

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

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THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Members	David Tait Daniel Rose Helen Rayfield Amy Loveng Thomas Adcock
Directors	David Tait, Chair Kurt Ma Gillian Jones Thomas Adcock Penny Barratt, CEO Derek Meerstadt (Resigned 21 July 2023) Marisa Reventos (Resigned 27 September 2023) Ghino Parker (Appointed 28 September 2023) Michael Davies (Appointed 28 September 2023)
Company registered number	08343491
Company name	The Bridge MAT LTD
Registered and principal office	251 Hungerford Road London N7 9LD
Accounting Officer	Penny Barratt
Senior Management Team	Penny Barratt, Chief Executive Officer Harold Reid, Chief Financial & Operating Officer Ed Ashcroft, Head Teacher, The Bridge ILS Martin Nirsimloo, Head Teacher, The Bridge School Rosie Whur, Head Teacher, The Bridge Satellite Provision Jo Stephens, Head Teacher, The Bridge Hungerford School Gary Morrissey, Director of The Development and Training Centre Heidi Philpott, Head Teacher, The Bridge Easton School
Independent Auditors	Price Bailey LLP Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditors Causeway House 1 Dane Street Bishop's Stortford Hertfordshire CM23 3BT
Bankers	Lloyds Bank PLC London EC2R 8AU

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

DIRECTORS' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

The Directors present their Annual Report together with the financial statements and Auditor's Report of The Bridge MAT Ltd (TBMAT, the Trust or the Charitable Company) formerly The Bridge London Trust London, for the year ended 31 August 2023. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' Report, and a Directors' Report under company law.

The Trust operates five Academies, one of which is a mainstream two form entry primary school, the other four schools are special schools. The Trust opened a brand new special school, The Bridge Easton School, in Easton, Norfolk on 1st January 2023 with 42 students, when full the school will cater for 170 pupils. The remaining four schools serve the local catchment area of Islington, Camden and North London over a total of five separate sites. The special schools cater for pupils aged 5-19 with autism and learning difficulties. The special schools are The Bridge School, The Bridge Integrated Learning Space, The Bridge Satellite Provision and The Bridge Easton School. The mainstream primary school is The Bridge Hungerford School. The total pupils across the Trust on the October 2023 school census day was 562.

Structure, governance and management

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 and the Board of Directors are also referred to as the Board. The Charitable Company operates as the Bridge MAT Limited, the trading names by which the Schools within the Trust are known are as follows;

The Bridge Primary School
The Bridge Secondary School
The Bridge School London
The Bridge Integrated Learning Space
The Bridge Satellite Provision
The Bridge Hungerford School
The Bridge Development and Training Centre
The Bridge Easton

The Board delegates powers to Local Governing Boards ('LGBs') to which Governors are appointed. These LGBs are responsible for maintaining the outstanding delivery of Teaching and Learning which has been achieved historically in the Trust schools.

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.

Directors' and Officers' indemnities

Director's benefit from the Department for Education's Risk Protection Arrangement (RPA), an alternative to insurance where UK Government funds cover losses that arise. This scheme protects Trustees and Officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on Trust business, and provides cover up to £10,000,000.

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Structure, governance and management (continued)

Method of recruitment and appointment or election of Directors

In line with the Trust's Articles of Association, the Trust Board may comprise of the following:

- Up to 5 Directors appointed by the Members of the Trust;
- The Chief Executive Officer, if so appointed by the Members of the Trust;
- Other Co-opted Directors appointed by those Directors appointed by the Members of the Trust with, staff appointments to not exceed one third of the total number of Directors.

The process for appointing new Directors is supported by sourcing nominations of potential candidates from external agencies including Academy Ambassadors with these considered by the Members and other Directors for appointment. These considerations include reference to skills and areas of knowledge in need of strengthening identified through skills audits and reviews of effectiveness.

The process for the election of a new Chair would commence with a search for potential nominees from amongst existing Directors to be followed, if required, by an external appointment search.

A Director shall cease to hold office if they resign by notice to the Trust, subject to at least three Directors remaining in office when the resignation takes effect. A Director may be removed from office by those that appointed them or by an Ordinary Resolution of the Members of the Trust in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

Policies adopted for the induction and training of Directors

The Charitable Company is committed to providing adequate opportunities for Directors and Governors to undertake and receive suitable training, so as to enable them to perform their role effectively. To this end the Trust provides an internal programme of continued professional development led by experienced training providers including members of the Trust Leadership Team.

All new Directors are entitled to an induction to the role, according to their need, which may include, introductory sessions, mentoring and formal courses. This process will involve a meeting with the Chair of Directors and the CEO. All Trustees are provided with access to policies and procedure documents that are appropriate to the role they undertake as Directors.

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 governance structure is on two levels; The Board and its Committees and then Local Governing Bodies.

The Board is responsible for the strategic decision making of the Trust and for ensuring that high standards of corporate governance are maintained. It exercises its powers and functions by addressing such matters as policy and strategy development, adopting the annual Trust Improvement Plan and three year budget, monitoring and making decisions about the direction of the Trust. It also appoints senior staff and reviews progress towards educational objectives. A committee of the Board agrees the performance objectives of the CEO, and reviews them.

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Structure, governance and management (continued)

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

Key management personnel include Directors and those staff to whom the Directors 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 school group size, ISR, the pay scales for each role and the level of experience of each staff member. In addition, pay levels may be affected by nationally agreed pay awards, the ability to recruit and retain in post, all of which are in accordance with the Trust's appointment and pay policies.

All amendments to key management's pay and remuneration is approved by a committee of the Board and are in line with comparatives for other academies supplied by the Confederation of School Trusts.

Trade union facility time

During the year, 2 employees who were relevant union officials spent 0% of time on trade union activities.

Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

Related parties and other connected charities and organisations

Owing to the nature of the Trust's operations and the composition of the Board 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 Directors may have an interest.

All transactions involving such organisations are conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the Academy Trust's financial regulations and normal procedures. Any transaction where the Director 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:

- The Bridge Charity

The Trust does not have a formal sponsor.

