

Company registration number 09118770 (England and Wales)

**THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST**  
**(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

Mr

**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

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# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

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### Members

T Pear  
C Pear (Appointed 13th December 2024)  
Corporate Member Chester Diocese Board of Education

### Trustees

H Canham (Vice Chair)  
A Rayner (Resigned 7 February 2025)  
I Lewis (Accounting Officer)  
H Hall  
N Holt  
O Lofthouse  
T Pear (Chair)  
A Thompson  
E Gilsenan (Appointed 11 December 2024)  
Rev H Morrey-Carter (Appointed 1 September 2025)

### Senior management team

|                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|
| - CEO/Accounting Officer/Headteacher | I Lewis   |
| - Deputy Headteacher                 | K Carr    |
| - CFO                                | K Brookes |

### Company registration number

09118770 (England and Wales)

### Principal and registered office

Smallwood C of E Primary School  
School Lane  
Smallwood  
Sandbach  
Cheshire  
CW11 2UR

### Independent auditor

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited  
24 Nicholas Street  
Chester  
CH1 2AU

### Bankers

LLoyds Bank Plc  
13 Victoria Street  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 2JQ

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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The trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the year 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report, and a directors' report and strategic report under company law.

The academy trust operates a primary school in Cheshire East of England. Its academies have a combined pupil capacity of 140 and had a roll of 183 in the school census on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

### Structure, governance and management

#### Constitution

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

The charitable company operates as Smallwood Academy Trust.

Details of the trustees who served during the year, and to the date these financial statements are approved, are included in the Reference and Administrative Details on page 1.

#### 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.

#### Trustees' indemnities

The academy trust has purchased RPA insurance to cover trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring while on academy trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £2,000,000 on any one claim.

#### Method of recruitment and appointment or election of trustees

Trustees are elected through two methods. Firstly, parent trustees are invited to apply for parent-trustee vacancies. Interested parties are sent an information pack and, if more than one application is received, a secret ballot is taken. The second method of recruitment occurs when the board see a need for a particular type of skill set and co-opt a suitable applicant.

#### Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees

The training and induction provided for new trustees will depend on their existing experience. All new trustees complete the statutory safeguarding training and Prevent and the courses are provided with relevant documentation to help them fulfil their role. Trustees also have access to The Key and GovernorHub training. As well as this, the trustees complete a key skills matrix and their training will be provided for any areas where gaps are identified in their experience.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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#### **Organisational structure**

The Academy has three levels of management: Members, Trustees/Directors and the Senior Management Team.

There are currently three Members. Members play a limited but crucial role in safeguarding academy trust governance. While they must ensure they do not stray into undertaking the Academy Trustees' role, they should assure themselves that the governance of the trust is effective, that Academy Trustees are acting in accordance with the trust's charitable object(s) and that they, the Members, use their powers to step in if governance is failing.

There are nine Trustees/Directors and they meet a minimum of six times a year together with the Senior Management Team. Each individual has specific areas of expertise that can be applied when discussing general school policy such as the annual school development plan, budget, special needs provision, etc. The Board of Trustees/Directors have delegated some of its functions to committees;

Teaching and Learning

Faith and Ethos

Pay Committee

Finance, Estates and Audit

The Senior Management Team includes the Headteacher, Deputy Head Teacher, SENCO and the School Business Manager/CFO. They meet on a weekly basis to discuss curriculum related issues and any issues arising with regards to the children in its care.

The Head teacher is also the Chief Executive Office of the Trust and the School Business Manager is the Trust's Chief Financial Officer.

#### **Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel**

The teaching staff pay policy has been developed to comply with current legislation and the requirements of the "school teachers' pay and conditions document". Annual appraisals take place during the autumn term which can potentially lead to incremental rises. The non-teaching pay policy acts in much the same way with incremental rises following annual appraisals and is structured to follow the NJC pay and conditions structure as laid out by Unison.

#### Trade Union Officials

The Trust has no relevant Trade Union Officials.

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

The Smallwood Academy Trust is a member of the Congleton Education Community Partnership (CECP). A termly fee is paid based on pupil numbers which then allows the group to buy services such as play therapy, health and wellbeing, early years, sports, SEND and so forth at a reduced rate should it wish to do so. The group also applies for grants such as heritage funding that then allows the schools to take part in joint activities.

The Chair is also the Chair of Castle Primary School who are a part of the Learning Alliance and is the Director of Reliance Medical.

4 Trustees and 1 member have children who attend the school and our Vicar is a governor at Astbury St Mary's school who are in Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT).

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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### **Objectives and activities**

#### **Objects and aims**

- Further embed formative assessment to identify gaps in literacy and numeracy early.
- Monitor and refine curriculum implementation to ensure pupils know and remember more.
- Continue to strengthen SEND provision and targeted interventions.
- Enhance EYFS provision and parental engagement.
- Improve attendance for key groups and specific days of the week.
- Support staff development and leadership capacity across the school.

### **Objectives, strategies and activities**

#### **Our MAT Vision**

We are currently meeting with several schools in the local area to start the process of forming a growth strategy for a Multi Academy Trust.

#### **Public benefit**

In setting our objectives and planning our activities, the trustees have carefully considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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### Strategic report

#### Achievements and performance

1.

#### Introduction

Smallwood CE Primary Academy is a thriving Church of England primary school that has grown significantly over the last decade while maintaining its family-focused ethos. Pupils come from a wide geographical area, with over 60% travelling from outside the catchment, representing a diverse socio-economic mix. Our PAN of 25 supports a small-school environment, though cohort sizes can influence data, particularly in year groups with higher proportions of SEND pupils.

2.

#### Vision,

#### Mission,

#### and

#### Values

Our mission, "Let Your Light Shine" (Matthew 5:16), is central to our ethos. Smallwood seeks to instill a love of learning in all pupils, nurturing spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Core values – Ready, Kind, Respectful, Safe – underpin behaviour, curriculum delivery, and relationships. We aim to enable every pupil to SHINE academically, socially, and spiritually in a rapidly changing world.

### 3. Governance and Leadership

Trustees provide robust oversight, monitoring the implementation of the School Development Plan (SDP), safeguarding arrangements, educational outcomes, and financial stewardship. Governance includes structured visits, reports from the Headteacher, and regular review of strategic priorities.

Leadership priorities have included:

- Strengthening curriculum design and sequencing.
- Embedding high-quality teaching and learning practices across all phases.
- Developing middle leadership capacity through CPD and coaching.
- Ensuring strong safeguarding, pastoral care, and inclusion.

