

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**  
**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

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**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS**

<b>Members</b>	Jane Gilbert Anthony Williams (appointed 20 June 2022) Martin Newman Philip Dewin John Wollocombe (appointed 29 September 2021)
<b>Trustees</b>	Dr Natasha Hutcheson, Chair of Trustees from 20 June 2022 Anthony Williams, Chair of Trustees to 20 June 2022 (resigned 20 June 2022) Andrew Savage (resigned 6 July 2022) Deborah Boldero Tracey Hughes Bryan Hurst Robert Martlew Gillian Pegg (appointed 1 September 2021) Constance Tyce (appointed 1 September 2021) Dr Robin Hanley (appointed 20 June 2022)
<b>Company registered number</b>	08198980
<b>Company name</b>	Synergy Multi Academy Trust
<b>Principal and registered office</b>	Whitwell Road Reepham Norwich Norfolk NR10 4JT
<b>Chief executive officer</b>	Robert Martlew
<b>Senior management team</b>	Robert Martlew, Chief Executive Officer and Headteacher of Litcham School Richard Levell, Chief Financial Officer Richard Lord, Executive Primary Lead Rob Watton, Trust Estates Manager
<b>Independent auditors</b>	Price Bailey LLP Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditors Anglia House, 6 Central Avenue St Andrews Business Park Thorpe St Andrew Norwich Norfolk NR7 0HR
<b>Bankers</b>	Barclays Bank Plc Leicester LE87 2BB

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**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**Solicitors**

Ashtons Legal  
Trafalgar House  
4 Meridian Way  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR7 0TA

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

The Trustees present their Annual Report together with the financial statements and Auditor's Report of Synergy Multi Academy Trust for the year ended 31 August 2022. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' Report, and a Directors' Report under company law.

In September 2021, North Norfolk Academy Trust merged into Synergy Multi Academy Trust, creating an enlarged organisation comprising 15 schools. The Trust now operates three secondary schools, one all through school, two junior schools, eight primary schools and one infant school serving a catchment area in north Norfolk. The academies had a roll of 4,734 pupils in the October 2021 census.

**Structure, governance and management**

**a. Constitution**

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

- Reepham High School and College (RHSC), which converted on 1st October 2012 and created the Trust on 8 October 2013.
- Reepham Primary School (RPS), which converted and joined the Trust on 1st August 2016;
- Bawdeswell Primary School (BPS), which converted and joined the Trust on 1st February 2017;
- Mattishall Primary School (MPS), which converted and joined the Trust on 1st April 2017;
- Foulsham Primary School (FPS), which converted and joined the Trust on 1st May 2017;
- Astley Primary School (APS), which converted and joined the Trust on 1st July 2017;
- Corpusty Primary School (CPS), which converted and joined the Trust on 1st January 2018;
- Litcham School (LAS), which converted and joined the Trust on 1 September 2018;
- Fakenham Junior School (FJS), which converted and joined the Trust on 1 April 2019;
- Fakenham Infant & Nursery School (FIN), which converted and joined the Trust on 1 April 2019.
- Antingham and Southrepps Primary School (ASRS), which joined the Trust on 1 September 2021 through the merger of North Norfolk Academy Trust into Synergy Multi Academy Trust
- Cromer Junior School (CJS), which joined the Trust on 1 September 2021 through the merger of North Norfolk Academy Trust into Synergy Multi Academy Trust
- Gresham Village Primary School (GVS), which joined the Trust on 1 September 2021 through the merger of North Norfolk Academy Trust into Synergy Multi Academy Trust
- Sheringham High School (SHS), which joined the Trust on 1 September 2021 through the merger of North Norfolk Academy Trust into Synergy Multi Academy Trust
- Stalham High School (STHS), which joined the Trust on 1 September 2021 through the merger of North Norfolk Academy Trust into Synergy Multi Academy Trust.

The operation of the Trust's academies and employment of staff are the responsibility of the Trustees. The Trust retains control of academy budgets and finances, and monitors these through its Board of Trustees. Throughout this report, the Board of Trustees is referred to as the Main Governing Body (MGB). Each Academy has appointed Local Governing Bodies (LGB) who have delegated authority to administer their Academy within agreed budgets.

Details of the Trustees who served throughout the period are included in the Reference and Administrative Details section. Within this report the term "Trustee" refers to a member of the MGB and the term "governor" to a member of an LGB.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**Structure, governance and management (continued)**

**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**

In accordance with normal commercial practice the academies purchase 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 £10,000,000 on any one claim and details of the costs are disclosed in Note 14 to the accounts.

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

The arrangements are as set out in the Articles and Funding Agreement.

Trustees are appointed for a fixed term. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is an ex officio member of the MGB. The Articles of Association make provision for 9 Trustees.

**e. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees**

The Trust is committed to providing adequate opportunities for Trustees and governors to undertake and receive suitable training so as to enable them to perform their role effectively. To this end, the Trust provides links with a number of training providers. New Trustees and Governors are required to attend a tailored training programme. The induction programme for Governors would involve a tour of the relevant academy, meetings with pupils and staff, provision of policy and procedures documents that are appropriate to the role they undertake, and training through governor services.

**f. Organisational structure**

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

The Board of Trustees, which meets on at least seven occasions per year, is responsible for the strategic direction of the Trust. The Trustees are responsible for setting strategic policy, adopting a Trust Development Plan and 3 year budget, monitoring the Trust by the use of those budgets and making major decisions about the direction of the Trust, capital expenditure and senior staff appointments. The Governors within their LGB's are responsible for implementing strategic policy, ensuring the appropriateness of annual budgets and devolved formula capital expenditure projects for their academy, and monitoring performance against that budget and authorised capital limits.

Individual school Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) manage their schools at an executive level implementing policies and reporting to their LGB. Each SLT is responsible for the day to day operation of their school, in particular organising staff, resources and pupils. They are responsible for the authorisation of spending within agreed budgets and for the appointment of staff following vetting and safeguarding recruitment processes.

The Trust's executive leaders have oversight of the Trust and align local SLT and LGB activity with the strategic aims of the Trust as a whole.

The Trust's CEO is the Accounting Officer.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**Structure, governance and management (continued)**

**g. Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel**

Key management personnel include the CEO, CFO, Headteachers and those staff to whom the Trustees have delegated significant authority and responsibility in the day to day running of the Trust.

Pay and remuneration of key management personnel is decided by a variety of contributory factors, such as the academy group size, ISR, the pay scales for each role and the level of experience of each staff member. In addition, pay levels will be affected by nationally agreed pay awards, the ability to recruit and retain in post, all of which are in accordance with the Trust's appointment and pay policies.

**h. Related parties and other connected charities and organisations**

Owing to the nature of the Trust's operations and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, it is inevitable that from time to time transactions will take place with organisations in which members of the MGB may have an interest. All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the academy's financial regulations and normal procedures. Any transaction where the trustee may have a pecuniary interest is only undertaken in accordance with the 'at cost' principle described in the Academy Trust Handbook. The Trust cooperated with the following organisations during the academic year in pursuit of its charitable activities:

- Litcham School Charity Fund
- Reepham High School Trust

The Trust does not have a formal sponsor.

**i. Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)**

Trustees recognise that our employees are fundamental to the delivery of high quality education and our core business activities. Our success depends on attracting, retaining and motivating employees. Where appropriate, the Trust consults on matters such as wellbeing, policy, pay, health and safety with the staff and trade unions.

The Trust provides information to employees through email, memoranda and meetings. In addition, staff have access to the Trust intranet / SharePoint and a Trust handbook. Information is also channelled via leadership meetings and staff briefings. Employees are encouraged to familiarise themselves with Ofsted reports, school and Trust websites, and pupil progress and attainment statistics.

Applications for employment by disabled persons are given full and fair consideration for all vacancies in accordance with their particular aptitude and abilities. In the event of employees becoming disabled, then every effort is made to retrain them as required in order that their employment within the Trust may continue.

**j. Engagement with suppliers, customers and others in a business relationship with the Academy Trust**

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

Trustees consider pupils and parents to be their "customers". Whilst pupils normally encounter engagement on a daily basis, engagement with parents is normally carried out through regular newsletters, Parent Mail, face to face meetings and remote meetings.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**Structure, governance and management (continued)**

**k. Trade union facility time**

Four of the schools outsourced its facility time arrangements to Norfolk County Council at a cost in the year of £3,898. This applies to Corpusty Primary School, Foulsham Primary School, Fakenham Junior School and Litcham School.

**Objectives and activities**

**a. Objects and aims**

The principal object and aim of Synergy Multi Academy Trust is the operation of a number of schools, to provide free education and care for pupils of different abilities within its local community, between the ages of 2 and 18.

**b. Objectives, strategies and activities**

The principal objective and activity of the Trust in the period under review, was to continue to improve the quality of educational provision for its pupils.

