

**Westminster
Cathedral
Choir
School**

Annual Report and Accounts

31 August 2023

Charity Registration Number
1063761

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Reference and administrative details of the charity and its Corporate Trustee

Trustee of the charity

The charity is controlled by the "Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee" (WRCDT), a company limited by guarantee. The company does not conduct any trade or business for its own account and has no assets or liabilities. Its sole purpose is to act as trustee for a number of trusts and funds. The principal of these is the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust.

The Directors of Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee (herein referred to as Trustees) are:

His Eminence Cardinal V Nichols
Rt Rev J Sherrington
Rt Rev N Hudson
Rt Rev P McAleenan
Rev Mgr M Hayes
Rev Mgr J O'Boyle
Mr A Ndoca
Baroness N O'Loan
Dame C Bowe
Mr K Ingram
Mr E Craston

President of the School

His Eminence Cardinal V Nichols

The Board of Governors

Chairman

Mr David Heminway
Mr Robert Enserro
Mrs Kate Finch
Martin Hattrell
Mrs Flora Lyon (resigned 7 July 2023)
Rev Alexander Master (Private Secretary to the Cardinal)
Mr James O'Brien
Mr Mike Pittendreigh
Mr Nick Robinson
Rev Stuart Seaton
Mr Nicholas Seed (appointed 6 September 2022; Finance Director for the Diocese)
Ms Maria Strauss
Rev Sławomir Witoń (The Dean of Westminster Cathedral)

Reference and administrative details of the charity and its Corporate Trustee

<i>In attendance at Governors' meetings</i>	The Head Master – Mr Neil McLaughlan The Master of Music – Mr Simon Johnson The Bursar – Mrs Joanna Stephens The Deputy Head (Pastoral) – Miss Emily Auger The Director of Admissions – Miss Lucy Auger
Clerk to the Governors	Mrs Joanna Stephens
Principal address	Westminster Cathedral Choir School Ambrosden Avenue London SW1 1QH
Charity registration number	1063761
Auditor	Buzzacott LLP 130 Wood Street London EC2V 6DL
Bankers	HSBC Bank plc 69 Pall Mall London SW1Y 5EY
Solicitors	Farrer & Co LLP 66 Lincoln's Inn Fields London WC2A 3LH

Report of the Directors of the Corporate Trustee Year to 31 August 2023

Introduction

The Directors of the Corporate Trustee (hereafter referred to as the Trustees) present their statutory report together with the accounts of Westminster Cathedral Choir School (the charity or School or WCCS) for the year ended 31 August 2023.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out on pages 19 to 22 of the attached accounts and comply with the charity's trust deed, applicable laws and 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).

Structure, governance and management

Constitution

Westminster Cathedral Choir School is governed by a trust deed dated 8 July 1997 and is registered with the Charity Commission, Charity Registration No 1063761.

Status

Westminster Cathedral Choir School was founded by Cardinal Herbert Vaughan in 1902 to provide boarding Choristers and Exhibitioners to sing the daily capitular liturgy in the then new Cathedral. In 1976 day boys were introduced and in 2017 a Pre Prep was added. There were 277 boys, aged 4-13, at the start of the 2022/23 year. The School is divided into nine year groups (National Curriculum Years Reception to Year 8). There are approximately 30 boys in each year group.

WCCS is situated within the precincts of Westminster Cathedral and is Roman Catholic by foundation. The Head Master is a member of the Incorporated Association of Preparatory Schools (IAPS), the Catholic Independent Schools' Conference (CISC) and the Choir Schools' Association (CSA).

Organisation

Ultimate responsibility for the charity lies with the Directors of Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee (WRCDT) (the Trustees).

Trustees and Governors

The Trustees i.e. the Directors of the Corporate Trustee are appointed by the Archbishop of Westminster.

Report of the Directors of the Corporate Trustee Year to 31 August 2023

Structure, governance and management (continued)

Trustees and Governors (continued)

The Trustees who have been in office since 1 September 2022 are as follows:

His Eminence Cardinal V Nichols
Rt Rev J Sherrington
Rt Rev N Hudson
Rt Rev P McAleenan
Rev Mgr M Hayes
Rev Mgr J O'Boyle
Mr A Ndoca
Dame C Bowe
Baroness N O'Loan
Mr K Ingram
Mr E Craston

On agreeing to become a Director of the Corporate Trustee, the Trustees are thoroughly briefed by their co-Trustees on the history of the charity, the day-to-day management, the responsibilities of the Trustees, the current objectives and future plans. The Trustees are also encouraged to attend any courses which they feel are relevant to the development of their role and to keep up-to-date on any changes in legislation.

The Trustees are ultimately responsible for the policies, activities and assets of the charity. The Archbishop appoints a Chairman of the Board of Governors who appoints other governors for a fixed term in consultation with the Archbishop. The Governors work with the Trustees in determining the general direction of the School and operate within powers set out in an Instrument of Government. They meet during the year to review the developments with regard to the charity, its activities and make any important decisions. When necessary, the Trustees and/or Governors seek advice and support from the charity's professional advisers including solicitors and accountants. The Bursar undertakes the day-to-day management of the charity's activities, the implementation of policies, administers payments and keeps the books and records of the charity.