### 4. Quality of Education and Key Attainment Data

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

- Good Level of Development (GLD): 80% of pupils achieved a GLD, above national average
- Communication and Language: 92% meeting expected standard.
- Literacy: 92% meeting expected standard.
- Mathematics: 91% meeting expected standard.  
*Impact:* Strong progress from starting points, with a stimulating indoor/outdoor curriculum supporting holistic development.

Phonics Screening (Year 1)

- Pass Rate: 90% of pupils met the expected standard, above the national average of 80%.
- *Impact:* Targeted interventions and high-quality teaching ensure early literacy foundations are secure.

Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check (MTC)

- Average Score of 9.1 (National Average 19.8)

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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#### Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

- Reading: 65.2% met expected standard (national average: 75%).
- Writing: 69.6% met expected standard (national average: 72%).
- Mathematics: 60.9% met expected standard (national average: 74%).
- Combined RWM: 43.5% met the expected standard (national average: 62%).
- *Context:* Attainment was lower than the school's historical standards due to cohort-specific factors, including higher proportions of SEND pupils and pandemic-related learning gaps. Targeted interventions, curriculum sequencing, and booster support are in place, and we are confident outcomes will return to usual high levels this year.

The school continues to provide a broad, balanced, and challenging curriculum. Key curriculum developments include:

- Foundational Skills: Whole-school CPD and structured interventions have improved literacy and numeracy fluency. Targeted support ensures pupils build strong foundational skills.
- Curriculum Coherence: Knowledge organisers, sequencing, retrieval practice, and "learning journey" displays support progression and long-term retention.
- Enrichment and Cultural Capital: Forest school, eco projects, music tuition, theatre visits, STEM activities, and ethical farming projects broaden pupils' experiences and skills.

#### 5. Personal Development and Well-being

Personal development and well-being are central to our ethos. Pupils benefit from:

- Structured PSHE, RSE, and philosophy programmes.
- Leadership opportunities, including School Councillors, Eco Councillors, Play Leaders, and Year 6 buddies.
- Targeted pastoral support through ELSA, play therapy, counselling, and SEMH interventions.
- Enrichment events such as "Dreams and Aspirations" week, "Mind, Body and Soul" week, and community service projects.

#### 6. Behaviour, Attendance, and Inclusion

Behaviour is exemplary, with pupils consistently demonstrating respect, responsibility, and pride in following the school's four core rules. Attendance is 95.8%, above national averages, with targeted strategies addressing persistent absence, particularly in Year 2, Fridays, and among SEND pupils. Inclusion is central, with reasonable adjustments and needs-led support ensuring all pupils access learning successfully.

#### 7.

#### Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains robust and compliant with statutory requirements. Key measures include:

- DSL and DDSL training to Level 2; all staff complete Level 1 Child Protection and PREVENT training.
- Fortnightly safeguarding briefings and structured reporting mechanisms.
- Rigorous pre-employment checks and induction procedures for all staff, governors, and volunteers.

#### 8. Staff Development and Well-being

Staff well-being is prioritised through protected PPA, CPD aligned to SDP objectives, appraisal, and performance management. Leadership fosters a collaborative culture, supporting staff in delivering high-quality teaching and learning.



# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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### 9. Financial Stewardship

The school maintains robust financial oversight, ensuring that budget-setting, monitoring, and reporting support strategic priorities. Investments focus on curriculum development, enrichment, SEND provision, and staff professional development, while ensuring best value and transparency.

### 10. **Community** **Engagement**

Smallwood maintains strong links with the local community, Parish, PTA, and partner schools. Engagement includes:

- Participation in village and church events.
- PTA-supported projects and fundraising, including contributions from the Village Summer Fete.
- Collaboration through the CECF community learning partnership and diocesan networks to share best practice and targeted improvement strategies.

### Key performance indicators

#### 11. Key Achievements

- Strong attainment and progress in most areas of the curriculum.
- Enhanced curriculum coherence, sequencing, and enrichment opportunities.
- Exemplary behaviour, pastoral care, and safeguarding practices.
- High attendance and positive pupil engagement.
- Effective governance and financial oversight.

#### 12. Priorities for 2025/26

- Further embed formative assessment to identify gaps in literacy and numeracy early.
- Monitor and refine curriculum implementation to ensure pupils know and remember more.
- Continue to strengthen SEND provision and targeted interventions.
- Enhance EYFS provision and parental engagement.
- Improve attendance for key groups and specific days of the week.
- Support staff development and leadership capacity across the school.
- To continue to retain a healthy level of reserves and maintain a balanced three-year budget.

### 13. Conclusion

Smallwood CE Primary Academy continues to provide a high-quality, values-driven education. While Key Stage 2 outcomes were below our usual standards last year, targeted interventions and curriculum improvements position the school to return to strong performance. Trustees remain confident in the school's strategic direction, leadership capacity, financial stewardship, and ability to enable all pupils to SHINE academically, socially, and spiritually.

### Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that the academy trust has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, the Board of Trustees 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.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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### Financial review

Most of the Trust's income is obtained from the DfE in the form of grants, the use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants received from the DfE during the year and the associated expenditure are shown as restricted funds in the statements of financial activities. The principal accounting policies adopted during the year are detailed in the notes to the financial statements.

During the year ended 31 August 2025, total expenditure of £1,224,000 (2024: £1,183,000) was not quite covered by grant funding from the DfE together with other incoming resources. The excess of expenditure over income (excluding actuarial losses on the defined benefit pension scheme) was £33,000 (2024: £70,000).

As at the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025, the net book value of fixed assets was £4,477,000 (2024: £4,542,000), including the value of the land and building which are on a 125-year lease. The assets are used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the pupils of the academy.

### Reserves policy

The academy seeks to have 1 month's overheads in general restricted and unrestricted reserves. Reserves at 31 August 2024 would cover 1 month of salaries only. The trustees review the reserve levels of the academy trust annually. This review encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams, the need to match income with commitments and the nature of reserves. These reserves are reviewed regularly during the year by the finance committee. The board of trustees has adopted a cautious policy of building up reserves over many years, to provide for a contingency in future years.

The Trust has overall reserves of £4,575,000 (2024: £4,600,000), included within is restricted general reserves (excluding pension & fixed asset reserves) of £nil (2024: £nil) and unrestricted reserves of £92,000 (2024: £68,000). The total free reserves (excluding pension & fixed asset reserves) amounts to £92,000 (2024: £68,000).

The pension scheme liability as at 31st August 2025 was £Nil (2024: £15,000). The vast majority of the movement of the pension scheme liability is due to actuarial assumptions and does not have a direct cash impact.