Engagement with employees (including disabled persons)

The Directors recognise that our employees are fundamental and core to our business and delivery of high quality education. Our success depends on attracting, retaining and motivating employees. The Directors factor the implications of decisions on employees and the wider workforce, where relevant and feasible. Where appropriate, the Trust consults on matters such as policy, pay, health, safety and welfare with the relevant support staff and teaching trades unions.

The Trust provides information to employees generally by way of email, memoranda and staff meetings. Information is channelled via leadership meetings and staff briefings. Employees are encouraged to familiarise themselves with policies and procedures, and wider literature available from the Trust landing page and website.

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

**THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
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**DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023**

Structure, governance and management (continued)

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

The Trust aims to build beneficial partnerships and arrangements with its key suppliers, developing beneficial relationships and improved quality to the Trust. The Trust aims to conduct all its business relationships with integrity and courtesy, and to honour business agreements. The Directors have therefore implemented clear policies and procedures for dealing fairly with suppliers. Formal orders are placed and agreed payment terms always adhered to.

The Directors consider pupils and parents to be their "clients". Whilst pupils encounter engagement on a daily basis, engagement with parents is carried out through regular newsletters and face to face meetings.

Objectives and activities

Objects and aims

The Trust's object is to advance, for the public benefit, education in the United Kingdom by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing academies that offer a broad and balanced curriculum and care for pupils of different abilities between the ages of 2 and 19.

Objectives, strategies and activities

The objective of the Trust is to deliver a high quality teaching and learning offer in all of its schools over a prolonged period.

In order to do this we have employed the following strategies and activities

- Developed staff to provide high quality teaching and learning through systematic coaching
- Designed curricular which is matched to local contexts and individual needs
- Implemented Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) across all the schools
- Learnt from evidence bases for our practice
- Encourage delegation
- Recruited well
- Built overall leadership capacity
- Provided a systematic CPD offer with career opportunities
- Continued progress in the improvement of central services, systems, structures and financial control
- Developed a centralised school improvement function

Public benefit

The Directors confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Trust's objectives and aims and in planning future activities for the year. The Directors consider that the Trust's aims are demonstrably to the public benefit.

Strategic report

Growth and Development

In January 2023 The Bridge MAT opened a special free school in Norwich. This will have a capacity of 170 when full. At present 100 pupils attend the school. Additionally The Trust has been approved as the receiving Trust for Fen Rivers School, Kings Lynn, Norwich, which is being rebrokered from Catch 22. This is likely to transfer in the next couple of months. The Trust has also been approved as a sponsor for Poole Park Primary School, a school placed in special measures, in Islington. The intention is to build a Trust hub in East Anglia and bids have been submitted for additional free schools in this area.

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Objectives and activities (continued)

Achievement against objectives

Three of the five schools currently in the Trust had Ofsted inspections in the 2022-23 academic year. These were all successful inspections with Hungerford School and the Satellites getting a grading of good and The ILS retaining their outstanding grading. For Hungerford this was the first inspection following the previous inadequate judgement which led to academisation and sponsorship.

All schools continue to belong to Challenge Partners and positive quality assurance reviews have been received. Pupils with EHCPs continue to achieve well against their targets and Hungerford School's Key Stage 2 and 3 data compared favourably with Islington and National data.

Key performance indicators

The academic performance of each school is regularly reviewed by the Directors and closely monitored by the Local Governing Boards. In addition, the Directors receive financial reports containing financial data which include; consolidated management accounts, cash flow forecast, individual Academy forecast outturn reports with commentary for any significant variations.

The Board monitors income and expenditure to ensure that no unlicensed deficits arise for individual Schools and reserves are maintained in line with policy, it also reviews performance of each School compared to aims, strategies and financial budgets.

Going concern

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

Promoting the success of the company

The Directors 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 Directors balance the needs of current and future cohorts.

The Directors 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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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

(continued)

Financial review

The principal source of funding for the Trust is the General Annual Grant (GAG), pupil top-up funding and other grants that it receives from the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is limited to specific purposes. The grants received from the ESFA during the year ended 31 August 2023 and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Income and expenditure for the year includes capital income, depreciation and pension scheme adjustments which are accounting adjustments and not included when operational budgets are agreed with the ESFA.

During the year ended 31 August 2023, total expenditure of £19,158,283 (2022 - £15,049,577) was met by recurrent grant funding, other incoming resources and funding carried forward from reserves. This expenditure has supported the key objectives of the Trust, with budgets being set in line with operational requirements. During the financial year it has been necessary to refine staffing structures required to deliver objectives within the funding available.

The surplus of income over expenditure, excluding depreciation and pension, for the year was £17,972,745. This surplus along with actuarial gains on defined benefit pension scheme of £1,676,000 the depreciation charge of £1,555,284 combined with prior year reserves of £104,421,076 provides overall cumulative reserves as at 31 August 2023 of £122,362,536.

At 31 August 2023 the net book value of fixed assets was £123,287,282 and movements in tangible fixed assets are shown in Note 14 to the financial statements. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the pupils of the Trust.

Due to the accounting rules for the Local Government Scheme under FRS102, the Trust is recognising significant pension fund deficit of £3,577,000. 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. In discussion with a DfE pensions expert, the Directors have rejected the proposal to employ staff by way of a service provision agreement, thereby reducing the exposure of the Trust to future defined benefit liability.

Reserves policy

The Directors 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 Directors monitor estimated year-end carry forward figures by way of monthly financial reports from the Chief Financial and Operating Officer. The three year budget plan identifies how any carry forward will be allocated in the plan for the following two academic years, including the identification of any funds earmarked for a specific project or purpose. The Directors recognise that a deficit position of the Local Government Pension Scheme would generally result in the increase in employer's pension contributions over a period of years.

The Trust's current level of free reserves (total funds less the amount held in fixed assets and restricted funds) is £1,220,514 (2022 - £1,135,662). The Directors take the prudent view that depending upon the need to finance educational improvement plans, the Trust should hold a cash contingency. Any such contingency should equate to no more than 5% of expenditure and might in many circumstances be less than this. Any deemed surplus is to be made available to invest in the development of the MAT.

The Trust's balance on restricted general funds (excluding pension reserve) plus the balance on unrestricted funds at 31 August 2023 was £2,581,743 (2022 - 2,437,379).