The names of the Governors who have served since 1 September 2022 are given on page 1 of this report and accounts.

At their meetings, the Governors review the latest management accounts including budget forecasts.

Trustees' and Governors' remuneration

No Trustee or Governor received any remuneration from the charity in connection with his/her duties as a Trustee or Governor during the year. One Governor received reimbursement of expenses totalling £457 from the charity in connection with their duties as a Governor during the year. No Trustee or Governor had any beneficial interest in any contract with the charity. £5,077 was spent during the year on a one-off event for Governors and staff to mark the retirement of a long standing Governor and recognise her contribution to the School.

Report of the Directors of the Corporate Trustee Year to 31 August 2023

Structure, governance and management (continued)

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and Accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the income and expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing these accounts, the Trustees are required to:

- ◆ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- ◆ observe the methods and principles in 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);
- ◆ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ◆ state whether applicable United Kingdom Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the accounts; and
- ◆ prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities Act 2011, the applicable Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Key management personnel

The Trustees and Governors consider that they, together with the Senior Management Team (SMT), comprise the key management of the charity in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the School.

As noted above, neither the Trustees nor the Governors receive any remuneration in respect to their services. The Governors meet at least once a term and there is regular formal and informal communication between the Governors, the Trustees and members of the SMT.

Day to day management of the School is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team. This consists of the Head Master, Deputy Head (Pastoral), Head of Pre-Prep, Deputy Head (Academic) (also Head of Boarding), Director of Studies, Director of Admissions and Bursar. The SMT meets weekly to discuss any operational, safeguarding or staff matters.

Report of the Directors of the Corporate Trustee Year to 31 August 2023

Structure, governance and management (continued)

Key management personnel (continued)

The remuneration of members of the SMT is reviewed annually by the Governors' Remuneration Committee. This Committee considers market pay levels (using external survey data where available), individual performance over the year and any changes in responsibilities. Those members of the SMT that also teach will have a portion of their salary determined by the main teaching pay scale.

Risk management

The Trustees delegate risk management to the School's Governing Body – principally through its Pastoral and Finance Committees, which meet termly. The School is also represented at the Health, Safety and Fire Committee of the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust. Risks are identified and assessed, and controls established throughout the year.

The key controls used by the School include:

- ◆ Formal agendas for all committee meetings
- ◆ Strategic planning, budgeting and management accounting
- ◆ Established organisational structure and lines of reporting
- ◆ Formal written policies, including safeguarding and child protection
- ◆ Clear authorisation and approval levels
- ◆ Maintenance of a risk register

Through the risk management processes established for the School, the Governors are satisfied that the major risks identified have been mitigated. It is recognised that systems can only provide reasonable but not absolute assurance that major risks have been adequately managed.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The principal risks and uncertainties facing the charity are detailed in a risk register. The principal risks and the strategies applied by the Trustees and Governors for managing these are outlined below.

Report of the Directors of the Corporate Trustee Year to 31 August 2023

Structure, governance and management (continued)

Principal risks and uncertainties (continued)

- ◆ **Safeguarding:** Compliance with safeguarding regulation is a key management concern because of the associated reputational risk for non-compliance. The School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a Safeguarding Governor who is responsible for ensuring the policies and procedures comply with the latest Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) regulations and *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, and are implemented in all aspects of the School's operation. Advice is sought from Westminster Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as appropriate. All staff are subject to an enhanced DBS check. Each member of staff receives safeguarding training at induction and this is repeated annually at staff INSET training. The Senior Management Team receives additional training on safer recruitment. The Deputy Head (Pastoral) and Designated Safeguarding Lead report any pastoral or safeguarding matters to the SMT weekly, and to the Governors' Pastoral Committee and full Governors' meetings termly.
- ◆ **Fall in pupil numbers:** A reduction in pupil numbers would result in a fall in income which, over the long term, could affect the overall financial security of the School. The School benefits from a strong market position, and demand for places is high. The School carefully monitors registration numbers to ensure any deterioration of this position is quickly identified and addressed. The existence of the Pre-Prep substantially reduces the School's reliance on a small, and dwindling, number of Pre-Prep feeder schools, and affords the School greater control of its pupil intake. Future market changes are expected to result in a rise of 11+ exits. This is a particular risk for the School that needs a provision in year 7 & 8 to support the choristers in these year groups. The Governors' Strategy committee is monitoring the market closely and the Trustees receive regular updates from the School on this risk.
- ◆ **Financial risk:** The charity opened a Pre-Prep for boys aged 4 to 8 in September 2017. Whilst this reduces the risk of falling pupil numbers, it increases the financial risk as substantial rent payments must be met to occupy the Pre-Prep building. The rent payments are linked to bank base rate so the School is exposed to interest rate risk. The annual budget and five-year cash flow are reviewed regularly by the Finance Committee to ensure affordability of rent. There is total confidence in the charity's ability to meet the rent levels as interest rates increase and cash flow remains strong.
- ◆ **Reputational risk:** The School may attract media interest due to the profile of both Westminster Cathedral and the Westminster Cathedral Choir. Inaccurate media coverage creates a potential reputational risk for the School. The School will seek professional advice where necessary to reduce this risk and closely monitors pupil registrations to ensure that any link between adverse press coverage and pupil registrations is noted and addressed.
- ◆ **Structural risk:** There is a potential for conflicts of interest to arise between the two charities, the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust (charity number 233699) and the Westminster Cathedral Choir School (charity number 1063761), both of which have the same corporate trustee. A conflict-of-interest policy has been produced by the corporate trustee setting out the process for managing potential conflicts of interest between the two charities. This is subject to ongoing discussion and review.