### Investment policy

Apart from the cash held for the operation of the school there are no realisable investments. However Smallwood C of E Primary Academy has a current account with Lloyds Bank on which it receives a small amount of interest.

### Principal risks and uncertainties

The principal risks facing the academy are:-

Reputation risk - mitigated by continual highly effective education and being a small village Church school.

Performance risk - mitigated by continued high quality expertise of the staff of the academy and the strong leadership of the Head Teacher.

Financial risk - there are a number of financial risks such as a reduction in pupil numbers, reduction in central government funding, unbudgeted increases in staffing costs or unbudgeted major capital repairs.

Through careful planning financial risk is kept to a minimum as the board of trustees have adopted a cautious policy of building up reserves over many years, to provide for a contingency in future years.

Consideration has been given to ensure the Trust's estate is safe, well maintained and complies with the relevant regulations.

### Fundraising

The Academy Trust does not use any external fundraisers. The school undertakes a variety of fundraising activities to support several charities and the Trust itself. All fundraising undertaken during the year was monitored by the Trustees.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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### **Streamlined energy and carbon reporting**

As the trust has not consumed more than 40,000 kWh of energy in this reporting period nor is it classed as a large company as determined by sections 465 and 466 of the Companies Act 2006, it is not required to report on its emissions, energy consumption or energy efficiency activities.

### **Plans for future periods**

Directors have met as a working party looking at the growth strategy of the wider trust. They are exploring options for growth or joining an existing MAT

The school will focus on the areas for improvement identified during the OFSTED inspection in July 2024

The school is looking at enhancing all computer software to cloud based systems.

Fundraising for all weather surfaces for the playgrounds.

Improve site security with improved access gates and fencing at the front of the school

Improvements to reduce carbon footprint with potential for solar panels, replacing all windows, upgrade lighting.

To continue to retain a healthy level of reserves and maintain a balanced three-year budget.

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

The Trust does not hold any fund as custodian for others.

### **Auditor**

Insofar as the trustees are aware:

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

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited was appointed auditor to the charitable company. A resolution proposing re-appointment will be put to the members.

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



17-12-2025

.....  
T Pear  
**Chair**

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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#### Scope of responsibility

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

As trustees, we have reviewed and taken account of the guidance in the DfE's Governance Guide.

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

#### Governance

The information on governance included here supplements that described in the Trustees' Report and in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities. The Board of Trustees has formally met 4 times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the Board of Trustees was as follows:

| Trustees   | Meetings attended | Out of possible |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|
| H Canham (Vice Chair)                            | 4                 | 4               |
| A Rayner (Resigned 7 February 2025)              | 2                 | 3               |
| I Lewis (Accounting Officer)                     | 4                 | 4               |
| H Hall   | 3                 | 4               |
| N Holt   | 3                 | 4               |
| O Lofthouse                                      | 3                 | 4               |
| T Pear (Chair)                                   | 2                 | 4               |
| A Thompson                                       | 1                 | 4               |
| E Gilsenan (Appointed 11 December 2024)          | 3                 | 3               |
| Rev H Morrey-Carter (Appointed 1 September 2025) | 0                 | 0               |

Andrew Rayner did not stand for re-election and resigned from the board. Emma Gilsenan was appointed as the parent-elected trustee to replace Andrew Rayner. Our new incumbent joined the board after being appointed by the Chester Diocese Board of Education. Tom Pear continues to be Chair of Trustees and Helen Canham continues to be the Vice Chair. We have a balance of trustees with a wide range of public and private experience. Our Board receive bi-monthly financial reports, assess the Trusts overall performance, formulate strategy planning and receive reports from various sub-committees.

#### Conflicts of interest

The Board maintains a clear and transparent process for identifying and managing conflicts of interest. All Trustees are required to declare their interests on GovernorHub annually, and declarations are reviewed regularly. At the start of every meeting, Governors are reminded of their responsibility to declare any conflicts in relation to agenda items. If discussions deviate into areas where a Governor has a personal or professional interest, they are expected to make this known immediately and, where appropriate, withdraw from that part of the meeting.

#### Meetings

The Directors meet 7 times a year. They meet every half term. The first half term consists of all the detailed information at committee levels and the second half term is for the ratification and approval agenda items put forward.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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### **Governance reviews**

During the 2024–2025 academic year, the Board of Trustees continued to provide strong, strategic leadership and effective oversight of Smallwood CE Primary Academy. The Trustees' work has been underpinned by the school's Christian vision and values, ensuring that every decision supports the aim of enabling all pupils to "Let their Light Shine."

### **Board Composition and Structure**

The composition of the Board remained stable throughout the year, providing consistency and depth of experience. A new trustee, **Emma Gilsenan** was appointed to the Board, bringing additional expertise and enthusiasm to governance discussions. The Board's sub-committee structure has remained unchanged, ensuring clear lines of accountability and effective delegation. Rev. Heather Carter was also appointed by Chester DBE as the incumbent of the parish of Smallwood

As part of the annual review of governance roles, the responsibilities of each Director have been refreshed to ensure alignment with current priorities and compliance requirements. **New link governor roles** have been assigned to strengthen focus on key areas including Safeguarding, SEND, Curriculum, and Wellbeing. This ensures that all strategic priorities are supported by direct oversight from experienced trustees.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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The Board has taken a strategic and informed approach to governance, ensuring that its decisions and actions are firmly aligned with the vision and priorities of the school. Over the course of the year, the Trustees have provided direction, challenge, and assurance in the following key areas:

- **Values, Faith, and Ethos:** Ensuring that the Christian ethos remains central to school life and that pupils' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development continues to flourish.
- **Teaching and Learning:** Monitoring the quality of education and reviewing curriculum intent, implementation, and impact.
- **Finance and Audit:** Overseeing the school's financial position to ensure value for money, sustainability, and compliance with ESFA and Trust financial procedures.
- **Pay Review and Leadership Performance:** Conducting the annual performance review of the Headteacher and leadership team to ensure accountability and alignment with strategic goals.
- **School Performance and Attendance:** Regularly scrutinising attainment and progress data, with a particular focus on vulnerable groups, and reviewing attendance trends and strategies for improvement.
- **School Development Priorities:** Monitoring progress against the School Development Plan to ensure that identified priorities are being effectively implemented.
- **Policies:** Systematic review of statutory and strategic policies to ensure compliance and best practice.
- **Health and Safety:** Overseeing premises management, risk assessments, and compliance with health and safety legislation.
- **Staff and Pupil Wellbeing:** Ensuring that workload, mental health, and well-being are actively supported and embedded in the school's culture.
- **Safeguarding:** Receiving termly safeguarding reports, ensuring that statutory duties are fulfilled and safeguarding culture remains strong.
- **SEND:** Monitoring the quality and impact of SEND provision and inclusion strategies.
- **Community Engagement:** Strengthening links with parents, the church, and the wider community to sustain the school's strong reputation and inclusive ethos.