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

Investment policy

The aim of the policy will be 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 Directors do not consider the investment of surplus funds as a primary activity, rather as good stewardship and as and when circumstances allow.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The Directors maintain 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 process is undertaken on an annual basis, the internal control systems and the exposure to risks are monitored on behalf of the Directors at key Board meetings. The principal risks facing the Trust are outlined below; those facing the Schools at an operational level are addressed by its systems and by internal financial and other controls.

The Directors 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 Multi Academy Trust, the level of financial risk is reduced as 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 Directors assess the other 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;
- 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, returns, etc. The Directors 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 student applicants in sufficient numbers by maintaining the highest educational standards. To mitigate this risk Directors ensure that student progress and outcomes are closely monitored and reviewed;
- safeguarding and child protection - the Directors continue to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the areas of selection and monitoring of staff, the operation of child protection policies and procedures, health & safety and discipline;
- staffing - the success of the Trust is reliant on achieving outstanding teaching and learning. The Directors monitor and review policies and procedures and recruitment to ensure continued development and training of staff as well as ensuring there is clear succession planning;
- fraud and mismanagement of funds - the Directors have appointed internal auditor, Kreston Reeves, to carry out independent and external checks on financial systems and records as required by the Academies Financial Handbook. All finance staff receive training to keep up to date with financial practice requirements and develop their skills in this area;
- financial instruments – the Trust only deals with bank balances, cash and trade creditors, with limited trade (and other) debtors. The risk in this area is considered to be low; and;

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DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

- 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. Directors take these payments into account when setting the annual budget plan.
- exposure to an infectious virus or bacteria places students, staff or external visitors at significant health risk

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

Disclosure of information to Auditors

Insofar as the Directors are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the Charitable Company's Auditors are unaware, and
- that Directors 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 Directors' Report was approved by order of the Board of Directors, as the company directors, on and signed on its behalf by:



D Tait (Dec 12, 2023, 2:54pm)

David Tait
Chair of Directors

Date: 12 Dec 2023

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Scope of responsibility

As directors, we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that The Bridge MAT Ltd 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.

In taking this view we have reviewed and taken account of the guidance in DfE's Governance Handbook and competency framework for governance.

The Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, has the statutory responsibility 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 The Bridge MAT Ltd and the Secretary of State for Education. The Chief Executive is not a financial professional and in order to perform this function relies upon the active involvement of the Chief Operating Officer. The Board of Directors has delegated the day-to-day responsibility of financial management to the Chief Operating Officer who is also responsible for reporting to the Board of Directors any material weaknesses or breakdowns in internal control.

Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Directors' Report and in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities. The Board has formally met 7 times during the academic year.

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

Director	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
David Tait, Chair	7	7
Kurt Ma	4	7
Gillian Jones	7	7
Thomas Adcock	5	7
Penny Barratt, CEO	7	7
Derek Meerstadt	4	7
Marisa Reventos	4	7
Ghino Parker	0	0
Michael Davies	0	0

Changes to the board in the financial year are detailed in the reference and administrative details on Page 1

Every full Board of Directors meeting includes a report from the Chief Executive Officer, a report from the Chief Operating Officer and an update on governance at both Trust and local level. Matters discussed during the year to 31 August 2023 included;

- Review of the Educational performance of all schools
- Review of the Financial performance of all schools
- Reports from OFSTED
- Review of leadership capacity and succession planning
- Review of Strategic risks, mitigations and contingencies
- Review of the Trust's Growth Strategy
- Review of the most efficient way to review the effectiveness of the board.
- Review and receive reports on the progress of the New School in Norfolk.

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Governance (continued)

Governance reviews:

During the year the Chair of Directors undertook a review of governance by interviewing all Directors, two Local Governing Board Chairs and two members of the Senior Leadership Team. The following main points arose:

- Financial control and the provisions of central services was considered robust
- The setting of strategic goals for the Trust and for its individual schools that were understood. implemented and monitored needed further development and improvement
- A system of annual review of the effectiveness of Local Governing Boards and the Board needed to put in place to start in the current year
- Every three years these reviews should be independently assessed by an accredited third party
- At this stage there was no appetite to conduct reviews of individual governors or directors but only on their effectiveness in working as a Trust or Local Governing Board

Conflicts of interest

Academy trusts must describe the processes they have in place to manage conflicts of interest, including for example (but not limited to) maintaining an up-to-date and complete register of interests, and how the information on this register is used in the day-to-day management and governance of the academy trust. Where relevant, they must also explain how the academy trust avoids conflicts of interest in its ownership or control of any subsidiaries, joint ventures or associates.

The Finance and Audit Risk Committee is a sub-committee of the main Board of Directors.

Attendance during the academic year at meetings was as follows:

Director	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
David Tait	2	2
Thomas Adcock	0	2
Kurt Ma	1	2

Matters discussed during the year to 31 August 2023 included but were not limited to

- Regular review of the forecast outturns and current financial position.
- Review of 3 year budgets.
- Review of Capital grants received in the year for the improvement of the estate.
- Review of procurement policies and value for money.
- Review and agreement of financial policies and regulations.
- Commission and receive reports from the Internal Auditors on the internal control framework.
- Receive and Review reports from external auditors on the year end process.

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

Review of value for money

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

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

- Procured new photocopiers across all schools using a purchasing framework and operating leasing arrangement with Ricoh
- Carried out a tender process and appointing a new catering company using a framework for 3 of the Trusts schools.
- Installation of energy efficient LED lighting at the Bridge School and Solar panels at the Bridge Primary School.
- Participating in the Local Authority energy management scheme to find the best possible price for gas and electricity supplies in 2022-23.

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 The Bridge MAT for the year 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to handle risk

The Board has reviewed the key risks to which the Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. It is of the view that there is a formal on-going process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Trust's risks that has been in place for the year to 31 August 2023 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board.

The risk and control framework

The Trust's system of internal financial control is based on a framework of regular management information and administrative procedures including the segregation of duties and a system of delegation and accountability. 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 Directors
- regular reviews by the Finance and Audit Risk 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 Directors has decided to buy-in an internal audit service from School Business Services.

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GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

The risk and control framework (continued)

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

- Review of Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Review of Whistleblowing Policy
- Review of Safeguarding Policy
- Review of GDPR Policy
- Review of Monthly Management reporting
- Review of Year End Procedures
- Review of Budgeting

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

The Internal Auditor has delivered their schedule of work as planned and there were no material control issues arising as a result of their work.