Report of the Directors of the Corporate Trustee Year to 31 August 2023

Structure, governance and management (continued)

Connected charity

The Trustees are also responsible for Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust, a registered charity, Charity Registration Number 233699.

Objectives and activities

The general aims of the charity are the advancement of the Roman Catholic Religion and the advancement of education in the Roman Catholic tradition. The charity aims to train boys in church choral music through the operation of Westminster Cathedral Choir School.

In planning the activities of the charity for the year, the Trustees and Governors have considered the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commission.

Pupil numbers

At the start of the 2022/23 academic year there were 277 boys in the School (2021/22: 260) of whom 22 were choristers (2021/22: 21) and 255 day boys (2021/22: 239).

Fees

Termly fees for 2022/23 were £6,457 for day boys in Reception – Year 2 (2021/22: £5,979), £7,204 for day boys in Year 3 (2021/22: £7,204), £7,564 for day boys in Years 4-8 (2021/22: £7,204) and £3,600 for choristers (2021/22: £3,564).

The Governors' Finance Committee sets the level of fees each year taking into consideration the cost of providing high standards of teaching, learning and pastoral care, and of maintaining the fabric of the building.

Academic life

WCCS continued to develop its liberal academic curriculum, producing exclusive resources for each subject from Reception to Year 8.

The School remains committed to 13+ Common Entrance and continues to prepare boys for a range of senior schools.

In 2023, the School enjoyed the most successful exit list in its history:

City of London School x 5
Dulwich College x 5 (2 Academic Scholarships)
Eton College x 6 (1 Choral Award)
Harrow School x 5
King's College School, Wimbledon
Radley College x 3 (2 Music Exhibitions)
St Paul's School x 3
The London Oratory School
Westminster School x 3
Winchester College.

Report of the Directors of the Corporate Trustee Year to 31 August 2023

Objectives and activities (continued)

Academic life (continued)

The School also met all the standards for an Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) inspection in June 2023.

Westminster Cathedral Choir continued a busy and varied schedule, on top of the six-day-a-week singing of the capitular liturgy in the Cathedral. It sang Evensong with the choir of Westminster Abbey in the Abbey for the Feast of St Edward the Confessor and Vespers in St Paul's Cathedral during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The choristers also sang at the Festival of St Cecilia, at the Christmas Celebration in Westminster Cathedral, and enjoyed a successful tour to Germany in the autumn, as well as a doing fruitful recording session at Buckfast Abbey.

The School and the local community

The School continues to devote an enormous amount of time, effort and funds to supporting its principal form of public benefit: supporting Westminster Cathedral's world-class choir. The choir sings live in public, at no cost to its thousands of listeners, six times a week, at a standard universally acknowledged to be world class. All the choristers receive generous scholarships, supported by means-tested bursaries, to enable this form of musical education to be accessible to any boy with an aptitude to sing.

On top of supporting the Choir, the School and Parents' Association raised £26,000 for charities over the year. This was split between the Cardinal Hume Centre, a local charity for young homeless people, and Eyehope, a charity founded by a team of Ophthalmologic Consultants at nearby St Thomas's Hospital and treating eye disease in Tanzania.

Financial review

Financial position

The charity had income during the year of £6,427,094 (2022 - £5,765,052). Income from tuition fees and similar charges, net of bursaries, totalled £6,202,723 (2022 - £5,558,163). Donations and legacies during the year amounted to £197,967 (2022 - £206,889). Included within this total was £90,000 (2022 - £90,000) received by way of a grant from the Westminster Cathedral Choir School Fund (Registered Charity Number 276878). Bank interest was £26,404 (2022 - £nil).

Total expenditure amounted to £5,882,506 (2022 - £5,103,735) with staff costs, rent for the Pre-Prep building and premises expenditure accounting for a significant proportion of this total. The accounts incorporate expenditure on refurbishment of the facilities and buildings to improve the quality of education provided to the boys.

The charity had net income for the year of £544,588 (2022 - £661,317).

At 31 August 2023, the charity had total net funds of £4,003,873 (2022 - £3,459,285). This includes restricted funds at 31 August 2023 of £436,845 (2022 - £420,779), principally being monies to be applied towards meeting the fees of those choristers who apply for a bursary.

Report of the Directors of the Corporate Trustee Year to 31 August 2023

Financial review (continued)

Reserves policy

The Trustees and Governors have examined the requirement for free reserves i.e. those unrestricted funds not invested in tangible fixed assets, designated or otherwise committed. The requirement for free reserves is affected by the amounts held in respect to fee deposits (most of which will not be repayable for several years), and an accrual for rent that arises from the requirement to account for payments under the lease on a straight line basis instead of when payable. Therefore, the nature of the charity's activities is such that the key performance indicator is cash flow rather than the level of free reserves. Cash flow will vary over the course of each term, with high levels of cash being held at the start of each term and then being used over the course of the term to meet expenditure on staff, premises and the operation of the School.