Specific priorities for the year included:

- Continuing to drive improvements in the quality of education in all of the Trust's schools.
- Further improving the curriculum implemented in each school.
- Supporting Headteachers at both primary and secondary phases, through collaborative working, the work of the Executive Primary Lead and the work of the CEO.
- Continuing to develop the framework for school improvement across the Trust.
- Ensuring the merger of schools from the North Norfolk Academy Trust was implemented successfully. In particular that the enlarged Trust had the scale of expertise and resources necessary to engender rapid and sustained improvement across all schools, including those that are vulnerable.
- Ensuring that any gaps in learning resulting from the pandemic were reduced, particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils.
- Ensuring provision to improve the wellbeing of our staff and pupils.
- Ensuring that effective mitigations were in place across all settings to reduce ongoing COVID 19 risks for staff and pupils.
- Further developing central services to maximise the efficiency of the Trust.
- Further developing the effectiveness of systems to mitigate risk, including the work of the Audit and Risk Committee.
- Further improving workforce expertise.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**Objectives and activities (continued)**

**c. Public benefit**

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

**Strategic report**

**Achievements and performance**

During the year, the Trust has worked towards its aims through:

- Reviewing its vision.
- Headteachers and teachers meeting regularly to develop the curriculum in each school.
- A working group of Headteachers investigating options for a Trust wide primary curriculum.
- Instigating a Trust-wide wellbeing group.
- Headteachers and teachers meeting regularly to develop their approaches to the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Primary class teachers meeting to develop best practice.
- Secondary Heads of Department collaborating to develop best practice.
- Maintaining close links with the local Research School to bring best practice to the Trust.
- Maintaining close links with the Julian Teaching School Hub to ensure that Early Career Teachers and other teaching staff have access to high quality professional development opportunities.
- Developing a comprehensive career pathway for teachers.
- Ensuring that any gaps in learning resulting from the pandemic were reduced, particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils. This was achieved through effective assessment of any learning gaps, intervention as required and effective use of additional funding including the use of academic tutors.

Other specific achievements are as follows:

- The Trust has rapidly grown from a membership of one school in 2013 to a membership of fifteen in September 2021. Schools have been effectively absorbed into the Synergy family and a particular strength is the way in which schools work co-operatively together to foster school improvement.

**a. Key performance indicators**

During the year, there were four external Ofsted inspections for schools within the Trust.

All four inspection reports highlighted significant improvements in provision since the school joined the Trust.

- Prior to joining the Trust, Mattishall Primary School had been judged to be Inadequate in all areas. It was inspected in September 2021 and judged to be Good for Personal Development, Early Years and Behaviour and Attitudes. The school was judged to still be Requiring Improvement for Leadership and Management and the Quality of Education. The Trust is confident that the school will be Good in all areas at its next inspection.
- Astley Primary School received a full Section 5 inspection in November 2021 with all areas judged to be Good. The significant improvements engendered over the past few years were highlighted.
- Reepham High School and College received a monitoring visit (no formal designation inspection) in January 2022 focusing on leadership, management and safeguarding. The report was very positive, and inspectors deemed that "safeguarding and leadership and management arrangements" were "effective."
- Gresham Village Primary School received a full Section 5 inspection in February 2022 with all areas judged to be Good. The significant improvements engendered over the past few years were highlighted.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**Strategic report (continued)**

**Achievements and performance (continued)**

Regular internal monitoring was undertaken to ensure that progress was being made in each Trust school.

**National examination results**

**Primary**

Key Stage 2 performance indicators:

- Outcomes in reading were largely maintained across all schools. The vast majority of our schools were in line with, or above, national.
- Outcomes in Maths were largely maintained across all schools. National outcomes in Maths fell by 8%, probably as a result of the pandemic. This was reflected locally, and the majority of our schools were in line with, or above, national.
- National outcomes in Writing fell by 9%, probably as a result of the pandemic. Writing outcomes across Norfolk were significantly lower than national and this turbulence in outcomes was also reflected across the Trust. Writing therefore remains as an improvement priority.

Across all primary schools there are clear improvement plans in place to further increase both attainment and progress, including close monitoring and work by the Executive Primary Lead and CEO.

**Secondary**

GCSE performance indicators:

- The percentage of students gaining a 4+ in English and Mathematics rose, with all schools now at or above the 2019 national average for this indicator.
- The percentage of students gaining a 5+ English and Mathematics is now at or above the 2019 national average in all schools.
- The percentage of students entered for the EBacc is now above the 2019 national average in all schools, and significantly so in some.
- The percentage of students achieving a standard EBacc pass is now above the 2019 national average in all schools.
- Progress levels (P8) are likely to be at or above the national average in three of our schools.
- P8 figures at Litcham School are likely to be above national.
- P8 figures at Stalham High School are likely to be below national.

A level performance indicators:

- Outcomes at Reepham College remain outstanding. The College was graded as a 2 on the ALPS score indicator, placing it amongst the top schools nationally.
  - 99.7% pass rate A\*-E.
  - 38% A\*/A, the highest recorded figure for any examination season.
  - 73% A\*-B, the highest recorded figure for any examination season.
  - 90% A\*-C, the highest recorded figure for any examination season.
  - 2 students gained places at Oxbridge.
  - 1 student gained a place at Nottingham to study Veterinary Science.
- Outcomes at Sheringham Sixth improved significantly.
  - Overall ALPs score indicator of 4, placing the Sixth Form at the national average.
  - 34% Norfolk Scholars.
  - 100% pass rate A\*-E.
  - Significant increase at A\*-A from 2019.
  - Significant increase at A\*-B from 2019.
  - Significant increase at A\*-C from 2019.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**Strategic report (continued)**

**Achievements and performance (continued)**

Across all four secondary schools/phases, the percentage of students leaving school and not in education, employment or training was very low.

Exclusion rates were very low in three of our secondary schools/phases compared to similar schools nationally. Rates at Sheringham High School were in line with national averages.

Across the secondary schools, there are clear improvement plans in place to further increase both attainment and progress, specifically the gender gap (this is also a national issue), including close monitoring and work by the CEO.

Across the Trust, total pupil numbers changed from 3,181 to 4,728 over the year, largely as a result of the merger with North Norfolk Academy Trust.

Another key financial performance indicator is staffing costs as a percentage of total income (excluding income on conversion and agency costs). For 2021/22 this was 79%, (2020/21: 81%; 2019/20: 81% and 2018/19: 79%) against expected parameters of between 76% to 81%. The Trustees are confident that staffing levels are closely monitored to agreed Full Time Equivalents, and staffing structures are approved by the MGB.

The Trust Board also monitors premises costs to General Annual Grant (GAG) income, spend for budget lines, total income less grants, and cash flow on a regular basis to ensure that the budget is set and managed appropriately. All of the above KPI's were within the parameters set by the MGB.

**b. 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 they continue 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 accounting policies.

**c. Promoting the success of the company**

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

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

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**Strategic report (continued)**

**Financial review**

The principal source of funding for the Trust is the General Annual Grant (GAG) and other grants that it receives from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). For the year ended 31 August 2022 the Trust received £41,245,193 (2021: £20,781,923) of GAG and other funding, including £1,824,472 (2021: £3,039,171) relating to donations and capital grants and £11,201,282 (2021: £Nil) relating to income on transfer of an existing academy into the Academy Trust).

A high percentage of the GAG and other funding is spent on wages and salaries and support costs to deliver the Trust's primary objective of the provision of education. During the year the Trust spent £31,181,188 (2021: £18,875,801) on expenditure and transferred £145,165 (2021: £45,787) to support capital improvements on the various academy sites. The Trust brought forward from 2021 a deficit on restricted funds including pension deficit of £8,409,408 as well as a surplus on unrestricted funds of £767,836. The carry forward for 2022 is a deficit on restricted funds including pension of £4,576,420 and £1,107,318 of surplus on unrestricted funding.

Due to the accounting rules for the Local Government Pension Scheme under FRS102, the Trust is recognising a significant pension fund deficit of £7,169,000 (2021: £9,775,000). The deficit transferred in the year from North Norfolk Academy Trust amounted to £5,142,000. This does not mean that an immediate liability for this amount crystallises and such a deficit generally results in a cash flow effect in the form of increased employer contributions over a number of years. While there has been a significant reduction in the opening deficit of £9,775,000, resulting from the application of actuarial assumptions and does not guarantee that contribution rates will reduce and ease the cash flow effect on the Trust.

**a. Reserves policy**

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

The Trust's current level of free reserves (total funds less the amount held in fixed assets and restricted funds) is £1,107,318 (2021: £767,836). This has been built up from a mixture of locally raised income and balances transferred from the predecessor schools.

The Trust's balance on restricted general funds (excluding pension reserve) plus the balance on unrestricted funds at 31 August 2022 was £3,699,898 (2021: £2,133,428).

The cash balance of the Trust has been very healthy all year, ending the year with a balance of £6,311,603 (2021: £4,623,947). A significant proportion of this cash is held against specific projects and is not available to meet normal recurring expenditure. The Trustees monitor cash flow and look to hold a minimum of £250,000 to cover short term cash flow variances.

**b. Investment policy**

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

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**c. Principal risks and uncertainties**

The Trust maintains a risk register identifying the major risks to which the Trust is exposed and identifying actions and procedures to mitigate those risks. A formal review of the risk register was undertaken by the Audit Committee. Internal control systems and the exposure to said risks are monitored carefully.