Review of effectiveness

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

- the work of the internal auditor
- the work of the executive managers within the 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 Finance, Audit and Risk 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 Directors and signed on their behalf by:



David Tait (2023, 2:54pm)
Chair of Directors

Date: 12 Dec 2023



Penny Barratt (2023, 5:15pm)
Accounting Officer

**THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
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STATEMENT ON REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

As Accounting Officer of The Bridge MAT LTD I have considered my responsibility to notify the Board of Directors and the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding received by the Trust under the funding agreement in place between the Trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academies Trust Handbook 2022.

I confirm that I and the Board of Directors are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of all funds by the Trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the Trust's funding agreement and the Academies Trust Handbook 2022, including responsibilities for estates safety and management.

I confirm that the following instance of material irregularity, impropriety or funding non-compliance discovered to date has been notified to the Board of Directors and ESFA . If any instances are identified after the date of this statement, these will be notified to the Board of Directors and the ESFA.

Over a two week period, a school bus was used by a member of staff as a replacement to transport one of our students, with very complex needs, to and from school. The school, as the registered owner, reasonably understood that as a blue badge holder it would be exempt from the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) regulations, as it would be exempted under the Ultra Low Emission Zone regulations (ULEZ). This however, was not the case and the Trust central services team did not immediately receive penalty charge notices, that were first sent to the school. When the notice was received the school was informed and they immediately stopped using the bus. The fines of £500 per contravention, were appealed but upheld by TfL, who were not prepared to use its discretion and reduce or waive the charges.

Penny Barratt

Penny Barratt (2023, 5:15pm)
Accounting Officer

Date: 12 Dec 2023

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial period. Under company law, the Directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charitable Company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Directors 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 2022 to 2023;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charitable Company will continue in business.

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

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

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



David Falt
Chair of Directors

Date: 12 Dec 2023

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
BRIDGE MAT LTD**

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Bridge MAT LTD (the 'Trust') for the period ended 31 August 2023 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Trust's affairs as at 31 August 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the period 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 2022 to 2023 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Basis for opinion

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

Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
BRIDGE MAT LTD (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 Directors 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 Directors' Report for the financial period for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- the Directors' Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the Trust and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the 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 Directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Directors

As explained more fully in the Directors' Responsibilities Statement, the Directors (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 Directors 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 Directors are responsible for assessing the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors either intend to liquidate the Trust or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
BRIDGE MAT LTD (CONTINUED)**

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

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

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

We gained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the Trust and the sector in which it operates and considered the risk of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations. This included those regulations directly related to the financial statements, including financial reporting and tax legislation and academy sector regulations including GDPR, employment law, health and safety and safeguarding. The risks were discussed with the audit team and we remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit. We carried out specific procedures to address the risks identified. These included the following:

- We reviewed systems and procedures to identify potential areas of management 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 Board meetings and other relevant sub-committees of the Board such as the Finance Committee 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 Directors 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: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditors' Report.

**THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
BRIDGE MAT LTD (CONTINUED)**

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the Trust's Members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Trust's Members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' Report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Trust and its Members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Tom Meeks FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)

for and on behalf of

Price Bailey LLP

Chartered Accountants

Statutory Auditors

Causeway House

1 Dane Street

Bishop's Stortford

Hertfordshire

CM23 3BT

14 December 2023

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO THE BRIDGE
MAT LTD AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY**

In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 23 August 2023 and further to the requirements of the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as included in the Academies Accounts Direction 2022 to 2023, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether the expenditure disbursed and income received by The Bridge MAT LTD during the period 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 have been applied to the purposes identified by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

This report is made solely to The Bridge MAT LTD and ESFA in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to The Bridge MAT LTD 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 The Bridge MAT LTD and ESFA, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of The Bridge MAT LTD's Accounting Officer and the Reporting Accountant

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of The Bridge MAT LTD's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education dated 21 April 2017 and the Academy Trust Handbook, extant from 1 September 2022, for ensuring that expenditure disbursed and income received is applied for the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

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

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

**INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S ASSURANCE REPORT ON REGULARITY TO THE BRIDGE
MAT LTD AND THE EDUCATION & SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY (CONTINUED)**

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 Trust's income and expenditure.

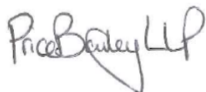
The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

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

Conclusion

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

We noted during the course of our work, an instance of non-compliance with Transport for London, Low Emission Zone. This instance of non-compliance was associated with various offences from June 2022 to July 2022 however fines at a net cost of £8,500 were not charged until February 2023 and March 2023.



Reporting Accountant
Price Bailey LLP
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditors

Date: 14 December 2023

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	Note	Restricted funds 2023 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Income from:						
Donations and capital grants	3	380,620	20,383,411	-	20,764,031	334,875
Other trading activities	5	-	-	592,865	592,865	669,897
Investments	6	-	-	369	369	298
Charitable activities	4	14,055,121	-	11,357	14,066,478	11,983,737
Total income		14,435,741	20,383,411	604,591	35,423,743	12,988,807
Expenditure on:						
Charitable activities		14,528,229	4,110,315	519,739	19,158,283	15,049,577
Total expenditure		14,528,229	4,110,315	519,739	19,158,283	15,049,577
Net movement in funds before other recognised gains/(losses)		(92,488)	16,273,096	84,852	16,265,460	(2,060,770)
Actuarial (losses)/gains on defined benefit pension schemes	26	1,676,000	-	-	1,676,000	8,914,000
Net movement in funds		1,583,512	16,273,096	84,852	17,941,460	6,853,230
Reconciliation of funds:						
Total funds brought forward		(3,799,283)	107,084,697	1,135,662	104,421,076	97,567,846
Net movement in funds		1,583,512	16,273,096	84,852	17,941,460	6,853,230
Total funds carried forward		(2,215,771)	123,357,793	1,220,514	122,362,536	104,421,076