The Trustees and Governors are of the opinion that at all times the charity should have sufficient cash flow to enable it to meet its costs, that the cash flow should be sufficient to enable the School to continue to invest in the premises, facilities and equipment, to provide sufficient flexibility to cover temporary shortfalls in income due to falls in pupil numbers, and to cover the other risks and uncertainties of operating as an independent educational establishment. To this end cash flow is monitored regularly against budget and there is tight control over debt collection and expenditure.

At 31 August 2023 the charity had net current assets of £2,938,046 (2022 - £2,688,065) with cash at bank amounting to £4,641,280 (2022 - £4,155,892). Free reserves were £2,003,701 (2022 - £1,808,786). The Trustees and Governors believe that the financial position of the School at this date was acceptable and that the cash flow, which is monitored closely, was adequate but not excessive.

Fundraising statement

The charity aims to achieve best practice in the way in which it communicates with donors and other supporters. It takes care with both the tone of its communications and the accuracy of its data to minimise the pressures on supporters. It applies best practice to protect supporters' data and never sells data; it never swaps data and ensures that communication preferences can be changed at any time. The charity manages its own fundraising activities and does not employ the services of professional fundraisers. The charity undertakes to react to and investigate any complaints regarding its fundraising activities and to learn from them and improve its service. During the year, the charity received no complaints about its fundraising activities.

Report of the Directors of the Corporate Trustee Year to 31 August 2023


Future plans

WCCS continues to enjoy stable pupil numbers in what has become a complex and over-supplied market in central London.

The charity's focus remains on maintaining numbers in the Pre-Prep School, which takes boys from Reception (age 4) to Year 3 (age 8). In September 2017, the Pre-Prep recruited its first 29 boys; in 2022 there were 96 boys from Reception (age 4) to Year 3 (age 8).

Signed on behalf of the Directors of Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee by:

Trustee

+ 

Approved by the Trustees on:

15th March 2024.

Independent auditor's report Year to 31 August 2023

Independent auditor's report to the Directors of the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trust (the Trustees)

Opinion

We have audited the accounts of the Westminster Cathedral Choir School (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 August 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and notes to the accounts. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the accounts:

- ◆ give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 August 2023 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- ◆ have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- ◆ have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

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 auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the accounts in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the accounts, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the accounts 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 charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the accounts are authorised for issue.

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

Independent auditor's report Year to 31 August 2023

Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report and Accounts, other than the accounts and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the accounts does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the accounts, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the accounts or our knowledge obtained in 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 there is a material misstatement in the accounts or a material misstatement of the other information. 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.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities Act 2011 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- ◆ the information given in the Trustees' report is inconsistent in any material respect with the accounts; or
- ◆ sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- ◆ the accounts are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- ◆ we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of the responsibilities of the Trustees, the Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of accounts that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Independent auditor's report Year to 31 August 2023

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the accounts as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's 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 accounts.

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

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

- ◆ we identified the laws and regulations applicable to the charity through discussions with those charged with governance and other management, and from our knowledge and experience of the sector;
- ◆ we focused on specific laws and regulations which we considered may have a direct material effect on the accounts or the operations of the charity, including the Charities Act 2011, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), 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 (Charities SORP FRS 102), and safeguarding regulations; and
- ◆ we assessed the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations identified above through making enquiries of management and inspecting legal correspondence. We corroborated our enquiries through our review of Trustees', Governors' and committee minutes.

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

- ◆ making enquiries of management as to their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- ◆ considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

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

- ◆ performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected financial relationships;
- ◆ performed substantive testing of expenditure including testing the authorisation thereof; and

Independent auditor's report Year to 31 August 2023

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the accounts (continued)

- ♦ tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions.

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

- ♦ agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation;
- ♦ reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- ♦ reviewing legal expenses incurred in the year; and
- ♦ enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the Trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the accounts is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and with regulations made under section 154 of that Act. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's Trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charity and the charity's Trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Buzzacott LLP

Buzzacott LLP
Registered Auditor
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

19 March 2024

Buzzacott LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

Statement of financial activities Year to 31 August 2023

	Notes	Un-restricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Un-restricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	1	105,284	92,683	197,967	114,225	92,664	206,889
Bank interest		26,404	—	26,404	—	—	—
Charitable activities							
Provision of education	2	6,202,723	—	6,202,723	5,558,163	—	5,558,163
Total income		6,334,411	92,683	6,427,094	5,672,388	92,664	5,765,052
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities							
Provision of education	3	5,805,889	51,151	5,857,040	5,071,054	29,541	5,100,595
Charity donations		—	25,466	25,466	328	2,812	3,140
Total expenditure		5,805,889	76,617	5,882,506	5,071,382	32,353	5,103,735
Net income and net movement in funds		528,522	16,066	544,588	601,006	60,311	661,317
Reconciliation of funds							
Balances brought forward at 1 September		3,038,506	420,779	3,459,285	2,437,500	360,468	2,797,968
Balances carried forward at 31 August		3,567,028	436,845	4,003,873	3,038,506	420,779	3,459,285

All of the charity's activities derived from continuing operations during each of the above two financial periods.