Governors conduct **regular link visits** to the school, focusing on their respective areas of responsibility. Findings are reported to the full Board, providing assurance that policies are being implemented effectively and that the school's priorities are having a demonstrable impact on pupils' outcomes and experiences.

#### Board Performance and Effectiveness

The Board continues to operate effectively, with strong attendance and active participation from all Directors. Meetings are well-structured and well-attended, with robust discussion and appropriate challenge that reflects the Trustees' commitment to the school's success. The Board benefits from a range of professional backgrounds, providing a broad skills base that enhances decision-making and strategic planning.

The overall effectiveness of governance is judged to be strong, with Trustees demonstrating a clear understanding of their statutory duties, strategic role, and moral purpose.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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The Audit, Finance & Building Committee is a sub-committee of the main Board of Trustees.

#### **Purpose of this committee**

Smallwood C of E Primary Academy (the Trust) is constituted as a Multi Academies Trust (MAT). The Academies Financial Handbook advises that: every MAT must have in place a process for independent checking of financial controls, systems, transactions and risks and ideally this process should be driven by an Audit and Finance Committee (A&FC) appointed by the Trust Board (MATB). This document sets out the main responsibilities and terms of reference for the Trust's A&FC.

#### **Core Purpose of the A&FC**

The A&FC must review the risks to internal financial control at the Trust and must agree a programme of work that will address these risks, inform the statement of internal control and, so far as is possible, provide assurance to the external auditors.

Membership: The A&FC will consist of four members from the Trust Board. Additionally up to two external co-opted members may also be appointed. At least one of the members should have relevant financial experience.

Chair: The Chair of the A&FC shall be appointed by the Trust Board at the start of the academic year or as required. The Chair of the A&FC will not be a member of any other sub-committee.

Quorum: The A&FC will be quorate if two members are present and more than 50% of those members present are members of the Trust Board.

Meetings: The A&FC will normally meet at least once per term and not less than twice per year.

Agendas: The Clerk shall circulate an agenda for each meeting, together with any supporting papers, at least one week in advance of the meeting. Minutes of meetings will be taken and will be submitted to the Trust Board after being approved in draft by the Chair of the A&FC.

Decisions: Decisions may be taken only by Members of the A&FC. Each question shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the Members present and voting on the question. Every Member shall have one vote. Where necessary, the Chair will have a second or casting vote. The Chief Financial Officer/School Business Manager and other members of the Trust Board may be invited to attend the A&FC but will have no voting rights.

Duties: The A&FC will consider matters relating to internal control and auditors. In particular the A&FC will:

- advise the Trust Board on the adequacy and effectiveness of its systems of internal control and arrangements for risk management, control and governance processes, and securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness (value for money);
- review the statement on internal control and make appropriate recommendations to the Trust Board;
- advise the Trust Board on the appointment, reappointment, dismissal and remuneration of auditors (both external and internal auditors);
- review the external auditor's annual planning document and approve the planned audit approach;
- ensure effective coordination of the work of the external auditor and internal auditor;
- ensure that any additional services undertaken by the auditors is compatible with audit independence and objectivity;
- agree the work programme of internal audit including the checking of financial controls, systems, transactions and risks;
- consider the reports of the auditors and, when appropriate, advise the Trust Board of material controls issues;
- monitor the implementation of agreed audit recommendations;
- ensure that any allegations of fraud or irregularity are appropriately investigated and control weaknesses addressed;
- meet with the external auditor and internal auditor at least once per year; and
- report its findings annually to the Trust Board.

Authority: The A&FC is authorised by the Trust Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference. It is authorised to seek any information it requires to discharge its duties from any other Committee of the Trust Board and/or employee of the Trust. Trust employees are directed to cooperate with any reasonable request made by the A&FC

The A&FC is delegated financial authority by the Trust Board for non-routine revenue expenditure of up to £6,000 pa.

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# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

| Trustees                                | Meetings attended | Out of possible |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|
| I Lewis (Accounting Officer)            | 3                 | 3               |
| H Hall                                  | 1                 | 3               |
| N Holt                                  | 1                 | 3               |
| O Lofthouse                             | 3                 | 3               |
| T Pear (Chair)                          | 2                 | 3               |
| E Gilsenan (Appointed 11 December 2024) | 2                 | 3               |

### Review of value for money

As accounting officer, the Head Teacher has responsibility for ensuring that the academy trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The accounting officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes, as well as estates safety and management, achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

The accounting officer considers how the academy trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during each academic year, and reports to the Board of Trustees where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data or by using a framework where appropriate. The accounting officer for the academy trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- Following our financial procedures, applying tight financial controls and measuring value for money for services via 3 quotes over £3,000. The SBM Networks are attended regularly, sharing best practice and recommending good quality traders.

### 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 Smallwood Academy Trust for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

### Capacity to handle risk

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the academy trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the academy trust's significant risks that has been in place for the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees.



# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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#### The risk and control framework

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

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Board of Trustees;
- regular reviews by the Audit, Finance & Building 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; and
- identification and management of risks.

The Board of Trustees has decided:

- to appoint Sarah Sproston (Strategic Business Manager at Malbank School and Sixth Form College). Sarah has experience as a HR and Business Improvement consultant within the Early Years sector, worked for Cheshire East Council as a HR consultant for both primary and secondary schools before joining Malbank as Strategic Business Manager in 2022.

The above option was chosen as it provided best value for money and offered the experience and expertise required.

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

- Testing of payroll systems

Audit objectives: 1. Ensure staff are paid correctly, in line with contracts, hours, and pay scales. 2. Confirm adherence to statutory requirements and school pay policies. 3. Assess the accuracy and consistency of contract setup and maintenance. 4. Ensure overtime is properly approved, recorded, and reflected in payroll. 5. Review how payroll data supports accurate budgeting and forecasting. 6. Verify timely and appropriate application of pay increments and awards. 7. Confirm that leave is logged correctly and impacts payroll as expected. 8. Highlight manual processes or inefficiencies that could affect payroll accuracy.