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

The Trustees report that the trust's financial and internal controls conform to guidelines issued by the ESFA, and that improvements to the wider framework of systems dealing with business risk and risk management strategy continue to be made and formally documented.

It is recognised that systems can only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that major risks have been adequately managed.

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

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

- The Trust has considerable reliance on continued Government funding through the ESFA and there is no assurance that Government policy or practice will remain the same, or that public funding will continue at the same levels or on the same terms. In addition, there is a risk of falling pupil numbers; unfunded pay rises, inflation and energy costs leaving individual academies financially unsustainable.
- Failures in governance and/or management - The risk in this area arises from potential failure to effectively manage the Trust's finances, internal controls, compliance with regulations and legislation, statutory returns, etc. The Trustees continue to review and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate these risks.
- Reputational - The continuing success of the Trust is dependent on continuing to attract pupils in sufficient numbers by maintaining the highest educational standards. To mitigate this risk, Trustees ensure that the quality of education and student outcomes are closely monitored and reviewed.
- Safeguarding and child protection - The Trustees continue to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the areas of selection and monitoring of staff, the operation of child protection policies and procedures, health & safety and discipline. The Trust has invested in a new Safeguarding system for its academies.
- Staffing - The success of the Trust is reliant on the quality of its staff and the trustees monitor and review policies and procedures and recruitment. Trustees also ensure continued development and training of staff as well as ensuring there is clear succession planning.
- Fraud and mismanagement of funds - All finance staff receive training to keep up to date with financial practice requirements and develop their skills in this area.
- Financial instruments - The Trust only deals with bank balances, cash and trade creditors, with limited trade (and other) debtors. The risk in this area is considered to be low.
- Defined benefit pension liability - As the Government has agreed to meet the defined benefit pension liability of any school ceasing to exist the main risk to the trust is an annual cash flow funding of part of the deficit. Trustees take these payments into account when setting the annual budget plan.

The Trust has continued to strengthen its risk management process throughout the year by formalising the process and ensuring staff awareness.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**Fundraising**

The schools within the Trust do not carry out fundraising of themselves, however the Friends of the respective schools have held small fundraising events during the year. The Trust does not work with professional fundraisers or companies who carry out fundraising on its behalf. During the year no complaints or issues have arisen as a result of the fundraising events.

**Streamlined energy and carbon reporting**

The Academy Trust's greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption are as follows:

	2022	2021
Energy consumption used to calculate emissions (kWh)	4,124,038	2,944,933
<b>Energy consumption breakdown (kWh):</b>		
Gas	2,834,000	2,069,844
Electricity	1,231,045	857,415
Transport fuel - owned transport	35,067	11,904
Transport fuel - employee vehicles	23,927	5,769
<b>Scope 1 emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):</b>		
Gas consumption	684.6	490.2
Owned transport	8.4	2.9
<b>Total scope 1</b>	693.0	493.1
<b>Scope 2 emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):</b>		
Electricity	238.1	182.1
<b>Scope 3 emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):</b>		
Business travel in employee-owned vehicles	5.9	1.6
<b>Total gross emissions (in tonnes of CO2 equivalent):</b>	937.0	676.8
<b>Intensity ratio:</b>		
Tonnes of CO2 equivalent per pupil	0.1982	0.2091

The intensity ratio in tonnes of CO2 equivalent per pupil is 0.1982.

The Academy Trust has followed and used the following quantification and reporting methodologies:

- the 2019 HM Government Environmental Reporting Guidelines;
- the GHG Reporting Protocol - Corporate Standard; and
- the 2020 UK Government's Conversion Factors for Company Reporting.

The chosen intensity ratio is total gross emissions in tonnes of CO2 equivalent per pupil, the recommended ratio for the sector.

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**TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**Streamlined energy and carbon reporting (continued)**

We continue to encourage the use of video conferencing as opposed to travel between sites. We are developing a trustwide decarbonisation strategy in particular greater use of Solar PV, LED lighting and other energy saving measures. We have leased an electric van to enable the provision of IT services across the school sites, to reduce reliance on the diesel vehicle.

**Plans for future periods**

The Trust has grown to almost 5,000 pupils, which gives access to significant additional capital funds. The MAT development plan indicates ambition to grow further over the next 4 years by an additional two schools. This will support the Trust's civic duty, improve provision within local rural schools and support the ambition of the Government for all schools to gain academy status by 2030. Importantly, any new Trust schools should remain within a 40 minute drive of all schools within the Trust. This will allow teachers to work together more easily, to share expertise, to visit each other's schools and improve standards as a result.

Our intention is to work with all schools to ensure that the highest quality education is provided for each pupil. It is our intention to ensure that all academies are well resourced, appropriately supported, cooperating and determined to achieve to the highest standard. The planned increased size of the Trust will further improve capacity for school improvement, combined with greater capacity for efficiencies.

**Funds held as custodian on behalf of others**

There are no funds held as Custodian Trustee on behalf of others.

**Disclosure of information to auditors**

Insofar as the Trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditors are unaware, and
- that 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 auditors are aware of that information.

The Trustees' Report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the company directors, on 7 December 2022 and signed on its behalf by:

**Dr Natasha Hutcheson**  
Chair of Trustees

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

**Scope of responsibility**

As Trustees, we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that Synergy Multi Academy 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 competency framework for governance.

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the Chief Executive Officer, as Accounting Officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between Synergy Multi Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. They are also responsible for reporting to the Board of Trustees any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

**Governance**

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' Report and in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities. The Board of Trustees has formally met 7 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
Dr Natasha Hutcheson, Chair of Trustees from 20 June 2022	5	7
Anthony Williams (resigned 20 June 2022), Chair of Trustees to 20 June 2022	4	6
Andrew Savage (resigned 6 July 2022)	5	6
Deborah Boldero	7	7
Tracey Hughes	4	7
Bryan Hurst	3	7
Robert Martlew	7	7
Gillian Pegg (appointed 1 September 2021)	6	7
Constance Tyce (appointed 1 September 2021)	7	7
Dr Robin Hanley (appointed 20 June 2022)	0	1

**Review of year**

The Board of Directors, Members and Local Governing Boards have been effective in their work, specifically:

- Working with senior staff to set the strategic direction for the Trust.
- Holding senior staff to account.
- Ensuring financial probity.
- Ensuring compliance with charity law requirements.

During the year, the Board embedded the work of a separate Audit Committee. The committee has reviewed the Risk Register and ensured Internal Scrutiny. Areas identified for scrutiny were based on external audit report findings and risks identified in the register, including those arising from COVID 19.

The Board reviewed the structure of meetings last year and determined that from September 1st 2021, it would form a separate Finance committee and a separate Pay and Remuneration Committee. The Finance Committee met three times during the year and the Pay and Remuneration Committee met once. The formation of these committees has significantly enhanced governance.

Detailed work was undertaken by the Board and Members around the future direction of the Trust, particularly in relation to the Education White Paper.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Governance (continued)**

The quality of information used by the Board further improved during the year. Reports on the effectiveness of provision within schools were enhanced by the planned regular attendance of the Executive Primary Lead and Estates Manager.

**Conflicts of interest**

The Trust has robust processes in place to manage conflicts of interest. This includes maintaining and publishing an up to date and complete register of interests that is scrutinised to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest. The Trust does not own or control any subsidiaries, joint ventures or associates.

**Governance reviews**

The Board has reviewed the experience, skills and competencies of individual Directors and Members against the Department for Education competency framework. Across the Board, all required competencies are evident, coupled with a very good range of experience, including:

- Governance
- Business
- Finance
- Law
- Human Resources
- Compliance
- Estates management

When Trustees left the Board, the findings of the review were used to determine the required skills and competencies of new Trustees.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Governance (continued)**

The purpose of the Audit and Risk Committee, as a sub committee of the main Board of Trustees, is to:

- Agree the programme of work to deliver internal scrutiny.
- Receive and consider reports from internal and external audits.
- Ensure the risk register is maintained and is comprehensive.
- Report to the main Board on matters of control.

During the year, the following issues were dealt with by the committee:

- Oversight of internal scrutiny
- Risk management related activities
- Follow up on actions from the previous year audits
- Approval of delegated policies
- Monitoring the progress of academies graded less than Good.