Balance sheet 31 August 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	7		1,563,327		1,229,720
Current assets					
Debtors	8	141,559		174,179	
Short term deposits		1,500,000		—	
Cash at bank and in hand		3,141,280		4,155,892	
		<u>4,782,839</u>		<u>4,330,071</u>	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	9	(1,844,793)		(1,642,006)	
Net current assets			<u>2,938,046</u>		<u>2,688,065</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>4,501,373</u>		<u>3,917,785</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	10		(497,500)		(458,500)
Total net assets			<u>4,003,873</u>		<u>3,459,285</u>
The funds of the charity:					
Funds and reserves					
Restricted funds	11		436,845		420,779
Unrestricted income funds					
.. General fund					
.. Tangible fixed assets		1,563,327		1,229,720	
.. Free reserves		2,003,701		1,808,786	
			<u>3,567,028</u>		<u>3,038,506</u>
			<u>4,003,873</u>		<u>3,459,285</u>

Approved by the Directors of Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee and signed on their behalf by:

Trustee

+ John Sherington.

Approved on:

15th March 2024

Statement of cash flows Year to 31 August 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Net cash provided by operating activities	A	914,630	1,078,356
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Increase in short term deposits		(1,500,000)	—
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(229,242)	(188,188)
Net cash used in investing activities		(1,729,242)	(188,188)
Cash flows from financing activities:			
Repayment of borrowings		(200,000)	—
Net cash used in financing activities		(200,000)	—
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(1,014,612)	890,168
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 September	B	4,155,892	3,265,724
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 August	B	3,141,280	4,155,892

Notes to the statement of cash flows for the year to 31 August 2023

A Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash provided by operating activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Net movement in funds (as per the statement of financial activities)	544,588	661,317
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charge	154,678	196,127
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	—	16,410
Decrease in debtors	32,620	133,169
Increase in creditors (excluding fixed asset creditors)	182,744	71,333
Net cash provided by operating activities	914,630	1,078,356

B Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2023 £	2022 £
Total cash and cash equivalents: Cash at bank and in hand	3,141,280	4,155,892

C Analysis of changes in net cash

	At 1 September 2022 £	Cash flows £	At 31 August 2023 £
Cash and cash equivalents	4,155,892	(1,014,612)	3,141,280
Short term deposits	—	1,500,000	1,500,000
Total	4,155,892	485,388	4,641,280

Principal accounting policies Year to 31 August 2023

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the accounts are laid out below.

Basis of preparation

These accounts have been prepared for the year to 31 August 2023 with comparative information given in respect to the year to 31 August 2022.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with 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 (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the notes to these accounts.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest pound.

Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the accounts requires the Trustees, in consultation with the Governors and Senior Management Team, to make significant judgements and estimates.

The items in the accounts where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- ◆ Estimating the useful economic life of tangible fixed assets for the purposes of determining an annual depreciation charge;
- ◆ Assessing the level of any necessary bad debt provision; and
- ◆ Estimating future income and expenditure flows for the purpose of assessing going concern (see below).

Assessment of going concern

The Trustees, in consultation with the Governors, have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these accounts. They have made this assessment in respect to a period of at least one year from the date of approval of these accounts.

Principal accounting policies Year to 31 August 2023

Assessment of going concern (continued)

The Trustees and Governors of the charity have concluded that there are no material uncertainties related to events or conditions, including the current macroeconomic and geopolitical climate, that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern although maintaining pupil numbers remains essential to financial security (see principal risks set out in the Report of the Directors of the Corporate Trustee). The Trustees and Governors are of the opinion that the charity will have sufficient resources to meet its liabilities as they fall due.

Income

Income is recognised in the period in which the charity has entitlement to the income, the amount of income can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Donations and grants are recognised when the charity has confirmation of both the amount and settlement date. In the event of donations or grants pledged but not received, the amount is accrued for where the receipt is considered probable. In the event that a donation or grant is subject to conditions that require a level of performance before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that those conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Legacies are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the legacy, the executors have established that there are sufficient surplus assets in the estate to pay the legacy, and any conditions attached to the legacy are within the control of the charity.

Interest receivable on bank deposits is credited to the statement of financial activities on an accruals basis.

Fees for the provision of education comprise tuition and related fees paid in accordance with agreements between the School and individual pupils' parents. Such income is stated after deducting bursaries and is recognised when the School is entitled to receipt under the relevant contractual agreements. This is usually at the point at which the School has commenced the provision of education in respect to the relevant student at the start of each academic term.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to make a payment 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.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Expenditure comprises direct costs and support costs and is stated inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

Principal accounting policies Year to 31 August 2023

Expenditure (continued)

Expenditure on charitable activities includes all direct and indirect costs associated with furthering the charitable purposes of the charity i.e. the provision of education and the training of children in church choral music through the operation of Westminster Cathedral Choir School. Such costs include:

- ◆ Teaching costs i.e. the cost of teaching and support staff salaries, including pension and national insurance costs, books and other tuition expenses, and the cost of games and activities.
- ◆ Welfare costs i.e. all domestic costs associated with the School including employment costs, consumables and catering.
- ◆ Premises costs i.e. costs associated with the premises, grounds and estate used by the charity for the purposes of education.
- ◆ Support costs i.e. administrative costs incurred in connection with the School.
- ◆ Governance costs, i.e. costs directly attributable to the legal procedures necessary for compliance with statutory requirements.