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
REGISTRATION NUMBER 08343491
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 AUGUST 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	14	123,287,282	106,448,579
Current assets			
Debtors	15	2,049,524	1,410,123
Cash at bank and in hand		3,190,032	3,227,441
		5,239,556	4,637,564
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(2,469,447)	(1,499,782)
Net current assets		2,770,109	3,137,782
Total assets less current liabilities		126,057,391	109,586,361
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	17	(117,855)	(64,285)
Net assets excluding pension liability		125,939,536	109,522,076
Defined benefit pension scheme liability	26	(3,577,000)	(5,101,000)
Total net assets		122,362,536	104,421,076
Funds of the Trust			
Restricted funds:			
Fixed asset funds	18	123,357,793	107,084,697
Restricted income funds	18	1,361,229	1,301,717
Pension reserve	18	(3,577,000)	(5,101,000)
Total restricted funds	18	121,142,022	103,285,414
Unrestricted income funds	18	1,220,514	1,135,662
Total funds		122,362,536	104,421,076

The financial statements on pages 22 to 51 were approved and authorised for issue by the Directors and are signed on their behalf, by:



David Tait
(David Tait, Dec 12, 2023, 2:54pm)
Chair of Directors

Date: 12 Dec 2023

The notes on pages 25 to 51 form part of these financial statements.

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

	Note	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash provided by operating activities	20	16,291,781	1,348,171
Cash flows from investing activities			
	22	(16,404,190)	100,088
Cash flows from financing activities			
	21	75,000	-
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the period		(37,409)	1,448,259
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period		3,227,441	1,779,182
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	23, 24	<u>3,190,032</u>	<u>3,227,441</u>

The notes on pages 25 to 51 form part of these financial statements

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1. Accounting policies

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

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

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

The Bridge MAT Ltd meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

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

1.2 Going concern

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

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

1.3 Company status

The Trust is a Company limited by guarantee. The Members are noted on page 3. In event of the Trust being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £10 per Member.

1.4 Fund accounting

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

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.

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.5 Income

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

• **Grants**

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

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

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

• **Donations**

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

• **Other income**

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

1.6 Expenditure

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

• **Charitable activities**

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

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.7 Taxation

The 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 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.

1.8 Tangible fixed assets

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

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

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

Depreciation is provided on the following bases:

Long-term leasehold property	- 35 - 125 years
Furniture and equipment	- 10 years
Motor vehicles	- 10 years
Computer equipment	- 4 years

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

1.9 Debtors

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

1.10 Cash at bank and in hand

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

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.11 Liabilities

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

1.12 Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Trust has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event which it is probable will result in the transfer of economic benefits and the obligation can be estimated reliably.

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

1.13 Financial instruments

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

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

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

Financial liabilities - trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost as detailed in notes 16 and 17. 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.

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.14 Pensions

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

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

The LGPS is a funded multi-employer scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the 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. 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 Directors make 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 2022 has been used by the actuary in valuing the pensions liability at 31 August 2023. Any differences between the figures derived from the roll forward approach and a full actuarial valuation would impact on the carrying amount of the pension liability.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

3. Income from donations and capital grants

	Restricted funds 2023 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Donations	-	-	-	-	59,075
Grants	22,500	-	-	22,500	3,088
Capital grants	-	1,989,428	-	1,989,428	272,712
Donated on conversion	358,120	18,393,983	-	18,752,103	-
Total 2023	<u>380,620</u>	<u>20,383,411</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20,764,031</u>	<u>334,875</u>
Total 2022	<u>6,847</u>	<u>272,712</u>	<u>55,316</u>	<u>334,875</u>	

In 2022, Capital grants received all related to restricted fixed asset funds.

In 2022, Grants received all related to restricted funds.

In 2022, Donations received consisted of £3,759 restricted funds and £55,316 of unrestricted funds.

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
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4. Funding for the Trust's charitable activities

	Restricted funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Provision of Education				
DfE/ESFA Grants				
General Annual Grant (GAG)	4,794,896	-	4,794,896	4,157,599
Other DfE/ESFA grants				
Start up grants	37,500	-	37,500	60,000
Pupil premium	307,359	-	307,359	307,840
UIFSM	23,506	-	23,506	13,695
Teachers pay grant	522	-	522	765
Teachers pension grant	1,475	-	1,475	2,160
Other DfE/ESFA grants	355,831	-	355,831	243,890
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-	5,521,089	4,785,949
Other Government grants				
Local Authority grant	8,534,032	-	8,534,032	7,157,670
Other income				
Catering income	-	11,357	11,357	40,118
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total 2023	14,055,121	11,357	14,066,478	11,983,737
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
Total 2022	11,943,619	40,118	11,983,737	
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	

In 2022, all DfE / ESFA grants received were restricted.

In 2022, all Other Government grants received were restricted.

In 2022, all catering income received was unrestricted.

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5. Income from other trading activities

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Hire of facilities	72,129	72,129	103,033
Other income generated	520,736	520,736	566,864
Total 2023	592,865	592,865	669,897
Total 2022	669,897	669,897	

In 2022, all income generated from other trading activities was unrestricted.

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
Interest receivable	369	369	298
Total 2022	298	298	

In 2022, all investment income was unrestricted.

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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7. Expenditure

	Staff Costs 2023 £	Premises 2023 £	Other 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Provision of Education:					
Direct costs	10,227,725	3,659	404,220	10,635,604	9,214,222
Support costs	1,666,555	5,765,641	1,090,483	8,522,679	5,835,355
Total 2023	<u>11,894,280</u>	<u>5,769,300</u>	<u>1,494,703</u>	<u>19,158,283</u>	<u>15,049,577</u>
Total 2022	<u>10,126,593</u>	<u>2,500,334</u>	<u>2,422,650</u>	<u>15,049,577</u>	

In 2023, of the total expenditure, £519,739 (2022 - £552,961) was from unrestricted funds, £14,376,229 (2022 - £12,574,993) was from restricted funds and £2,555,030 (2022 - £1,921,624) was from restricted fixed asset funds.

In 2022, direct costs consisted of £8,458,302 staff costs and £756,122 other costs.

In 2022, support costs consisted of £1,447,958 staff costs, £2,500,334 premises costs and £1,612,038 other costs.

In 2022, teaching school consisted of £220,333 staff costs and £54,490 other costs.