During the year, the following changes to the committee took place:

- New Chair, effective from 20 Jun 2022

Attendance during the year at meetings was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Dr Natasha Hutcheson (Chair to 20 June 2022)	2	3
Anthony Williams (resigned 20 June 2022)	2	3
Andrew Savage (resigned 6 July 2022)	3	3
Bryan Hurst	2	3
Deborah Boldero	3	3
Robert Martlew (in attendance)	3	3
Constance Tyce	3	3
Gillian Pegg	2	3

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Governance (continued)**

The purpose of the Finance Committee, as a sub committee of the main Board of Trustees, is to:

- Scrutinise the Trust budget and recommend adoption to the Board of Directors
- Develop the Trust Business Plan
- Scrutinise the Asset Management Plan and approve spend against this
- Scrutinise and approve bids, including those to the DfE and ESFA

During the year, the following issues were dealt with by the committee:

- Annual budgetary setting, recommending adoption to the Board of Directors
- Budget oversight including scrutiny of management accounts
- Approval of SCA spend
- Approval of delegated policies
- Asset Management Plan scrutiny including energy management planning
- PSDS oversight

During the year, the following changes to the committee took place:

- New Chair, effective from 20 June 2022
- New member of the committee from 20 June 2022

Attendance during the year at meetings was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Anthony Williams (resigned 20 June 2022)	2	3
Andrew Savage (resigned 6 July 2022)	3	3
Deborah Boldero	3	3
Tracey Hughes	3	3
Robert Martlew	3	3

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**Governance (continued)**

The purpose of the Pay and Remuneration Committee, as a sub committee of the main Board of Trustees, is to:

- Approve executive pay ranges
- Approve the pay policy
- Form the appraisal committee for the CEO

During the year, the following issues were dealt with by the committee:

- Approval of delegated policies
- Approval of executive pay ranges
- Appraisal of the CEO

During the year, the following changes to the committee took place:

- New Chair, effective from 20 June 2022

Attendance during the year at meetings was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Anthony Williams	1	1
Deborah Boldero	1	1
Andrew Savage	1	1
Gill Pegg	1	1
Dr Natasha Hutcheson	1	1
Constance Tyce	1	1
Robert Martlew	1	1

**Review of value for money**

As accounting officer, the Chief Executive Officer 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 reports to the Board of Trustees where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where appropriate. The Accounting Officer for the academy trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- Reviewing catering contracts, resulting in bringing more catering in house, to improve consistency of provision and secure better value for money.
- Implementing restructuring of staff in a number of schools, to reduce in year deficits whilst maintaining the quality of provision.
- Strengthening financial oversight through the creation of a separate Finance Committee.
- Co-ordination of school IT purchasing via the Central Services IT Manager to ensure that bulk purchase savings are obtained.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**The purpose of the system of internal control**

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. It can, therefore, only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an on-going process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Academy Trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Synergy Multi Academy Trust for the year 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

**Capacity to handle risk**

The Audit and Risk Committee 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 Audit and Risk Committee is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Academy Trust's significant risks that has been in place for the year 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee.

**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 Committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines
- identification and management of risks

The Board of Trustees considered the need for a specific internal audit function and decided to appoint Educator Solutions (Norfolk County Council) to carry out reviews to provide independent assurance in respect of particular aspects of the Trust's activities.

This option was chosen because of their expertise, knowledge of the academy Trust and cost.

The main duties of the Internal Assurance Function are to provide the board with on going independent assurance that:

- The financial responsibilities of the Board are being properly discharged.
- Financial considerations are fully considered in reaching decisions.
- Advice and guidance are provided to the board on how to address weaknesses in financial and other controls, recommending improvements but without weakening the responsibility of the management for the day to day running of the trust
- Risks are adequately identified, reported, and managed.

The independent assurance role includes giving advice on financial and other control matters and performing a range of checks on the academy trust's financial systems.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)**

**The risk and control framework (continued)**

The scope of the internal assurance function was agreed by the Audit and Risk Committee and in the current period included compliance with the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook, covering the following:

1. Procurement
2. Payroll and HR

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

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

**Review of effectiveness**

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

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

The accounting officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on 7 December 2022 and signed on their behalf by:

**Dr Natasha Hutcheson**  
Chair of Trustees

**Robert Martlew**  
Accounting Officer

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**STATEMENT ON REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE**

As accounting officer of Synergy Multi Academy Trust I have considered my responsibility to notify the Academy Trust Board of Trustees and the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding received by the Academy Trust, under the funding agreement in place between the Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook 2021.

I confirm that I and the Academy Trust Board of Trustees 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 Academy Trust Handbook 2021.

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

**Robert Martlew**  
Accounting Officer  
Date: 7 December 2022

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

The Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report (including the Strategic Report and Directors' Report) and the financial statements in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction published by the Education & Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare 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. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2021 to 2022;
- 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 operation.

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

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that in its conduct and operation the charitable company applies financial and other controls, which conform with the requirements both of propriety and of good financial management. They are also responsible for ensuring grants received from the Education & Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education 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 7 December 2022 and signed on its behalf by:

**Dr Natasha Hutcheson**  
Chair of Trustees

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF  
SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**

**Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of Synergy Multi Academy Trust (the 'academy trust') for the year ended 31 August 2022 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, and 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 2020 to 2021 issued by the Education & Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Academy Trust's affairs as at 31 August 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2021 to 2022 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 UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

**Conclusions relating to going concern**

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

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

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

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF  
SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)**

**Other information**

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

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

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

- the information given in the Trustees' Report (incorporating the Strategic Report and the Directors' 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 Strategic Report and the Directors' 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 Trustees' Responsibilities Statement, the Trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the Academy Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF  
SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)**

**Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

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

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

- We reviewed systems and procedures to identify potential areas of management override risk. In particular, we carried out testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of any large or unusual transactions to determine whether they were significant to our assessment.
- We reviewed key controls, authorisation procedures and decision making processes for any unusual or one-off transactions.
- We reviewed minutes of Trustee meetings and other relevant sub-committees of the Board and agreed the financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation.
- We have made enquiries of the Accounting Officer and senior management team to identify laws and regulations applicable to the Trust. We assessed details of any breaches where applicable in order to assess the impact upon the Trust.
- We reviewed the risk management processes and procedures in place including a review of the Risk Register and Board assurance reporting and the Internal Scrutiny Reports.
- We have reviewed any correspondence with the ESFA / DfE and the procedures in place for the reporting of incidents to the Trustees including reporting of any serious incidents to the Regulator if necessary.

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: <https://www.frc.org.uk/auditors/audit-assurance/auditor-s-responsibilities-for-the-audit-of-the-fi/description-of-the-auditor%E2%80%99s-responsibilities-for>. This description forms part of our Auditors' Report.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF  
SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)**

**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.

**John Warren BSc FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)**

for and on behalf of

**Price Bailey LLP**

Chartered Accountants

Statutory Auditors

Anglia House, 6 Central Avenue

St Andrews Business Park

Thorpe St Andrew

Norwich

Norfolk

NR7 0HR

21 December 2022

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO SYNERGY  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST AND THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY**

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 19 July 2022 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2021 to 2022, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by Synergy Multi Academy Trust during the year 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022 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 Synergy Multi Academy Trust and ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to Synergy Multi Academy 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 Synergy Multi Academy Trust and ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

**Respective responsibilities of Synergy Multi Academy Trust's accounting officer and the reporting accountant**

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of Synergy Multi Academy Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 9 June 2016 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2021, 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 2021 to 2022. 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 2021 to 31 August 2022 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 conclusions includes:

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

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO SYNERGY  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY (CONTINUED)**

**Conclusion**

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggest in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the year 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022 has not been applied to purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

**Price Bailey LLP**

Chartered Accountants  
Statutory Auditors  
Anglia House, 6 Central Avenue  
St Andrews Business Park  
Thorpe St Andrew  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR7 0HR

Date: 21 December 2022

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
<b>Income from:</b>						
Donations and capital grants:	4					
Income on conversion		132,000	(4,534,162)	15,603,444	11,201,282	-
Other donations and capital grants		92,134	602,098	1,130,240	1,824,472	3,039,171
Other trading activities	6	115,348	104,672	-	220,020	167,546
Charitable activities	5	-	27,999,419	-	27,999,419	17,575,206
<b>Total income</b>		<b>339,482</b>	<b>24,172,027</b>	<b>16,733,684</b>	<b>41,245,193</b>	<b>20,781,923</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>						
Charitable activities	7, 8	-	29,978,874	1,202,314	31,181,188	18,875,801
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>29,978,874</b>	<b>1,202,314</b>	<b>31,181,188</b>	<b>18,875,801</b>
<b>Net income/ (expenditure)</b>		<b>339,482</b>	<b>(5,806,847)</b>	<b>15,531,370</b>	<b>10,064,005</b>	<b>1,906,122</b>
Transfers between funds	19	-	(145,165)	145,165	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)</b>		<b>339,482</b>	<b>(5,952,012)</b>	<b>15,676,535</b>	<b>10,064,005</b>	<b>1,906,122</b>
<b>Other recognised gains/(losses):</b>						
Actuarial gains/(losses) on defined benefit pension schemes	26	-	9,785,000	-	9,785,000	(1,704,000)
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>339,482</b>	<b>3,832,988</b>	<b>15,676,535</b>	<b>19,849,005</b>	<b>202,122</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>						
Total funds brought forward		767,836	(8,409,408)	32,090,879	24,449,307	24,247,185
Net movement in funds		339,482	3,832,988	15,676,535	19,849,005	202,122
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>1,107,318</b>	<b>(4,576,420)</b>	<b>47,767,414</b>	<b>44,298,312</b>	<b>24,449,307</b>

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

The notes on pages 33 to 64 form part of these financial statements.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**  
**REGISTERED NUMBER: 08198980**

**BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 31 AUGUST 2022**

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	15	46,806,905	30,876,204
		46,806,905	30,876,204
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	16	854,361	1,247,070
Cash at bank and in hand		6,311,603	4,623,947
		7,165,964	5,871,017
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(2,455,189)	(2,522,914)
<b>Net current assets</b>		4,710,775	3,348,103
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		51,517,680	34,224,307
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18	(50,368)	-
<b>Net assets excluding pension liability</b>		51,467,312	34,224,307
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	26	(7,169,000)	(9,775,000)
<b>Total net assets</b>		44,298,312	24,449,307
<b>Funds of the Academy Trust</b>			
<b>Restricted funds:</b>			
Fixed asset funds	19	47,767,414	32,090,879
Restricted income funds	19	2,592,580	1,365,592
		50,359,994	33,456,471
Restricted funds excluding pension asset	19	50,359,994	33,456,471
Pension reserve	19	(7,169,000)	(9,775,000)
		43,190,994	23,681,471
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	19	43,190,994	23,681,471
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>	19	1,107,318	767,836
<b>Total funds</b>		44,298,312	24,449,307

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**  
**REGISTERED NUMBER: 08198980**

**BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)**  
**AS AT 31 AUGUST 2022**

The financial statements on pages 29 to 64 were approved by the Trustees, and authorised for issue on 07 December 2022 and are signed on their behalf, by:

**Dr Natasha Hutcheson**  
Chair of Trustees

The notes on pages 33 to 64 form part of these financial statements.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

	Note	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net cash provided by operating activities	21	1,127,217	1,212,662
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>	23	489,649	1,135,795
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>	22	70,790	-
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		1,687,656	2,348,457
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		4,623,947	2,275,490
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	24, 25	<u>6,311,603</u>	<u>4,623,947</u>

The notes on pages 33 to 64 form part of these financial statements

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**1. General information**

Synergy Multi Academy Trust is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales under the Companies Act 2006. The address of its registered office is Whitwell Road, Reepham, Norwich, Norfolk, NR10 4JT. The place of business is at each of the individual school sites within the Trust.

The financial statements have been prepared in pounds sterling and have been rounded to the nearest pound.

**2. Accounting policies**

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

**2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements**

The financial statements of the Academy Trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historic cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Academies Accounts Direction 2021 to 2022 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

Synergy Multi Academy Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

**2.2 Going concern**

The Trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the Academy Trust to continue as a going concern. The Trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of at least one year from the date of authorisation for issue of the financial statements and have concluded that the 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.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**2. Accounting policies (continued)**

**2.3 Income**

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

• **Grants**

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

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

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

• **Donations**

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

• **Transfer of existing academies into the Academy Trust**

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

• **Donated fixed assets (excluding transfers on conversion or into the Academy Trust)**

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 Capital Grants' and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the Academy Trust's accounting policies.

**2.4 Expenditure**

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

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**2. Accounting policies (continued)**

**2.4 Expenditure (continued)**

• **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.

**2.5 Redundancy payments**

Redundancy and termination costs are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Financial Activities and a liability on the Balance Sheet immediately at the point the Academy Trust is demonstrably committed to either:

- terminate the employment of an employee or group of employees before normal retirement date; or
- provide termination benefits as a result of an offer made in order to encourage voluntary redundancy.

The Academy Trust is considered to be demonstrably committed only when it has a detailed formal plan for the termination and is without realistic possibility of withdrawal from the plan.

**2.6 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.

**2.7 Tangible fixed assets**

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

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

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets other than 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:

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**2. Accounting policies (continued)**

**2.7 Tangible fixed assets (continued)**

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Freehold property	- 2% straight line
Long term leasehold land	- over the life of the lease (125 years)
Long-term leasehold buildings	- 2% straight line
Furniture and equipment	- 20% straight line
Computer equipment	- 33% straight line

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

**2.8 Debtors**

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

**2.9 Cash at bank and in hand**

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

**2.10 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.

**2.11 Financial instruments**

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

Financial assets - trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

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

Financial liabilities - trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

**2.12 Operating leases**

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

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A Company Limited by Guarantee)**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**2. Accounting policies (continued)**

**2.13 Pensions**

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. TPS is an unfunded multi-employer scheme with no underlying assets to assign between employers. Consequently, the TPS is treated as a defined contribution scheme for accounting purposes and the contributions recognised in the period to which they relate.

The LGPS is a funded multi-employer scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the Academy Trust in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each Balance Sheet date. The amounts charged to 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/asset is also recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities and comprises the interest cost on the defined benefit obligation and interest income on the scheme assets, calculated by multiplying the fair value of the scheme assets at the beginning of the period by the rate used to discount the benefit obligations. The difference between the interest income on the scheme assets and the actual return on the scheme assets is recognised in other recognised gains and losses.

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

**2.14 Agency arrangements**

The academy trust acts as an agent in distributing 16-19 bursary funds from ESFA. Payments received from ESFA and subsequent disbursements to students are excluded from the statement of financial activities as the trust does not have control over the charitable application of the funds. The trust does not use any of the allocation towards its own administration costs and so none is recognised in the statement of financial activities. The funds received and paid and any balances held are disclosed in note 29.

**2.15 Fund accounting**

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

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

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

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**3. Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgment**

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

Critical accounting estimates and assumptions:

The 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 or income for pensions include the discount rate. Any changes in these assumptions, which are disclosed in note 26, will impact the carrying amount of the pension liability. Furthermore a roll forward approach which projects results from the latest full actuarial valuation performed at 31 March 2019 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2022. 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.

Assets on conversion

The valuation of the land and buildings on conversion is a material estimate in the financial statements. The amount is based on the valuation carried out by a third party independent valuer.

Depreciation

Depreciation is a material estimate which is calculated based on the estimated useful economic life of the assets.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**4. Income from donations and capital grants**

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
<b>Donations</b>					
Funds transferred on conversion to academy (note 30)	132,000	(4,534,162)	15,603,444	11,201,282	-
Donated fixed assets	-	-	-	-	72,616
Other donations including school fund	92,134	602,098	-	694,232	223,580
<b>Total donations</b>	<u>224,134</u>	<u>(3,932,064)</u>	<u>15,603,444</u>	<u>11,895,514</u>	<u>296,196</u>
Capital Grants	-	-	1,130,240	1,130,240	2,742,975
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,130,240</u>	<u>1,130,240</u>	<u>2,742,975</u>
	<u>224,134</u>	<u>(3,932,064)</u>	<u>16,733,684</u>	<u>13,025,754</u>	<u>3,039,171</u>
Total 2021	<u>-</u>	<u>223,580</u>	<u>2,815,591</u>	<u>3,039,171</u>	

In 2021, donated fixed assets totalling £72,616 were restricted fixed assets. Other donations including school fund totalling 223,580 were in relation to restricted funds. Capital grants of £2,742,975 were in relation to restricted fixed asset funds.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**5. Funding for the Academy Trust's charitable activities**

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
<b>Provision of Education</b>				
<b>DfE/ESFA grants</b>				
General Annual Grant	-	24,051,368	24,051,368	14,679,728
Other DfE/ESFA grants				
Pupil premium	-	1,098,342	1,098,342	711,587
PE and sports grant	-	208,910	208,910	157,100
UFSM	-	206,752	206,752	193,900
Rates reclaim	-	119,691	119,691	70,196
Teachers pay grant	-	28,968	28,968	204,705
Teachers pension grant	-	81,853	81,853	537,064
FSM supplementary grant	-	-	-	27,450
MAT development improvement funds	-	-	-	28,129
Schools supplementary grant	-	295,555	295,555	-
National tutoring programme	-	141,919	141,919	-
Others	-	49,062	49,062	-
	-	26,282,420	26,282,420	16,609,859
<b>Other Government grants</b>				
Local Authority Grants	-	780,923	780,923	359,009
Other Government Grants	-	19,897	19,897	56,336
	-	800,820	800,820	415,345
<b>Other income from the academy trust's provision of education</b>				
Catering income	-	510,403	510,403	126,477
Music income	-	32,844	32,844	25,605
Income from services	-	67,748	67,748	63,857
Nursery and club income	-	75,363	75,363	35,863
	-	686,358	686,358	251,802
<b>COVID-19 additional funding (DfE/ESFA)</b>				
Recovery Premium	-	138,821	138,821	-
Catch-up Premium	-	-	-	239,520
Other DfE/ESFA COVID-19 funding	-	91,000	91,000	58,680
	-	229,821	229,821	298,200
	-	27,999,419	27,999,419	17,575,206

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**5. Funding for the Academy Trust's charitable activities (continued)**

	-	27,999,419	27,999,419	17,575,206
Total 2021	215,939	17,359,267	17,575,206	

In 2021, income from DfE/ESFA grants was £16,609,859 which all was restricted. Income from other government grants was £415,345 which was all restricted. Income from other academy trust's educational operations amounted to £251,802 of which £215,939 was unrestricted and £35,863 was restricted. COVID-19 additional funding totalled £298,200 which was all restricted.