- A review of HR and recruitment procedures

Audit scope: This audit covers the following areas: Recruitment including background checks and safeguarding compliance Employee contracts and job descriptions Induction Attendance and leave management Performance evaluation processes HR policy and procedure & Employee wellbeing

Twice, during the 2024-2025 year, the reviewer reports to the board of trustees, through the sub-committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the board of trustees' financial responsibilities. On an annual basis the reviewer 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 SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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### Review of effectiveness

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

- the work of the internal auditor/reviewer;
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process or the school resource management self-assessment tool;
- the work of the executive managers within the academy trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework;
- the work of the external auditor; and
- correspondence from ESFA, eg financial notice to improve/notice to improve (FNtI/NtI) and 'minded to' letters.

The accounting officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the Audit and Finance Committee and ensures continuous improvement of the system is in place.

### Conclusion

Based on the advice of the Audit, Finance & Building Committee and the accounting officer, the Board of Trustees is of the opinion that the academy trust has an adequate and effective framework for governance, risk management and control.

18-12-2025

17-12-2025

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on ..... and signed on its behalf by:



I Lewis  
**Accounting Officer**



T Pear  
**Chair**

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## STATEMENT OF REGULARITY, PROPRIETY AND COMPLIANCE

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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As accounting officer of The Smallwood Academy Trust, I confirm that I have had due regard to the framework of authorities governing regularity, propriety and compliance, including the trust's funding agreement with the Department for Education (DfE), and the requirements of the Academy Trust Handbook, including responsibilities for estates safety and management. I have also considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust Board of Trustees and DfE of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with terms and conditions of all funding, including for estates safety and management.

I confirm that I and the Board of Trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of all funds by the academy trust, or material non-compliance with the framework of authorities.

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



I Lewis

**Accounting Officer**

18-12-2025

Date: .....

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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The trustees (who are also the directors of The Smallwood Academy Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025 published by the Department for Education, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

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

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025;
- make judgements 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; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

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

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

17-12-2025

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on ..... and signed on its behalf by:



T Pear  
Chair

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Smallwood Academy Trust for the year ended 31 August 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. 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), the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025 issued by the Department for Education.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP 2019 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2024 to 2025.

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

### Conclusions relating to going concern

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

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

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

### Other information

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

We have nothing to report in this regard.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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### **Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006**

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

- the information given in the trustees' report including the incorporated strategic report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report including the incorporated strategic report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

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

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the academy trust and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report, including the incorporated strategic report.

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

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the academy trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### **Auditor's 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 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 financial statements.

The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

### **Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud**

We identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and then design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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### Identifying and assessing potential risks related to irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we considered the following:

- the nature of the industry and sector, control environment and business performance;
- the schools' own assessment of the risks that irregularities may occur either as a result of fraud or error;
- the results of our enquiries of management and members of the board of governors of their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities;
- any matters we identified having obtained and reviewed the schools' documentation of their policies and procedures relating to:
- identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- the internal controls established to mitigate risks of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations; and
- the matters discussed among the audit engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, we considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the organisation for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas:

(i) The presentation of the trust's Statement of Financial Activities, (ii) revenue recognition (iii) the overstatement of salary and other costs (iv) the assumptions used in the calculation of the valuation of the surplus or deficit on the defined benefit pension scheme and the movements for the year. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), we are also required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

We also obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on provisions of those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The key laws and regulations we considered in this context included the UK Companies Act, the Statement of Recommended Practice - 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' issued by the joint SORP making body, along with the Academy Trust Handbook and Accounts Direction 2024-25 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the financial statements but compliance with which may be fundamental to the academy's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. This includes regulations concerning Data Protection and Safeguarding.

### Audit response to risks identified

As a result of performing the above, we identified income recognition, override of controls and adherence to laws and regulations as the key audit matters related to the potential risk of fraud.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT ON THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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As a result of performing the above, we identified the presentation of the academy's Statement of Financial Activities, revenue recognition and overstatement of wages and other costs as the key audit matters related to the potential risk of fraud. The key audit matters section of our report explains the matters in more detail and also describes the specific procedures we performed in response to those key audit matters.

In addition to the above, our procedures to respond to risks identified included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations described above as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management and members of the board concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and reviewing correspondence with relevant authorities where matters identified were significant;
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls we carried out testing of the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates were indicative of a potential bias; and evaluated the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: <https://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 charitable company'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 charitable company's members 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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



### Jonathan Lucas (Senior Statutory Auditor)

For and on behalf of Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited, Statutory Auditor  
Accountants  
24 Nicholas Street  
Chester  
CH1 2AU

17-12-2025

Date: .....



# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON REGULARITY TO THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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In accordance with the terms of our engagement letter dated 27 August 2025 and further to the requirements of the Department for Education (DfE) as included in the extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts, we have carried out an engagement to obtain limited assurance about whether anything has come to our attention that would suggest, in all material respects, the expenditure disbursed and income received by The Smallwood Academy Trust during the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 have not been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

This report is made solely to The Smallwood Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education in accordance with the terms of our engagement letter. Our work has been undertaken so that we might state to The Smallwood Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education 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 Smallwood Academy Trust and the Secretary of State for Education, for our work, for this report, or for the conclusion we have formed.

### **Respective responsibilities of the accounting officer of The Smallwood Academy Trust and the reporting accountant**

The accounting officer is responsible, under the requirements of The Smallwood Academy Trust's funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education and the Academy Trust Handbook, 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 extant Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountants of Academy Trusts. 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 2024 to 31 August 2025 have not been applied for the purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

### **Approach**

We conducted our engagement in accordance with the Framework and Guide for External Auditors and Reporting Accountant of Academy Trusts issued by the DfE, which requires a limited assurance engagement as set out in our engagement letter.

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

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

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

The work undertaken to draw to our conclusion includes:

- Reviewing the activities to ensure they are in keeping with the charitable objectives and framework.
- Reviewing declarations of interest and seeking further representations.
- Reviewing the control environment and considering potential weaknesses.
- Reviewing minutes of various committees, management accounts and holding discussions with key personnel.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## INDEPENDENT REPORTING ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON REGULARITY TO THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EDUCATION (CONTINUED)

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

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### Conclusion

In the course of our work, nothing has come to our attention which suggests that in all material respects the expenditure disbursed and income received during the period 1 September 2024 to 31 August 2025 has not been applied for the purposes intended by Parliament or that the financial transactions do not conform to the authorities which govern them.

*Mitchell Charlesworth*

### Reporting Accountant

Mitchell Charlesworth (Audit) Limited

17-12-2025

Date: .....