8. Charitable activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Direct costs	10,635,604	9,214,222
Support costs	8,522,679	5,835,355
	<u>19,158,283</u>	<u>15,049,577</u>

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	2023 £	2022 £
Analysis of support costs		
Support staff costs	1,666,555	1,447,958
Depreciation	1,555,284	1,182,780
Premises costs	4,210,356	1,317,554
Technology costs	167,715	203,930
Other costs	834,405	1,350,950
Governance costs	30,043	23,706
Legal costs	58,321	33,452
	8,522,679	5,560,330
	8,522,679	5,560,330

9. Net (expenditure)/income

Net (expenditure)/income for the period includes:

	2023 £	2022 £
Operating lease rentals	54,916	17,699
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	1,555,284	1,182,780
Fees paid to Auditors for:		
- audit	15,330	12,560
- other services	10,730	9,870
	15,330	12,560
	10,730	9,870

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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10. Staff

a. Staff costs

Staff costs during the period were as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	7,829,430	6,227,538
Social security costs	736,263	633,058
Pension costs	1,695,866	2,389,227
	<u>10,261,559</u>	<u>9,249,823</u>
Agency staff costs	1,616,009	1,490,623
Staff restructuring costs	20,000	30,000
	<u>11,897,568</u>	<u>10,770,446</u>

Staff restructuring costs comprise:

	2023 £	2022 £
Redundancy payments	-	30,000
Severance payments	20,000	-
	<u>20,000</u>	<u>30,000</u>

All redundancy and severance payments were made under statutory guidelines.

b. Staff numbers

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

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Teachers	44	43
Administration and support	195	179
Management	18	15
	<u>257</u>	<u>237</u>

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

10. Staff (continued)

b. Staff numbers (continued)

The average headcount expressed as full-time equivalents was:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Teachers	42	38
Administration and support	143	128
Management	17	13
	<u>202</u>	<u>179</u>

c. Higher paid staff

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

	2023 No.	2022 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	5	5
In the band £70,001 - £80,000	4	2
In the band £80,001 - £90,000	2	3
In the band £90,001 - £100,000	1	1
In the band £100,001 - £110,000	1	-
In the band £140,001 - £150,000	1	1
	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

d. Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the Trust comprise the Directors and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of employee benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the Trust was £1,821,554 (2022 - £1,428,892). Included in the above are employer National Insurance contributions of £165,489 (2022 - £132,816) and employer pension contributions of £306,569 (2022 - £238,821).

THE BRIDGE MAT LTD
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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11. Central services

The Trust has provided the following central services to its Academies during the period:

- Educational leadership support
- HR management
- Financial management
- Property management
- Procurement
- ICT management
- Legal and governance
- Marketing

The Trust charges for these services on the following basis:

The charges for these services on the basis of 6% of income, the charge is also used as a mechanism for the efficient recharge of other expenditure. Where this percentage is not deemed to be an appropriate method, the basis of the recharge is either pupil numbers or a proportion of the full amount as a recharge of expenditure on the schools behalf.

All services charged by the Trust represent internal recharges within the Multi Academy Trust, and as such are not within the scope of VAT.

The actual amounts charged during the period were as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
The Integrated Learning Space	239,756	144,883
The Bridge Primary School	347,088	294,812
The Bridge Secondary School	278,270	267,907
Hungerford Primary	170,532	152,236
The Bridge Satellite Provision	136,449	122,649
The Bridge Easton	24,800	-
The Bridge TS	12,421	-
Total	1,209,316	982,487

12. Directors' remuneration and expenses

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

		2023	2022
Penny Barratt	Remuneration	145,000 -	140,000 -
		150,000	145,000
	Pension contributions paid	30,000 -	30,000 -
		35,000	35,000

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

12. Directors' remuneration and expenses (continued)

During the period ended 31 August 2023, expenses totalling £264.59 were reimbursed or paid directly to Director (2022 - £303.40 to no Director).

13. Directors' and Officers' insurance

The Trust has opted into the Department of Education's risk protection arrangement (RPA), an alternative to insurance where UK government funds cover losses that arise. This scheme protects Directors and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy business, and provides cover up to £10,000,000. It is not possible to quantify the Directors and officers indemnity element from the overall cost of the RPA scheme membership.

14. Tangible fixed assets

	Long-term leasehold property £	Furniture and equipment £	Computer equipment £	Motor vehicles £	Total £
Cost or valuation					
At 1 September 2022	111,910,228	268,579	210,080	53,138	112,442,025
Additions	18,365,000	13,601	15,386	-	18,393,987
At 31 August 2023	<u>130,275,228</u>	<u>282,180</u>	<u>225,466</u>	<u>53,138</u>	<u>130,836,012</u>
Depreciation					
At 1 September 2022	5,691,395	139,684	133,234	29,133	5,993,446
Charge for the period	1,484,799	28,784	36,387	5,314	1,555,284
At 31 August 2023	<u>7,176,194</u>	<u>168,468</u>	<u>169,621</u>	<u>34,447</u>	<u>7,548,730</u>
Net book value					
At 31 August 2023	<u><u>123,099,034</u></u>	<u><u>113,712</u></u>	<u><u>55,845</u></u>	<u><u>18,691</u></u>	<u><u>123,287,282</u></u>
At 31 August 2022	<u><u>106,218,833</u></u>	<u><u>128,895</u></u>	<u><u>76,846</u></u>	<u><u>24,005</u></u>	<u><u>106,448,579</u></u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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15. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade debtors	410,754	312,002
VAT recoverable	121,698	87,233
Prepayments and accrued income	1,517,072	1,010,888
	<u>2,049,524</u>	<u>1,410,123</u>

16. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Other loans	21,430	10,715
Trade creditors	858,989	670,236
Other taxation and social security	222,076	156,780
Other creditors	181,006	145,932
Accruals and deferred income	1,185,946	516,119
	<u>2,469,447</u>	<u>1,499,782</u>

	2023 £	2022 £
Resources deferred during the period	<u>128,296</u>	<u>-</u>

17. Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Other loans	<u>117,855</u>	<u>64,285</u>

Other loans comprise a loan from Salix for £128,570, which is provided at 0% interest, repayable over 6 years.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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18. Statement of funds