In 2022, other DfE/ESFA grants of £49,062 consist of 16-19 Bursary Funding.

**6. Income from other trading activities**

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £	Total funds 2021 £
Hire of facilities	61,793	-	61,793	17,817
Other income	53,555	104,672	158,227	149,729
	115,348	104,672	220,020	167,546
Total 2021	167,546	-	167,546	

In 2021, hire of facilities income was £17,817 which was unrestricted. Other income of £149,729 was unrestricted.

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**7. Expenditure**

	Staff Costs 2022 £	Premises 2022 £	Other 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Provision of Education:					
Direct costs	17,499,342	-	1,719,809	19,219,151	10,822,837
Allocated support costs	6,611,610	1,714,604	3,635,823	11,962,037	8,052,964
	<u>24,110,952</u>	<u>1,714,604</u>	<u>5,355,632</u>	<u>31,181,188</u>	<u>18,875,801</u>
Total 2021	<u>15,177,906</u>	<u>822,955</u>	<u>2,874,940</u>	<u>18,875,801</u>	

In 2021, direct expenditure consisted of £10,305,897 staff costs and £786,940 other costs. Support expenditure consisted of £5,142,009 staff costs, £822,955 premises costs and £2,088,000 other costs.

In 2022, of the total expenditure, £Nil (2021: £383,485) was to unrestricted funds, £29,978,874 (2021: £17,692,361) was to restricted funds and £1,202,314 (2021: £799,955) was to restricted fixed asset funds.

**8. Charitable Activities**

	2022 £	2021 £
Direct costs	19,219,151	10,822,837
Support costs	11,962,037	8,052,964
	<u>31,181,188</u>	<u>18,875,801</u>

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**Analysis of support costs**

	2022 £	2021 £
Support staff costs	6,611,610	5,142,009
Depreciation	1,202,314	799,955
Technology costs	361,051	125,817
Premises costs	1,714,604	822,955
Legal costs - on conversion	-	-
Legal costs - other	2,301	67,567
Other support costs	2,016,535	1,046,046
Governance costs	53,622	48,615
	<u>11,962,037</u>	<u>8,052,964</u>

**9. Net income/(expenditure)**

Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:

	2022 £	2021 £
Operating lease rentals	35,931	33,574
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<u>1,202,314</u>	<u>799,955</u>

**10. Auditors' remuneration**

	2022 £	2021 £
Fees payable to the Academy Trust's auditor and its associates for the audit of the Academy Trust's annual accounts	25,475	15,915
Fees payable to the Academy Trust's auditor and its associates in respect of:		
Regularity assurance report	2,750	1,965
All non-audit services not included above	<u>7,300</u>	<u>6,585</u>
Fees payable to the Academy Trust's auditor and its associates in connection with the Academy Trust's pension scheme(s) in respect of:		
TPS assurance reports	<u>6,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**11. Central services**

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

- Human resources
- CEO
- Financial services
- Executive Primary Lead
- IT services
- Estates services
- Primary Maths & English Leads

The Academy Trust charges for these services on the following basis:

5% of GAG income.

The actual amounts charged during the year were as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Antingham and Southrepps Primary School	15,830	-
Astley Primary School	44,099	40,884
Bawdeswell Primary School	24,391	20,994
Corpusty Primary School	17,741	17,396
Cromer Junior School	53,614	-
Fakenham Infant and Nursery School	46,370	43,541
Fakenham Junior School	65,626	64,612
Foulsham Primary School	22,922	19,746
Gresham Village Primary School	27,684	-
Litcham School	203,996	185,418
Mattishall Primary School	40,141	36,534
Reepham High School and College	284,537	261,614
Reepham Primary School	45,144	40,990
Sheringham High School	190,699	-
Stalham High School	121,882	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,204,676</b>	<b>731,729</b>

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**12. Staff**

**a. Staff costs**

Staff costs during the year were as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	16,737,733	10,855,456
Social security costs	1,607,672	999,630
Pension costs	5,532,408	3,215,431
	<u>23,877,813</u>	<u>15,070,517</u>
Agency staff costs	233,139	35,969
Staff restructuring costs	-	71,420
	<u>24,110,952</u>	<u>15,177,906</u>

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

	2022 £	2021 £
Redundancy payments	-	29,420
Severance payments	-	42,000
	<u>-</u>	<u>71,420</u>

**b. Special staff severance payments**

There are no non statutory, non-contractual amounts included in staff restructuring costs (2021: 2 amounts totalling £42,000).

**c. Staff numbers**

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

	2022 No.	2021 No.
Teachers	276	192
Administration and support	388	262
Management	14	11
	<u>678</u>	<u>465</u>

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**12. Staff (continued)**

**d. Higher paid staff**

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

	2022 No.	2021 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	12	7
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	1	1
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	1	1
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	2	1
	16	10

**e. Key management personnel**

The key management personnel of the Academy Trust comprise the Trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the Academy Trust was £382,668 (2021 £1,036,373). Included in this are employer national insurance contributions of £35,741 (2021: £91,376) and employer pension contributions of £61,349 (2021: £177,147).

Following the merger with NNAT on 1 September 2021, the Trust has reassessed the make-up of its Key Management Personnel. See page 1 for further details.

**13. Trustees' remuneration and expenses**

One or more Trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the Academy Trust. The principal and other staff Trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of principal and staff members under their contracts of employment. The value of Trustees' remuneration and other benefits was as follows:

		2022 £	2021 £
Robert Martlew, Chief Executive	Remuneration	85,000 - 90,000	85,000 - 90,000
	Pension contributions paid	20,000 - 25,000	20,000 - 25,000

During the year, retirement benefits were accruing to 1 Trustees (2021 - 1) in respect of defined contribution pension schemes.

During the year ended 31 August 2022, no expenses were reimbursed or paid directly to Trustees (2021 - £NIL).

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**14. Trustees' and Officers' insurance**

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

**15. Tangible fixed assets**

	Freehold property £	Long-term leasehold land and buildings £	Furniture and equipment £	Computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
<b>Cost or valuation</b>						
At 1 September 2021	-	34,141,425	770,369	837,791	9,039	35,758,624
Additions	51,288	1,277,307	26,290	83,589	-	1,438,474
Acquired on conversion	5,208,001	10,272,667	93,213	120,660	-	15,694,541
At 31 August 2022	<u>5,259,289</u>	<u>45,691,399</u>	<u>889,872</u>	<u>1,042,040</u>	<u>9,039</u>	<u>52,891,639</u>
<b>Depreciation</b>						
At 1 September 2021	-	3,674,540	580,253	618,588	9,039	4,882,420
Charge for the year	104,206	823,155	93,089	181,864	-	1,202,314
At 31 August 2022	<u>104,206</u>	<u>4,497,695</u>	<u>673,342</u>	<u>800,452</u>	<u>9,039</u>	<u>6,084,734</u>
<b>Net book value</b>						
At 31 August 2022	<u><u>5,155,083</u></u>	<u><u>41,193,704</u></u>	<u><u>216,530</u></u>	<u><u>241,588</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>46,806,905</u></u>
At 31 August 2021	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>30,466,885</u></u>	<u><u>190,116</u></u>	<u><u>219,203</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>30,876,204</u></u>

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**16. Debtors**

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>Due within one year</b>		
Trade debtors	26,832	3,191
Other debtors	-	4,678
Prepayments and accrued income	526,149	841,366
VAT recoverable	301,380	397,835
	854,361	1,247,070
	854,361	1,247,070

**17. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year**

	2022 £	2021 £
Other loans	20,422	-
Trade creditors	716,663	1,608,907
Other taxation and social security	375,946	240,493
Other creditors	402,725	307,176
Accruals and deferred income	939,433	366,338
	2,455,189	2,522,914
	2,455,189	2,522,914

Included within creditors falling due within one year are two Salix loans totalling £20,422 under CIF and SEEF which are both provided on the following terms: Repayable interest-free over six to eight years via deduction from GAG.

	2022 £	2021 £
Deferred income at 1 September 2021	260,919	198,209
Resources deferred during the year	389,015	260,919
Amounts released from previous periods	(260,919)	(198,209)
	389,015	260,919
	389,015	260,919

Deferred income relates to UIFSM, rates rebates and trip income in advance.

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**18. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year**

	2022 £	2021 £
Other loans	50,368	-
	50,368	-

Included within creditors falling due after one year are two Salix loans totalling £50,368 under CIF and SEEF which are both provided on the following terms: Repayable interest-free over six to eight years via deduction from GAG.