Tangible fixed assets

Assets costing in excess of £1,000 and with an expected useful life exceeding one year are capitalised.

All tangible fixed assets are stated at cost. Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life:

- ◆ Furniture, equipment and minor improvements 10% - 20% per annum based on cost
- ◆ Major improvements to property 4% per annum based on cost

Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand represents such accounts and instruments that are available on demand or have a maturity of less than three months from the date of acquisition. Deposits for more than three months but less than one year have been disclosed as short term deposits.

Principal accounting policies Year to 31 August 2023

Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions 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. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt.

Fund structure

The general fund comprises the net book value of tangible fixed assets and free reserves i.e. those monies which may be used towards meeting the charitable objectives of the charity and which may be applied at the discretion of the Trustees.

The restricted funds comprise monies raised for, or their use restricted to, a specified purpose or amounts subject to donor imposed conditions as to use.

Leased assets

Operating leases are defined as those leases where substantially all of the benefits and risks of ownership remain with the lessor. The rental applicable for the period from the commencement of such a lease until the end of the lease is charged to the statement of financial activities on a straight line basis spread over the entirety of the lease term, including over any rent free period or period of reduced rent.

Pension costs

Contributions in respect to defined contribution schemes are charged to the statement of financial activities in the year in which they become payable to the schemes.

The charity contributes to a defined benefit pension scheme. Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the scheme is a multi-employer pension scheme. The School is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the scheme and accordingly, the School has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS 102 and has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined contribution scheme.

Notes to the accounts Year to 31 August 2023

1 Income from: Donations and legacies

	Un-restricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Un-restricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £
Grants receivable from Westminster Cathedral Choir School Fund (Registered Charity Number 276878)	90,000	—	90,000	90,000	—	90,000
Legacies receivable	—	20,511	20,511	—	—	—
Other donations, gifts and sundry receipts	15,284	72,172	87,456	24,225	92,664	116,889
Total funds	105,284	92,683	197,967	114,225	92,664	206,889

Mrs Joanna Stephens, Bursar at the School, is a trustee of Westminster Cathedral Choir School Fund.

2 Income from: Provision of education

	Un-restricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Un-restricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £
Gross fees	6,284,123	—	6,284,123	5,608,163	—	5,608,163
Less: Bursaries	(81,400)	—	(81,400)	(50,000)	—	(50,000)
Total funds	6,202,723	—	6,202,723	5,558,163	—	5,558,163

Choristers' fees only partially cover the costs associated with the provision of education for choristers. The shortfall is in part made up by a grant of £90,000 (2022 - £90,000) receivable from Westminster Cathedral Choir School Fund (see note 1).

3 Expenditure on: Provision of education

	Un-restricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Un-restricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £
Teaching and music						
Personnel costs	2,416,042	—	2,416,042	2,208,160	—	2,208,160
Books, equipment and educational supplies	598,864	—	598,864	479,462	—	479,462
Scholarships and prizes	11,564	51,151	62,715	20,030	29,541	49,571
Depreciation	95,260	—	95,260	136,709	—	136,709
Advertising, travel and related costs	138,807	—	138,807	112,850	—	112,850
	3,260,537	51,151	3,311,688	2,957,211	29,541	2,986,752

Notes to the accounts Year to 31 August 2023

3 Expenditure on: Provision of education (continued)

	Un- restricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Un- restricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £
Welfare						
Personnel costs	305,551	—	305,551	281,751	—	281,751
Provisions	172,698	—	172,698	121,066	—	121,066
Miscellaneous expenses	25,028	—	25,028	21,390	—	21,390
	503,277	—	503,277	424,207	—	424,207
Premises						
Personnel costs	157,709	—	157,709	145,475	—	145,475
Maintenance and repairs	159,797	—	159,797	134,038	—	134,038
Rent and property charges payable to Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust (note 14)	896,900	—	896,900	636,516	—	636,516
Depreciation	59,418	—	59,418	59,418	—	59,418
Fuel, light and water	135,939	—	135,939	88,102	—	88,102
Cleaning	8,902	—	8,902	8,385	—	8,385
Staff accommodation	70,767	—	70,767	104,465	—	104,465
Loss on disposal of tangible fixed assets	—	—	—	16,410	—	16,410
Miscellaneous	26,612	—	26,612	33,966	—	33,966
	1,516,044	—	1,516,044	1,226,775	—	1,226,775
Support						
Personnel costs	338,112	—	338,112	314,883	—	314,883
Printing, postage, stationery and telephone	61,254	—	61,254	48,806	—	48,806
Computers and related maintenance	57,236	—	57,236	53,866	—	53,866
Bank charges	6,676	—	6,676	5,604	—	5,604
	463,278	—	463,278	423,159	—	423,159
Governance						
Auditor's remuneration	14,229	—	14,229	12,530	—	12,530
Other legal and professional fees	48,523	—	48,523	27,172	—	27,172
	62,752	—	62,752	39,702	—	39,702
Total funds	5,805,889	51,151	5,857,040	5,071,054	29,541	5,100,595