	Balance at 1 September 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2023 £
Unrestricted funds					
Unrestricted fund	1,411,410	604,591	(519,739)	-	1,496,262
Development Centre	(275,748)	-	-	-	(275,748)
	<u>1,135,662</u>	<u>604,591</u>	<u>(519,739)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,220,514</u>
Restricted general funds					
General Annual Grant (GAG)	1,264,153	4,866,320	(4,769,244)	-	1,361,229
Start Up Grant	37,564	-	(37,564)	-	-
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	654,769	(654,769)	-	-
Other Government grants	-	8,556,532	(8,556,532)	-	-
Restricted donations	-	358,120	(358,120)	-	-
Pension reserve	(5,101,000)	-	(152,000)	1,676,000	(3,577,000)
	<u>(3,799,283)</u>	<u>14,435,741</u>	<u>(14,528,229)</u>	<u>1,676,000</u>	<u>(2,215,771)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds					
Fixed asset fund	106,448,579	18,393,983	(1,555,285)	-	123,287,277
CIF	636,118	620,244	(1,185,846)	-	70,516
DFC	-	32,460	(32,460)	-	-
Other Capital Grants	-	34,023	(34,023)	-	-
Other ESFA	-	1,302,701	(1,302,701)	-	-
	<u>107,084,697</u>	<u>20,383,411</u>	<u>(4,110,315)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>123,357,793</u>
Total Restricted funds	<u>103,285,414</u>	<u>34,819,152</u>	<u>(18,638,544)</u>	<u>1,676,000</u>	<u>121,142,022</u>
Total funds	<u><u>104,421,076</u></u>	<u><u>35,423,743</u></u>	<u><u>(19,158,283)</u></u>	<u><u>1,676,000</u></u>	<u><u>122,362,536</u></u>

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

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

Unrestricted funds

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

Other DfE/ESFA grants

This represents funding to be used to help raise achievement and improve outcomes for pupils from low income families who are eligible for free school meals.

General Annual Grant (GAG)

This represents funding from the ESFA to be used for the normal running costs of the Trust, including education and support costs. The Trust is not subject to GAG carried forward limits.

Other Government grants

This represents place funding from local councils to be used for the normal running costs of the Trust, including education and support costs.

Start up grant

This represents a grant to aid with start up costs for new member schools to the Trust.

Pension reserve

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

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 specific purpose.

Devolved Formula Capital (DFC)

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

Condition Improvement Fund (CIF)

This represents funding received from the ESFA to cover the cost of safeguarding improvements undertaken during the year.

Development Centre

This represents funding received for community-focused school funding and facilities income.

Other Capital Grants

This represents a grant from local government sources.

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

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

	Balance at 1 September 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Gains/ (Losses) £	Balance at 31 August 2022 £
Unrestricted funds						
Unrestricted fund	1,133,273	556,275	(278,138)	-	-	1,411,410
Development Centre	(210,279)	209,354	(274,823)	-	-	(275,748)
	<u>922,994</u>	<u>765,629</u>	<u>(552,961)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,135,662</u>
Restricted funds						
General Annual Grant (GAG)	857,665	4,157,599	(3,578,189)	(172,922)	-	1,264,153
Start Up Grant	86,500	60,000	(108,936)	-	-	37,564
Other DfE/ESFA grants	-	568,350	(568,350)	-	-	-
Other Government grants	-	7,157,670	(7,157,670)	-	-	-
Other restricted funds	-	6,847	(6,847)	-	-	-
Pension reserve	(12,860,000)	-	(1,155,000)	-	8,914,000	(5,101,000)
	<u>(11,915,835)</u>	<u>11,950,466</u>	<u>(12,574,992)</u>	<u>(172,922)</u>	<u>8,914,000</u>	<u>(3,799,283)</u>
Restricted fixed asset funds						
Fixed asset fund	107,458,437	-	(1,182,780)	172,922	-	106,448,579
CIF	1,031,679	-	(395,561)	-	-	636,118
DFC	-	70,976	(70,976)	-	-	-
Other Capital Grants	70,571	201,736	(272,307)	-	-	-
	<u>108,560,687</u>	<u>272,712</u>	<u>(1,921,624)</u>	<u>172,922</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>107,084,697</u>
Total Restricted funds	<u>96,644,852</u>	<u>12,223,178</u>	<u>(14,496,616)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,914,000</u>	<u>103,285,414</u>
Total funds	<u><u>97,567,846</u></u>	<u><u>12,988,807</u></u>	<u><u>(15,049,577)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>8,914,000</u></u>	<u><u>104,421,076</u></u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

18. Statement of funds (continued)

Total funds analysis by Academy

Fund balances at 31 August 2023 were allocated as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
The Trust	2,581,743	2,437,379
Restricted fixed asset fund	123,357,793	107,084,697
Pension reserve	(3,577,000)	(5,101,000)
Total	122,362,536	104,421,076

Fund balances for each academy 31 August 2023 and 31 August 2022 were zero as the Trust holds all reserves centrally, hence a breakdown by academy is not included in these accounts.

Total cost analysis by Academy

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

	Teaching and educational support staff costs £	Other support staff costs £	Educational supplies £	Other costs excluding depreciation £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
The Intergrated Learning Space	1,533,642	218,061	15,907	196,726	1,964,336	1,778,929
The Bridge School	5,482,302	429,926	113,797	1,686,368	7,712,393	6,249,741
Hungerford Primary	1,107,072	273,524	31,149	623,645	2,035,390	1,785,441
The Bridge Satellite Provision	974,859	65,607	90,362	269,809	1,400,637	1,237,605
The Bridge Easton	674,518	37,401	399,125	142,290	1,253,334	-
Central services	455,332	450,836	26,453	2,304,287	3,236,908	2,815,081
Trust	10,227,725	1,475,355	676,793	5,223,125	17,602,998	13,866,797

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19. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current year

	Restricted funds 2023 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	123,287,282	-	123,287,282
Current assets	3,948,531	70,511	1,220,514	5,239,556
Creditors due within one year	(2,469,447)	-	-	(2,469,447)
Creditors due in more than one year	(117,855)	-	-	(117,855)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(3,577,000)	-	-	(3,577,000)
Total	<u>(2,215,771)</u>	<u>123,357,793</u>	<u>1,220,514</u>	<u>122,362,536</u>