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

|  | Notes | Unrestricted<br>funds<br>£'000 | General<br>£'000  | Restricted funds:<br>Fixed asset<br>£'000 | Total<br>2025<br>£'000 | Total<br>2024<br>£'000 |
|--|-------|--------------------------------|-------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Income and endowments from:</b>                 |       |                                |                   |   |                        |                        |
| Donations and capital grants                       | 3     | 5                              | -                 | 6   | 11                     | 13                     |
| Charitable activities:                             |       |                                |                   |   |                        |                        |
| - Funding for educational operations               | 4     | 14                             | 1,086             | -   | 1,100                  | 1,040                  |
| Other trading activities                           | 5     | 80                             | -                 | -   | 80                     | 60                     |
|  |       | <u>          </u>              | <u>          </u> | <u>          </u>                         | <u>          </u>      | <u>          </u>      |
| <b>Total</b>                                       |       | 99                             | 1,086             | 6   | 1,191                  | 1,113                  |
|  |       | <u>          </u>              | <u>          </u> | <u>          </u>                         | <u>          </u>      | <u>          </u>      |
| <b>Expenditure on:</b>                             |       |                                |                   |   |                        |                        |
| Charitable activities:                             |       |                                |                   |   |                        |                        |
| - Educational operations                           | 7     | 75                             | 1,078             | 71  | 1,224                  | 1,183                  |
|  |       | <u>          </u>              | <u>          </u> | <u>          </u>                         | <u>          </u>      | <u>          </u>      |
| <b>Total</b>                                       | 6     | 75                             | 1,078             | 71  | 1,224                  | 1,183                  |
|  |       | <u>          </u>              | <u>          </u> | <u>          </u>                         | <u>          </u>      | <u>          </u>      |
| <b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>                    |       | 24                             | 8                 | (65)                                      | (33)                   | (70)                   |
| <b>Other recognised gains/(losses)</b>             |       |                                |                   |   |                        |                        |
| Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes | 17    | -                              | 7                 | -   | 7                      | 26                     |
|  |       | <u>          </u>              | <u>          </u> | <u>          </u>                         | <u>          </u>      | <u>          </u>      |
| <b>Net movement in funds</b>                       |       | 24                             | 15                | (65)                                      | (26)                   | (44)                   |
| <b>Reconciliation of funds</b>                     |       |                                |                   |   |                        |                        |
| Total funds brought forward                        |       | 68                             | (15)              | 4,548                                     | 4,601                  | 4,644                  |
|  |       | <u>          </u>              | <u>          </u> | <u>          </u>                         | <u>          </u>      | <u>          </u>      |
| Total funds carried forward                        |       | 92                             | -                 | 4,483                                     | 4,575                  | 4,600                  |
|  |       | <u>          </u>              | <u>          </u> | <u>          </u>                         | <u>          </u>      | <u>          </u>      |

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED) INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

| Comparative year information                       |       | Unrestricted    | Restricted funds: |                 | Total           |
|--|-------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Year ended 31 August 2024                          |       | funds           | General           | Fixed asset     | 2024            |
|  | Notes | £'000           | £'000             | £'000           | £'000           |
| <b>Income and endowments from:</b>                 |       |                 |                   |                 |                 |
| Donations and capital grants                       | 3     | 7               | -                 | 6               | 13              |
| Charitable activities:                             |       |                 |                   |                 |                 |
| - Funding for educational operations               | 4     | -               | 1,040             | -               | 1,040           |
| Other trading activities                           | 5     | 60              | -                 | -               | 60              |
|  |       | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u>   | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u> |
| <b>Total</b>                                       |       | 67              | 1,040             | 6               | 1,113           |
|  |       | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u>   | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u> |
| <b>Expenditure on:</b>                             |       |                 |                   |                 |                 |
| Charitable activities:                             |       |                 |                   |                 |                 |
| - Educational operations                           | 7     | 44              | 1,044             | 95              | 1,183           |
|  |       | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u>   | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u> |
| <b>Total</b>                                       | 6     | 44              | 1,044             | 95              | 1,183           |
|  |       | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u>   | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u> |
| <b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>                    |       | 23              | (4)               | (89)            | (70)            |
| Transfers between funds                            | 15    | (7)             | -                 | 7               | -               |
| <b>Other recognised gains/(losses)</b>             |       |                 |                   |                 |                 |
| Actuarial gains on defined benefit pension schemes | 17    | -               | 26                | -               | 26              |
|  |       | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u>   | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u> |
| <b>Net movement in funds</b>                       |       | 16              | 22                | (82)            | (44)            |
| <b>Reconciliation of funds</b>                     |       |                 |                   |                 |                 |
| Total funds brought forward                        |       | 52              | (37)              | 4,629           | 4,644           |
|  |       | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u>   | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u> |
| Total funds carried forward                        |       | 68              | (15)              | 4,547           | 4,600           |
|  |       | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u>   | <u>        </u> | <u>        </u> |

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 AUGUST 2025

|  |       | 2025       |         | 2024       |         |
|--|-------|------------|---------|------------|---------|
|  | Notes | £'000      | £'000   | £'000      | £'000   |
| <b>Fixed assets</b>                            |       |            |         |            |         |
| Tangible assets                                | 11    |            | 4,477   |            | 4,542   |
| <b>Current assets</b>                          |       |            |         |            |         |
| Debtors  | 12    | 37         |         | 27         |         |
| Cash at bank and in hand                       |       | 143        |         | 147        |         |
|  |       | <u>180</u> |         | <u>174</u> |         |
| <b>Current liabilities</b>                     |       |            |         |            |         |
| Creditors: amounts falling due within one year | 13    | (82)       |         | (101)      |         |
|  |       | <u></u>    |         | <u></u>    |         |
| <b>Net current assets</b>                      |       |            | 98      |            | 73      |
| <b>Net assets excluding pension liability</b>  |       |            | 4,575   |            | 4,615   |
| Defined benefit pension scheme liability       | 17    |            | -       |            | (15)    |
|  |       |            | <u></u> |            | <u></u> |
| <b>Total net assets</b>                        |       |            | 4,575   |            | 4,600   |
|  |       |            | <u></u> |            | <u></u> |
| <b>Funds of the academy trust:</b>             |       |            |         |            |         |
| <b>Restricted funds</b>                        | 15    |            |         |            |         |
| - Fixed asset funds                            |       |            | 4,483   |            | 4,547   |
| - Pension reserve                              |       |            | -       |            | (15)    |
|  |       |            | <u></u> |            | <u></u> |
| <b>Total restricted funds</b>                  |       |            | 4,483   |            | 4,532   |
| <b>Unrestricted income funds</b>               | 15    |            | 92      |            | 68      |
|  |       |            | <u></u> |            | <u></u> |
| <b>Total funds</b>                             |       |            | 4,575   |            | 4,600   |
|  |       |            | <u></u> |            | <u></u> |

17-12-2025

The financial statements on pages 25 to 46 were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on ..... and are signed on their behalf by:



.....