4 Staff costs

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs during the period were as follows:		
Wages and salaries	2,516,341	2,293,166
Social security costs	243,634	238,358
Other pension costs	409,084	362,012
	3,169,059	2,893,536
Other staff costs	48,355	56,732
	3,217,414	2,950,268

Notes to the accounts Year to 31 August 2023

4 Staff costs (continued)

The number of employees who earned more than £60,000 (including taxable benefits but excluding employer's national insurance and pension contributions) during the year was as follows:

	Total 2023	Total 2022
£60,001 - £70,000	2	3
£70,001 - £80,000	4	2
£80,001 - £90,000	2	1
£150,001 - £160,000	—	1
£160,001 - £170,000	1	—

The average number of employees during the period, analysed by function, was as follows:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Teaching and music	44	42
Welfare	19	17
Support	5	5
	68	64

5 Remuneration of Trustees, Governors and key management personnel

No Trustee or Governor received any remuneration from the charity in connection with their duties as a Director of the Corporate Trustee or Governor during the year or in respect to their role as key management personnel (2022 – £nil). One Governor received reimbursement of expenses totalling £457 from the charity in connection with their duties as a Governor during the year (2022 – £769 reimbursed to three Governors). No Trustee or Governor had any beneficial interest in any contract with the charity during the year (2022 – none). £5,077 was spent during the year on a one-off event for Governors and staff to mark the retirement of a long standing Governor and recognise her contribution to the School. (2022 – £nil).

The key management personnel of the charity in charge of running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis are the Directors of the Corporate Trustee, Governors, Head Master, Deputy Head (Pastoral), Head of Pre-Prep, Deputy Head (Academic) (also Head of Boarding), Director of Studies, Director of Admissions and Bursar. The total remuneration (including taxable benefits, employer's national insurance and pension contributions) of the key management personnel for the year was £844,288 (2022 – £778,231).

The School provides a discount on school fees of up to 85% for senior management and up to 25% for all other School staff. In line with this policy, the Head of Pre-Prep receives an 85% discount on School fees for her son, who joined the School in September 2020.

There were no donations from Governors in the year (2022 – donations totalling £8,000 were made to support a choir trip to Rome).

Notes to the accounts Year to 31 August 2023

6 Taxation

Westminster Cathedral Choir School is a registered charity and, therefore, is not liable to income tax or corporation tax on income derived from its charitable activities, as it falls within the various exemptions available to registered charities.

7 Tangible fixed assets

	Major improvements to property £	Furniture, equipment and minor improvements £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 September 2022	1,485,462	2,017,311	3,502,773
Additions	422,433	65,852	488,285
Disposals	—	(78,309)	(78,309)
At 31 August 2023	<u>1,907,895</u>	<u>2,004,854</u>	3,912,749
Depreciation			
At 1 September 2022	721,199	1,551,854	2,273,053
Charge for year	59,418	95,260	154,678
Eliminated in respect of disposals	—	(78,309)	(78,309)
At 31 August 2023	<u>780,617</u>	<u>1,568,805</u>	2,349,422
Net book values			
At 31 August 2023	<u>1,127,278</u>	<u>436,049</u>	1,563,327
At 31 August 2022	<u>764,263</u>	<u>465,457</u>	1,229,720

8 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Tuition and other fees receivable	33,110	16,837
Rent prepaid	—	100,000
Prepayments and sundry debtors	108,449	57,342
	<u>141,559</u>	<u>174,179</u>

9 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Loan from Westminster Cathedral Choir School Fund (see below)	—	200,000
Amounts due to Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust (note 14)	61,431	9,754
Accrued rent (see below)	317,311	384,472
PAYE, National Insurance and employer's pension contributions	128,616	114,022
Fees in advance	933,227	780,064
Returnable fee deposits	41,000	47,500
Additions to tangible fixed assets	296,454	37,411
Accruals	66,754	68,783
	<u>1,844,793</u>	<u>1,642,006</u>

The loan from the Westminster Cathedral Choir School Fund (Charity Registration Number 276878) was interest free and was repaid in full in November 2022.

Notes to the accounts Year to 31 August 2023

9 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (continued)

The accrued rent of £317,311 (2022 – £384,472) represents the cumulative charge to the statement of financial activities required in order to spread the rent applicable to the lease of the charity's premises over the entire period of the lease on a straight line basis, after adjusting for an initial period of reduced rent and a further 6 month period of reduced rent.

10 Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Returnable fee deposits	497,500	458,500

11 Restricted funds

The income funds include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants to be applied for specific purposes.