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior year

	Restricted funds 2022 £	Restricted fixed asset funds 2022 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Total funds 2022 £
Tangible fixed assets	-	106,448,579	-	106,448,579
Current assets	2,865,784	636,118	1,135,662	4,637,564
Creditors due within one year	(1,499,782)	-	-	(1,499,782)
Creditors due in more than one year	(64,285)	-	-	(64,285)
Provisions for liabilities and charges	(5,101,000)	-	-	(5,101,000)
Total	<u>(3,799,283)</u>	<u>107,084,697</u>	<u>1,135,662</u>	<u>104,421,076</u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

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

	2023 £	2022 £
Net income/(expenditure) for the year (as per Statement of Financial Activities)	16,265,460	(2,060,770)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation	1,555,284	1,182,780
Capital grants from DfE and other capital income	(1,989,428)	(272,712)
Interest receivable	(369)	(298)
Movement in debtors	(639,401)	475,417
Movement in creditors	948,235	868,754
LGPS adjustment	152,000	1,155,000
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>16,291,781</u>	<u>1,348,171</u>

21. Cash flows from financing activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Receipt of Salix loan	75,000	-
Net cash provided by financing activities	<u>75,000</u>	<u>-</u>

22. Cash flows from investing activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Interest	369	298
Purchase of tangible assets	-	(172,922)
Capital grants from DfE Group	1,989,428	272,712
Assets donated on introduction to the Trust	(18,393,987)	-
Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities	<u>(16,404,190)</u>	<u>100,088</u>

23. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash in hand and at bank	<u>3,190,032</u>	<u>3,227,441</u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

24. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2022 £	Cash flows £	At 31 August 2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	3,227,441	(37,409)	3,190,032
Debt due within 1 year	(10,715)	(10,715)	(21,430)
Debt due after 1 year	(64,285)	(53,570)	(117,855)
	<u>3,152,441</u>	<u>(101,694)</u>	<u>3,050,747</u>

25. 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 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 cease to be a Member.

26. Pension commitments

The Trust's employees belong to two principal pension schemes: the Teachers' Pension Scheme England and Wales (TPS) for academic and related staff; and the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for non-teaching staff, which is managed by London Borough of Islington. 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 2022.

Contributions amounting to £181,006 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2023 (2022 - £140,570) 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 period amounted to £742,522 (2022 - £624,917).

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

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

Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contribution made for the period ended 31 August 2023 was £1,328,000 (2022 - £1,087,000), of which employer's contributions totalled £1,046,000 (2022 - £850,000) and employees' contributions totalled £282,000 (2022 - £237,000). The agreed contribution rates for future years are 15.8 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 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 period. The obligation in respect of employees who transferred on conversion represents their cumulative service at both the predecessor school and the Trust at the balance sheet date.

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

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2023

26. Pension commitments (continued)

Principal actuarial assumptions

Islington Council Pension Fund

	2023	2022
	%	%
Rate of increase in salaries	4.3	4.3
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	2.9	2.9
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.2	4.3
Inflation assumption (CPI)	2.8	2.8
	2.8	2.8

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

	2023	2022
	Years	Years
Retiring today		
Males	21.4	22.7
Females	23.7	25.3
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	22.4	24.1
Females	25.4	27.1
	25.4	27.1

Norfolk Pension Fund

	2023	2022
	%	%
Rate of increase in salaries	3.7	
Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation	3.0	
Discount rate for scheme liabilities	5.2	
Inflation assumption (CPI)	3.0	
	3.0	

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

	2023	2022
	Years	Years
Retiring today		
Males	21.4	
Females	24.1	
Retiring in 20 years		
Males	22.3	
Females	25.7	
	25.7	

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26. Pension commitments (continued)

Sensitivity analysis

	2023 £000	2022 £000
Discount rate +0.1%	233	270
Discount rate -0.1%	233	270
Mortality assumption - 1 year increase	202	214
Mortality assumption - 1 year decrease	202	214
CPI rate +0.1%	228	277
CPI rate -0.1%	228	277
	<u>228</u>	<u>277</u>

Share of scheme assets

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

	At 31 August 2023 £	At 31 August 2022 £
Equities	4,647,000	2,701,000
Gilts	303,000	419,000
Property	1,117,000	1,001,000
Cash and other liquid assets	68,000	739,000
Other	1,324,000	961,000
Total market value of assets	<u>7,459,000</u>	<u>5,821,000</u>

The actual return on scheme assets was £377,000 (2022 - £38,000).

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

	2023 £	2022 £
Current service cost	958,000	1,766,000
Interest income	(277,000)	(91,000)
Interest cost	475,000	303,000
Total amount recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities	<u>1,156,000</u>	<u>1,978,000</u>

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26. Pension commitments (continued)

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

	2023 £	2022 £
At 1 September	10,922,000	17,682,000
Current service cost	958,000	1,766,000
Interest cost	475,000	303,000
Employee contributions	282,000	237,000
Actuarial gains	(1,576,000)	(9,043,000)
Benefits paid	(46,000)	(23,000)
At 31 August	<u>11,015,000</u>	<u>10,922,000</u>

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

	2023 £	2022 £
At 1 September	5,821,000	4,822,000
Interest income	277,000	91,000
Actuarial gains/(losses)	100,000	(129,000)
Employer contributions	1,046,000	850,000
Employee contributions	282,000	237,000
Benefits paid	(46,000)	(23,000)
Administrative Expenses	(42,000)	(27,000)
At 31 August	<u>7,438,000</u>	<u>5,821,000</u>

27. Operating lease commitments

At 31 August 2023 the Trust had commitments to make future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Not later than 1 year	54,916	17,101
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	65,645	61,867
	<u>120,561</u>	<u>78,968</u>

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28. Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the Trust and the composition of the Board of Directors being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the directors 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 Trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures relating to connected and related party transactions.

During the year, The Bridge Charity, a connect charity of which Penny Barratt and Harold Reid are trustees, donated £Nil (2022: £96,881) to the Trust. No amounts were outstanding at the year end.

No other related party transactions took place in the period of account, other than certain directors' remuneration and expenses already disclosed in note 12.

29. Post balance sheet events

On the 22 November 2023 it was confirmed by the Department for Education that The Fen Rivers Academy will transfer to The Bridge MAT Ltd on 1 December 2023.



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