T Pear

Chair

Company registration number 09118770 (England and Wales)

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**

|   | Notes | 2025<br>£'000 | 2024<br>£'000 |
|---|-------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>   |       |               |               |
| Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities                                 | 18    | (5)           | 32            |
| <b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>   |       |               |               |
| Capital grants from DfE Group   |       | 6             | 6             |
| Purchase of tangible fixed assets   |       | (5)           | (13)          |
| <b>Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities</b>                          |       | 1             | (7)           |
| <b>Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period</b> |       | (4)           | 25            |
| Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year                                  |       | 147           | 122           |
| <b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year</b>                                 |       | 143           | 147           |

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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#### 1 Accounting policies

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

##### 1.1 Basis of preparation

The financial statements of the academy trust, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared under the historical cost convention in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements 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 2024 to 2025 issued by ESFA, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the trust. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are in £'000.

##### 1.2 Going concern

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

##### 1.3 Income

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

###### Grants

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

General Annual Grant is recognised in full in the statement of financial activities in the period for which it is receivable, and any abatement in respect of the period 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.

###### Sponsorship income

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

###### 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.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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#### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

##### Other income

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

##### Donated goods, facilities and services

Goods donated for resale are included at fair value, being the expected proceeds from sale less the expected costs of sale. If it is practical to assess the fair value at receipt, it is recognised in stock and 'Income from other trading activities'. Upon sale, the value of the stock is charged against 'Income from other trading activities' and the proceeds are recognised as 'Income from other trading activities'. Where it is impractical to fair value the items due to the volume of low value items they are not recognised in the financial statements until they are sold. This income is recognised within 'Income from other trading activities'.

##### Donated fixed assets

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

#### 1.4 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges are allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

##### Expenditure on raising funds

This includes all expenditure incurred by the academy trust to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

##### Charitable activities

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



# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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#### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

##### 1.5 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Assets costing £500 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 that require 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, at rates calculated to write off the cost of each asset on a straight-line/reducing balance basis over its expected useful life, as follows:

|                                |                                      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Leasehold Land and building    | Over 125 years                       |
| Computer equipment             | 33.3% per annum straight line basis  |
| Fixtures, fittings & equipment | 15% per annum reducing balance basis |

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.

##### 1.6 Liabilities

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

##### 1.7 Leased assets

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

##### 1.8 Financial instruments

The academy trust only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the academy trust and their measurement basis are as follows.

###### Financial assets

Trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

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

###### Financial liabilities

Trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition.

Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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### 1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

#### 1.9 Taxation

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

#### 1.10 Pensions benefits

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

The TPS is an unfunded scheme and contributions are calculated to spread the cost of pensions over employees' working lives with the academy trust in such a way that the pension cost is a substantially level percentage of current and future pensionable payroll. The contributions are determined by the Government Actuary based on quadrennial valuations using a prospective unit credit method. The 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 are recognised in the period to which they relate.

The LGPS is a funded multi-employer scheme and the assets are held separately from those of the academy trust in separate trustee administered funds. Pension scheme assets are measured at fair value and liabilities are measured on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method and discounted at a rate equivalent to the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term and currency to the liabilities. The actuarial valuations are obtained at least triennially and are updated at each balance sheet date. The amounts charged to net income or expenditure 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.

#### 1.11 Fund accounting

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

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

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

#### 1.12 Provisions

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

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

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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#### 2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

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

##### Critical accounting estimates and assumptions

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

The present value of the Local Government Pension Scheme defined benefit asset/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 17, will impact the carrying amount of the pension asset/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 asset/liability at 31 August 2025. 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 asset/liability.

##### Critical areas of judgement

The trustees consider there are no critical areas of judgement relevant to the academy.

#### 3 Donations and capital grants

|                 | Unrestricted<br>funds<br>£'000 | Restricted<br>funds<br>£'000 | Total<br>2025<br>£'000 | Total<br>2024<br>£'000 |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Capital grants  | -                              | 6                            | 6                      | 6                      |
| Other donations | 5                              | -                            | 5                      | 7                      |
|                 | <hr/>                          | <hr/>                        | <hr/>                  | <hr/>                  |
|                 | 5                              | 6                            | 11                     | 13                     |
|                 | <hr/>                          | <hr/>                        | <hr/>                  | <hr/>                  |

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

### 4 Funding for the academy trust's educational operations

|                                 | Unrestricted<br>funds<br>£'000 | Restricted<br>funds<br>£'000 | Total<br>2025<br>£'000 | Total<br>2024<br>£'000 |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>DfE/ESFA grants</b>          |                                |                              |                        |                        |
| General annual grant (GAG)      | -                              | 898                          | 898                    | 870                    |
| Other DfE/ESFA grants:          |                                |                              |                        |                        |
| - Pupil premium                 | -                              | 33                           | 33                     | 26                     |
| - Others                        | -                              | 118                          | 118                    | 105                    |
|                                 | <u>-</u>                       | <u>1,049</u>                 | <u>1,049</u>           | <u>1,001</u>           |
| <b>Other government grants</b>  |                                |                              |                        |                        |
| Local authority grants          | -                              | 37                           | 37                     | 39                     |
|                                 | <u>-</u>                       | <u>37</u>                    | <u>37</u>              | <u>39</u>              |
| <b>Other incoming resources</b> | 14                             | -                            | 14                     | -                      |
|                                 | <u>14</u>                      | <u>-</u>                     | <u>14</u>              | <u>-</u>               |
| <b>Total funding</b>            | <u>14</u>                      | <u>1,086</u>                 | <u>1,100</u>           | <u>1,040</u>           |

### 5 Other trading activities

|                    | Unrestricted<br>funds<br>£'000 | Restricted<br>funds<br>£'000 | Total<br>2025<br>£'000 | Total<br>2024<br>£'000 |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Hire of facilities | 12                             | -                            | 12                     | 8                      |
| Catering income    | 36                             | -                            | 36                     | 27                     |
| Other income       | 32                             | -                            | 32                     | 25                     |
|                    | <u>80</u>                      | <u>-</u>                     | <u>80</u>              | <u>60</u>              |

