84	
Present value of scheme liabilities - funded	(481)		(134)	
(Deficit) / surplus in the scheme	(292)		(50)	

The academy trust's share of the assets of the fund is less than 1%.

The actual return on scheme assets was £21,000 (2015: £nil).

Amounts recognised in the statement of financial activities

	2016	2015
	£'000	£'000
Current service cost (net of employee contributions)	(114)	(107)
Net interest cost	(1)	-
Total operating charge	(115)	(107)

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

	2016	2015
	£'000	£'000
At 1 September	134	-
Current service cost	114	107
Interest cost	6	2
Actuarial (gain)/loss	204	-
Benefits paid	(3)	-
Employee contributions	26	25
At 31 August	481	134

Autism Schools Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 August 2016
(continued)

20 Pensions and similar liabilities (continued)

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

	2016 £'000	2015 £'000
At 1 September	84	-
Interest on assets	5	2
Return on plan assets (excluding net interest on the defined pension liability)	16	(2)
Employer contributions	61	59
Employee contributions	26	25
Benefits paid	(3)	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
At 31 August	<u>189</u>	<u>84</u>

21 Related party transactions

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

The trustees appointed by Dimensions (UK) Limited and Ambitious about Autism (the two sponsors of the academy trust) have provided their services as trustees for no remuneration.

The following related party transactions took place in the period of account.

Charlotte Warner and Mark Paulson (trustees of the academy trust) had a child attending the School between September 2014 and July 2016.

In the year, cash donations were received from Dimensions (UK) Limited and Ambitious about Autism totalling £50k each (2015: £106k and £113k respectively). Donations in kind of services during the period April 2015 to August 2016 were also received totalling £75k from Dimensions (UK) Limited (September 2014 to March 2015: £16k from Dimensions (UK) Limited and £40k from Ambitious About Autism).

Services were provided by Dimensions (UK) and Ambitious about Autism at a cost of £36k and £23k respectively from September 2015 to August 2016 (April to August 2015: £14k and £28k).

At year end costs accrued to be paid to Dimensions (UK) were £51k and to Ambitious About Autism were £50k.

22 Events after the balance sheet date

There are no events after the balance sheet date that have an impact on the financial statements.