	At 1 September 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31 August 2023 £
Basil Hume Fund	402,815	83,011	(50,900)	434,926
Neil McLaughlan Fund	2,169	—	(250)	1,919
Other funds	15,795	9,672	(25,467)	—
Total restricted funds	420,779	92,683	(76,617)	436,845

	At 1 September 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 31 August 2022 £
<i>Basil Hume Fund</i>	354,756	77,600	(29,541)	402,815
<i>Neil McLaughlan Fund</i>	2,169	—	—	2,169
<i>Other funds</i>	3,543	15,064	(2,812)	15,795
<i>Total restricted funds</i>	<i>360,468</i>	<i>92,664</i>	<i>(32,353)</i>	<i>420,779</i>

The purposes for which the funds must be used are as follows:

◆ Basil Hume Fund

Although choristers are required to pay only a small proportion of the full fees by virtue of the grant received annually from the Westminster Cathedral Choir School Fund (note 1), further assistance is also available on application to this fund.

◆ Neil McLaughlan Fund.

The Neil McLaughlan Fund comprises a donation from a parent to establish a fund from which an annual award will be made to recognise an outstanding contribution from a member of academic teaching staff (excluding SMT members).

◆ Other funds

Funds were collected for the Eyehope charity and the Cardinal Hume Centre during the course of the year.

Notes to the accounts Year to 31 August 2023

12 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted general fund £	Restricted funds £	2023 Total £
Fund balances at 31 August 2023			
are represented by:			
Tangible fixed assets	1,563,327	—	1,563,327
Net current assets	2,501,201	436,845	2,938,046
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	(497,500)	—	(497,500)
Total net assets	3,567,028	436,845	4,003,873
	<i>Unrestricted general fund £</i>	<i>Restricted funds £</i>	<i>2022 Total £</i>
<i>Fund balances at 31 August 2022</i>			
<i>are represented by:</i>			
<i>Tangible fixed assets</i>	<i>1,229,720</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>1,229,720</i>
<i>Net current assets</i>	<i>2,267,286</i>	<i>420,779</i>	<i>2,688,065</i>
<i>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</i>	<i>(458,500)</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>(458,500)</i>
<i>Total net assets</i>	<i>3,038,506</i>	<i>420,779</i>	<i>3,459,285</i>

13 Connected charity

The charity is connected to Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust (Charity Registration Number 233699) which has the same Corporate Trustee, namely Westminster Roman Catholic Diocese Trustee.

14 Transactions with connected charity

A licence agreement exists between the School and Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust in relation to the School's share of the heating and hot water costs.

During the year to 31 August 2023, rent and property related charges of £896,900 (2022 – £636,516) were payable to Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust. This includes a rent payment for the use of 47 Francis Street, London, SW1P by Westminster Cathedral Choir School as a Pre-Prep School. The property is owned by the Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust and is rented to the charity.

As at 31 August 2023, an amount of £61,431 (2022 - £9,754) was due to Westminster Roman Catholic Diocesan Trust (note 9).

Notes to the accounts Year to 31 August 2023

15 Commitments under operating leases

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

	2023 £	2022 £
Land and buildings		
Amount due within one year	986,006	701,680
Amounts due between two and five years	3,670,241	2,665,109
Amounts due after five years	10,949,396	9,415,825
	<u>15,605,643</u>	<u>12,782,614</u>

The above lease is for a 30 year period from July 2017 with an initial three year period of reduced rent and a further 6 months of reduced rent from April 2020.

The rent payable is variable and depends on the Bank Rate set by the Bank of England.

16 Pension commitments

The charity's teaching staff belong to the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS). The total pension cost for the TPS for the period was £367,713 (2022 – £323,614). For non-teaching staff, contributions are made to defined contribution pension schemes. The total pension costs for the year payable to these schemes was £41,371 (2022 – £38,398).

Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS)

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. These regulations apply to teachers in schools, colleges and other educational establishments. Membership is automatic for teachers and lecturers at eligible institutions. Teachers and lecturers are able to opt out of the TPS.

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

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102 (28.11), the TPS is a multi-employer pension plan. The School is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the plan.

Accordingly, the School has taken advantage of the exemption in FRS 102 and has accounted for its contributions to the scheme as if it were a defined-contribution plan. The School has set out below the information available on the plan and the implications for the School in terms of the anticipated contribution rates.

The valuation of the TPS is carried out in line with regulations made under the Public Service Pension Act 2013. Valuations credit the teachers' pension account with a real rate of return assuming funds are invested in notional investments that produce that real rate of return.

Notes to the accounts Year to 31 August 2023

16 Pension commitments (continued)

Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) (continued)

The latest actuarial review of the TPS was carried out as at 31 March 2020. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education (DfE) in October 2023. The valuation reported total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £262 billion, and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £222 billion, giving a notional past service deficit of £40 billion.

As a result of the valuation, new employer contribution rates have been set at 28.68% of pensionable pay from April 2024 onwards (compared to 23.68% since September 2019).

A full copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation can be found on the Teachers' Pension Scheme website.

17 Related party transactions

A total of £34,597 (2022 – £23,298) was paid to Farrer & Co LLP, the School's legal advisers, of which Maria Strauss, a Governor, is a partner. Other than the relationships and transactions disclosed in notes 1, 5 and 14 there were no other related party transactions requiring disclosure (2022 – none).