**19. Statement of funds**

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2022 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>						
General Funds	767,836	339,482	-	-	-	1,107,318
	767,836	339,482	-	-	-	1,107,318
<b>Restricted general funds</b>						
General Annual Grant	1,064,325	24,051,368	(23,370,805)	(145,165)	-	1,599,723
Educational visits	190,803	558,048	(655,330)	-	-	93,521
Pupil premium	-	1,098,342	(1,098,342)	-	-	-
PE and sports grant	70,703	208,910	(279,613)	-	-	-
UIFSM	-	206,752	(206,752)	-	-	-
Rates reclaim	-	119,691	(119,691)	-	-	-
Teachers pay grant	-	28,968	(28,968)	-	-	-
Teachers pension grant	-	81,853	(81,853)	-	-	-
Schools supplementary grant	-	295,555	(295,555)	-	-	-
COVID mass testing	-	91,000	(91,000)	-	-	-
Recovery premium	-	138,821	(138,821)	-	-	-
National tutoring programme	-	141,919	(99,343)	-	-	42,576
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	49,062	(49,062)	-	-	-

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
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**19. Statement of funds (continued)**

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2022 £
Other government grants	18,081	800,820	(818,901)	-	-	-
Other restricted income	21,680	835,080	-	-	-	856,760
On conversion	-	607,838	(607,838)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	(9,775,000)	(5,142,000)	(2,037,000)	-	9,785,000	(7,169,000)
	<u>(8,409,408)</u>	<u>24,172,027</u>	<u>(29,978,874)</u>	<u>(145,165)</u>	<u>9,785,000</u>	<u>(4,576,420)</u>
	Balance at 1 September 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2022 £
<b>Restricted fixed asset funds</b>						
Restricted fixed asset fund	30,780,335	15,603,444	(1,156,007)	1,438,475	-	46,666,247
DfE / ESFA capital grants	145,223	1,130,240	-	(402,116)	-	873,347
Other capital grants	1,069,452	-	-	(911,620)	-	157,832
Capital expenditure from GAG	95,869	-	(46,307)	20,426	-	69,988
	<u>32,090,879</u>	<u>16,733,684</u>	<u>(1,202,314)</u>	<u>145,165</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>47,767,414</u>
<b>Total Restricted funds</b>	<u>23,681,471</u>	<u>40,905,711</u>	<u>(31,181,188)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>9,785,000</u>	<u>43,190,994</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u><u>24,449,307</u></u>	<u><u>41,245,193</u></u>	<u><u>(31,181,188)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>9,785,000</u></u>	<u><u>44,298,312</u></u>

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

**Unrestricted funds**

This represents income in the period over which there are no spending restrictions.

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**19. Statement of funds (continued)**

**General Annual Grant (GAG)**

This represents funding from the ESFA to cover the costs of recurrent expenditure. The transfer from GAG relates to the contribution from GAG funding towards capital assets during the year. Under the funding agreement with the Secretary of State, the academy was not subject to a limit on the amount of GAG that it could carry forward at 31 August 2022.

**Educational Visits**

This represents contributions made by parents to the running of educational visits for the pupils of the Academy and the associated costs of running the trips.

**Pupil Premium**

The Pupil Premium income has been provided by the ESFA to help raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

**Other DfE/ESFA grants**

The Other DfE/ESFA Grants represents PE and Sports Grants, Universal Infant Free School Meals, Rates Relief, MAT Development Improvement Funds, FSM supplementary grant, Schools supplementary grant, Teacher pay grant, Teacher pension grant, National tutoring programme, COVID catch up premium, Recovery premium and COVID Mass Testing. These funds are used to raise achievement and improve outcomes for pupils, or to provide support for pupils from low income families. The COVID Catch-up Premium, is to be utilised to help pupils catch-up on missed learning, as a result of the impact of COVID.

**Other government grants**

This represents other funding from the government towards the provision of education.

**Other Restricted**

This represents funding received in the form of donations for a specific purpose.

**Pension reserve**

This fund represents the Trust's share of the deficit on the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) transferred to the academy on conversion from a state controlled school.

The restricted pension fund is materially in deficit and plans to eliminate the liability on the defined benefit pension scheme are set out in note 25 based on the period end valuation.

**Restricted fixed asset fund**

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

**DfE/ESFA Capital Grants**

Capital grants, are made up of Devolved Formula Capital which is received by the Trust to use to maintain and improve its buildings and facilities and Schools Condition Allocation income which is funding received from the government for the purpose of addressing improvements to buildings and other facilities or capital repairs/refurbishments required within the Trust.

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

	Balance at 1 September 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2021 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>						
General Funds	767,836	383,485	(383,485)	-	-	767,836

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**19. Statement of funds (continued)**

**Restricted  
general funds**

General Annual Grant	296,707	14,679,728	(13,887,845)	(24,265)	-	1,064,325
Educational visits	208,736	120,330	(138,263)	-	-	190,803
Pupil premium	-	711,587	(711,587)	-	-	-
PE and sports grant	77,065	157,100	(163,462)	-	-	70,703
UIFSM	-	193,900	(193,900)	-	-	-
Rates reclaim	-	70,196	(70,196)	-	-	-
Teachers pay grant	-	204,705	(204,705)	-	-	-
Teachers pension grant	-	537,064	(537,064)	-	-	-
FSM supplementary grant	-	27,450	(27,450)	-	-	-
COVID catch-up	-	239,520	(239,520)	-	-	-
COVID mass testing	-	58,680	(58,680)	-	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	28,129	(28,129)	-	-	-
Other government grants	(9,600)	415,345	(387,664)	-	-	18,081
Other restricted income	7,985	139,113	(103,896)	(21,522)	-	21,680
Pension reserve	(7,131,000)	-	(940,000)	-	(1,704,000)	(9,775,000)
	<u>(6,550,107)</u>	<u>17,582,847</u>	<u>(17,692,361)</u>	<u>(45,787)</u>	<u>(1,704,000)</u>	<u>(8,409,408)</u>

**Restricted fixed  
asset funds**

Restricted fixed asset fund	29,476,170	-	(749,313)	2,053,478	-	30,780,335
DfE / ESFA capital grants	447,786	586,404	-	(888,967)	-	145,223
Other capital grants	-	2,156,571	-	(1,087,119)	-	1,069,452
DfE donations	-	72,616	-	(72,616)	-	-
Capital expenditure from GAG	105,500	-	(50,642)	41,011	-	95,869

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**19. Statement of funds (continued)**

	Balance at 1 September 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2021 £
	30,029,456	2,815,591	(799,955)	45,787	-	32,090,879
<b>Total Restricted funds</b>	23,479,349	20,398,438	(18,492,316)	-	(1,704,000)	23,681,471
<b>Total funds</b>	24,247,185	20,781,923	(18,875,801)	-	(1,704,000)	24,449,307

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**19. Statement of funds (continued)**

**Total funds analysis by academy**

Fund balances at 31 August 2022 were allocated as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Astley Primary School	144,811	168,705
Bawdeswell Primary School	31,647	(58,856)
Corpusty Primary School	232,465	152,820
Fakenham Infant and Nursery School	214,144	113,994
Fakenham Junior School	203,456	130,117
Foulsham Primary School	137,737	121,780
Litcham School	869,213	632,524
Mattishall Primary School	20,501	(18,540)
Reepham High School and College	1,174,434	823,745
Reepham Primary School	89,954	45,847
Antingham and Southrepps Primary School	(114,518)	-
Cromer Junior School	69,002	-
Gresham Village Primary School	(12,978)	-
Sheringham High School	207,725	-
Stalham High School	317,421	-
Synergy Multi Academy Trust	114,884	21,292
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total before fixed asset funds and pension reserve	3,699,898	2,133,428
Restricted fixed asset fund	47,767,414	32,090,879
Pension reserve	(7,169,000)	(9,775,000)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,298,312</b>	<b>24,449,307</b>
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

**SYNERGY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
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**19. Statement of funds (continued)**

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

	Deficit £
Antingham and Southrepps Primary School	(114,518)
Gresham Village Primary School	(12,978)
	<u>                    </u>

Antingham and Southrepps Primary transferred to Synergy with a deficit as at 1 September 2021 of £49k. The Trust determined that significant additional support was required to secure improved quality of education, requiring additional finance. This has led to a planned agreed deficit of £114k. It should be noted that the deficit is budgeted to increase further until the school secures a good Ofsted judgement and attracts a greater number of pupils.

Gresham Village Primary School transferred to Synergy with a deficit as at 1 September 2021 of £4k and has incurred a small deficit as a result of additional staffing costs to accommodate increases in pupil numbers.

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

Antingham and Southrepps Primary has had some staff restructures during the year and further restructuring is planned for September 2023.

Gresham Village Primary has increased in pupil numbers and is budgeted to return to surplus during 22-23.

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**19. Statement of funds (continued)**

**Total cost analysis by academy**

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

	Teaching and educational support staff costs £	Other support staff costs £	Educational supplies £	Other costs excluding depreciation £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Astley Primary School	710,677	114,246	55,644	147,861	1,028,428	985,096
Bawdeswell Primary School	333,220	46,970	22,302	79,413	481,905	499,782
Corpusty Primary School	189,450	31,134	19,491	70,720	310,795	391,130
Fakenham Infant and Nursery School	829,149	104,362	33,687	188,356	1,155,554	1,205,230
Fakenham Junior School	1,011,075	149,114	58,307	190,988	1,409,484	1,444,999
Foulsham Primary School	351,734	37,125	29,469	91,162	509,490	464,501
Litcham School	3,086,200	379,833	332,073	563,645	4,361,751	3,970,610
Mattishall Primary School	651,742	35,673	32,276	156,661	876,352	877,227
Reepham High School and College	4,336,893	588,186	506,956	681,163	6,113,198	5,610,948
Reepham Primary School	705,446	71,086	55,754	126,641	958,927	923,501
Antingham and Southrepps Primary School	324,567	52,787	15,755	99,357	492,466	-
Cromer Junior School	1,063,497	73,368	96,165	247,382	1,480,412	-
Gresham Village Primary School	522,635	59,891	32,114	108,149	722,789	-
Sheringham High School	3,175,015	241,604	185,596	653,006	4,255,221	-
Stalham High School	1,869,005	181,478	151,955	516,796	2,719,234	-
Synergy Multi Academy Trust	452,679	402,928	665	209,596	1,065,868	1,702,822
<b>Academy Trust</b>	<b>19,612,984</b>	<b>2,569,785</b>	<b>1,628,209</b>	<b>4,130,896</b>	<b>27,941,874</b>	<b>18,075,846</b>

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**20. Analysis of net assets between funds**

**Analysis of net assets between funds - current year**

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	46,806,905	46,806,905
Current assets	1,107,318	4,819,968	1,238,678	7,165,964
Creditors due within one year	-	(2,227,388)	(227,801)	(2,455,189)
Creditors due in more than one year	-	-	(50,368)	(50,368)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	-	(7,169,000)	-	(7,169,000)
<b>Total</b>	<u>1,107,318</u>	<u>(4,576,420)</u>	<u>47,767,414</u>	<u>44,298,312</u>

**Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year**

	Unrestricted funds 2021 £	Restricted funds 2021 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2021 £	Total funds 2021 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	-	30,876,204	30,876,204
Current assets	767,836	2,989,872	2,113,309	5,871,017
Creditors due within one year	-	(1,624,280)	(898,634)	(2,522,914)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	-	(9,775,000)	-	(9,775,000)
<b>Total</b>	<u>767,836</u>	<u>(8,409,408)</u>	<u>32,090,879</u>	<u>24,449,307</u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
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**21. Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities**

	2022 £	2021 £
Net income for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	10,064,005	1,906,122
<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
Depreciation	1,202,314	799,955
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(1,130,240)	(2,742,975)
Defined benefit pension scheme obligation inherited	5,142,000	-
Increase in debtors	(191,429)	(282,670)
Increase in creditors	603,108	664,846
Pension adjustment	2,037,000	940,000
Donated assets	-	(72,616)
Assets on transfer of existing academy	(16,599,541)	-
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>1,127,217</b>	<b>1,212,662</b>

**22. Cash flows from financing activities**

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash inflows from new borrowing	70,790	-
<b>Net cash provided by financing activities</b>	<b>70,790</b>	<b>-</b>

**23. Cash flows from investing activities**

	2022 £	2021 £
Purchase of tangible assets	(2,129,729)	(1,127,634)
Capital grants from DfE Group	1,714,378	2,263,429
Cash received on transfer of existing academy	905,000	-
<b>Net cash provided by investing activities</b>	<b>489,649</b>	<b>1,135,795</b>

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**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022**

**24. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents**

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash in hand and at bank	6,311,603	4,623,947
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>6,311,603</b>	<b>4,623,947</b>

**25. Analysis of changes in net debt**

	At 1 September 2021 £	Cash flows £	New Salix Loans £	At 31 August 2022 £
Cash at bank and in hand	4,623,947	1,687,656	-	6,311,603
Debt due within 1 year	-	-	(20,422)	(20,422)
Debt due after 1 year	-	-	(50,368)	(50,368)
	<b>4,623,947</b>	<b>1,687,656</b>	<b>(70,790)</b>	<b>6,240,813</b>

**26. Pension commitments**

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 Norfolk County Council. Both are multi-employer defined benefit schemes.

The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2016 and of the LGPS 31 March 2019.

Contributions amounting to £402,009 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2022 (2021 - £277,384) and are included within creditors.

**Teachers' Pension Scheme**

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

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

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**26. Pension commitments (continued)**

**Valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme**

The Government Actuary, using normal actuarial principles, conducts a formal actuarial review of the TPS in accordance with the Public Service Pensions (Valuations and Employer Cost Cap) Directions 2014 published by HM Treasury every 4 years. The aim of the review is to 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 year amounted to £2,486,335 (2021 - £1,636,056).

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

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. The 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.

**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 2022 was £1,338,000 (2021 - £888,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £1,090,000 (2021 - £698,000) and employees' contributions totalled £ 298,000 (2021 - £190,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 18.4 - 21.3 per cent for employers and 5.5 - 12.5 per cent for employees.

As described in note the LGPS obligation relates to the employees of the Academy Trust, who were the employees transferred as part of the conversion from the maintained school and new employees who were eligible to, and did, join the Scheme in the year. The obligation in respect of employees who transferred on conversion represents their cumulative service at both the predecessor school and the Academy Trust at the balance sheet date.

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

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**26. Pension commitments (continued)**

**Principal actuarial assumptions**

	2022 %	2021 %
Rate of increase in salaries	3.75	3.60
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	3.05	2.90
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	4.25	1.65
Inflation assumption (CPI)	3.05	2.90

The commutation rate for Norfolk County Council was 50% (2021: 50%) pre April 2008 and increased to 75% (2021: 75%) for post April 2008 service.

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

	2022 Years	2021 Years
Retiring today		
Males	21.7	21.9
Females	24.1	24.3
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	22.9	23.2
Females	26.0	26.2

As at the 31 August 2022 the Trust had a pension liability of £7,169,000 (2021: £9,775,000). The sensitivity analysis detailed below would increase/(decrease) the closing defined obligation in the following way;

**Sensitivity analysis**

	2022 £000	2021 £000
Discount rate +0.1%	(94)	(456)
Discount rate -0.1%	94	456
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	189	152
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	(189)	(152)
CPI rate +0.1%	94	418
CPI rate -0.1%	(94)	(418)

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**26. Pension commitments (continued)**

**Share of scheme assets**

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

	At 31 August 2022 £	At 31 August 2021 £
Equities	8,037,960	4,703,220
Bonds	6,069,480	3,135,480
Property	1,968,480	1,014,420
Cash	328,080	368,880
<b>Total market value of assets</b>	<b>16,404,000</b>	<b>9,222,000</b>

The actual return on scheme assets was £113,000 (2021 - £1,391,000).

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

	2022 £	2021 £
Current service cost	(2,950,000)	(1,510,000)
Interest income	162,000	126,000
Interest cost	(339,000)	(254,000)
<b>Total amount recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities</b>	<b>(3,127,000)</b>	<b>(1,638,000)</b>

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

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>At 1 September</b>	<b>18,997,000</b>	<b>14,187,000</b>
Transferred in on existing academies joining the trust	10,951,000	-
Current service cost	2,950,000	1,510,000
Interest cost	339,000	254,000
Employee contributions	298,000	190,000
Actuarial (gains)/losses	(9,834,000)	2,969,000
Benefits paid	(128,000)	(113,000)
<b>At 31 August</b>	<b>23,573,000</b>	<b>18,997,000</b>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
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**26. Pension commitments (continued)**

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

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>At 1 September</b>	9,222,000	7,056,000
Transferred in on existing academies joining the trust	5,809,000	-
Interest income	162,000	126,000
Actuarial (losses)/gains	(49,000)	1,265,000
Employer contributions	1,090,000	698,000
Employee contributions	298,000	190,000
Benefits paid	(128,000)	(113,000)
<b>At 31 August</b>	<u>16,404,000</u>	<u>9,222,000</u>

**27. Operating lease commitments**

At 31 August 2022 the Academy Trust had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Not later than 1 year	37,255	23,772
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	75,697	45,470
Later than 5 years	21,000	25,000
	<u>133,952</u>	<u>94,242</u>

**28. Members' liability**

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of it being wound up while he/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.

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**29. 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 trustees have 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 the Academy Trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures relating to connected and related party transactions.

No related party transactions took place in the period of account (2021: None).

**30. Agency arrangements**

The academy trust distributes 16-19 bursary funds to students as an agent for ESFA. In the accounting period ending 31 August 2022 the trust received £48,697 (2021: £19,544) and disbursed £78,489 (2021: £17,545) from the fund. An amount of £Nil (2021: £29,792) is included in other creditors relating to undistributed funds.

**31. Transfer of existing academies into the academy trust**

**North Norfolk Academy Trust**

	Value reported by transferring trust £	Transfer in recognised £
<b>Intangible assets</b>		
<b>Tangible fixed assets</b>		
Freehold property	5,208,001	5,208,001
Long-term leasehold property	10,272,667	10,272,667
Furniture and equipment	93,213	93,213
Computer equipment	120,660	120,660
<b>Current assets</b>		
Debtors due within one year	207,000	207,000
Cash at bank and in hand	905,000	905,000
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Creditors due within one year	(392,259)	(392,259)
Creditors due after one year	(71,000)	(71,000)
<b>Pensions</b>		
Pensions - pension scheme liabilities	(5,142,000)	(5,142,000)
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>11,201,282</u>	<u>11,201,282</u>