### 6 Expenditure

|                                  | Staff costs<br>£'000 | Non-pay expenditure |                | Total<br>2025<br>£'000 | Total<br>2024<br>£'000 |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|
|                                  |                      | Premises<br>£'000   | Other<br>£'000 |                        |                        |
| Academy's educational operations |                      |                     |                |                        |                        |
| - Direct costs                   | 777                  | 52                  | 69             | 898                    | 827                    |
| - Allocated support costs        | 73                   | 89                  | 163            | 325                    | 356                    |
|                                  | <u>850</u>           | <u>141</u>          | <u>232</u>     | <u>1,223</u>           | <u>1,183</u>           |

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

|          |  |                           |                         |               |                    |
|----------|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| <b>6</b> | <b>Expenditure</b>                                     |                           |                         |               | <b>(Continued)</b> |
|          | <b>Net income/(expenditure) for the year includes:</b> |                           | <b>2025</b>             | <b>2024</b>   |                    |
|          |  |                           | <b>£'000</b>            | <b>£'000</b>  |                    |
|          | Depreciation of tangible fixed assets                  |                           | 70                      | 95            |                    |
|          | Fees payable to auditor for:                           |                           |                         |               |                    |
|          | - Audit  |                           | 8                       | 5             |                    |
|          | - Other services                                       |                           | 2                       | 1             |                    |
|          | Net interest on defined benefit pension liability      |                           | -                       | 2             |                    |
|          |  |                           | <u>      </u>           | <u>      </u> |                    |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Charitable activities</b>                           |                           |                         |               |                    |
|          |  | <b>Unrestricted funds</b> | <b>Restricted funds</b> | <b>Total</b>  | <b>Total</b>       |
|          |  | <b>£'000</b>              | <b>£'000</b>            | <b>2025</b>   | <b>2024</b>        |
|          |  |                           |                         | <b>£'000</b>  | <b>£'000</b>       |
|          | <b>Direct costs</b>                                    |                           |                         |               |                    |
|          | Educational operations                                 | 75                        | 823                     | 898           | 827                |
|          | <b>Support costs</b>                                   |                           |                         |               |                    |
|          | Educational operations                                 | -                         | 325                     | 325           | 356                |
|          |  | <u>      </u>             | <u>      </u>           | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u>      |
|          |  | 75                        | 1,148                   | 1,223         | 1,183              |
|          |  | <u>      </u>             | <u>      </u>           | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u>      |
|          | <b>Analysis of support costs</b>                       |                           |                         |               |                    |
|          |  |                           |                         | <b>2025</b>   | <b>2024</b>        |
|          |  |                           |                         | <b>£'000</b>  | <b>£'000</b>       |
|          | Support staff costs                                    |                           |                         | 73            | 117                |
|          | Depreciation   |                           |                         | 18            | 24                 |
|          | Technology costs                                       |                           |                         | 37            | 29                 |
|          | Premises costs   |                           |                         | 71            | 61                 |
|          | Legal costs  |                           |                         | 31            | 22                 |
|          | Other support costs                                    |                           |                         | 84            | 95                 |
|          | Governance costs                                       |                           |                         | 11            | 8                  |
|          |  |                           |                         | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u>      |
|          |  |                           |                         | 325           | 356                |
|          |  |                           |                         | <u>      </u> | <u>      </u>      |

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

#### 8 Staff

##### Staff costs and employee benefits

Staff costs during the year were:

|   | 2025<br>£'000 | 2024<br>£'000 |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| Wages and salaries                      | 630           | 616           |
| Social security costs                   | 54            | 43            |
| Pension costs                           | 156           | 139           |
|   | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |
| Staff costs - employees                 | 840           | 798           |
| Agency staff costs                      | 10            | 3             |
|   | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |
|   | 850           | 801           |
| Staff development and other staff costs | 3             | 7             |
|   | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |
| Total staff expenditure                 | 853           | 808           |
|   | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |

##### Staff numbers

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

|                            | 2025<br>Number | 2024<br>Number |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Teachers                   | 10             | 8              |
| Administration and support | 15             | 18             |
| Management                 | 1              | 1              |
|                            | <hr/>          | <hr/>          |
|                            | 26             | 27             |
|                            | <hr/>          | <hr/>          |

##### Higher paid staff

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

|                   | 2025<br>Number | 2024<br>Number |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| £60,001 - £70,000 | 1              | 1              |
|                   | <hr/>          | <hr/>          |

##### Key management personnel

The key management personnel of the academy trust comprise the trustees and the senior management team as listed on page 1. The total amount of key management personnel benefits (including employer pension contributions and employer national insurance contributions) received by key management personnel for their services to the academy trust was £167,653 (2024: £210,292).

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

#### 9 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

One or more of the trustees has been paid remuneration or has received other benefits from an employment with the academy trust. The Head Teacher and other staff trustees only receive remuneration in respect of services they provide undertaking the roles of Head Teacher and staff members under their contracts of employment, and not in respect of their services as trustees.

The value of trustees' remuneration and other benefits was as follows:

I Lewis (Head Teacher & Trustee)

Remuneration £65,000 - £70,000 (2024 £60,000 - £65,000)

Employer's pension contributions paid £15,000 - £20,000 (2024 £15,000 - £20,000)

During the year, no trustees received any reimbursement of expenses (2024: £nil).

#### 10 Trustees' and officers' insurance

In accordance with normal commercial practice, the academy trust has purchased insurance to protect trustees and officers from claims arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy trust business. The insurance provides cover up to £2,000,000 on any one claim and the cost for the year ended 31 August 2025 was £4,500 (2024: £4,140). The cost of this insurance is included in the total insurance cost.

#### 11 Tangible fixed assets

|                       | Leasehold<br>Land and<br>building<br>£'000 | Computer<br>equipment<br>£'000 | Fixtures,<br>fittings &<br>equipment<br>£'000 | Total<br>£'000 |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|----------------|
| <b>Cost</b>           |  |                                |   |                |
| At 1 September 2024   | 4,551                                      | 157                            | 1,001   | 5,709          |
| Additions             | -  | 3                              | 2   | 5              |
|                       | —  | —                              | —   | —              |
| At 31 August 2025     | 4,551                                      | 160                            | 1,003   | 5,714          |
|                       | —  | —                              | —   | —              |
| <b>Depreciation</b>   |  |                                |   |                |
| At 1 September 2024   | 227  | 148                            | 792   | 1,167          |
| Charge for the year   | 28   | 10                             | 32  | 70             |
|                       | —  | —                              | —   | —              |
| At 31 August 2025     | 255  | 158                            | 824   | 1,237          |
|                       | —  | —                              | —   | —              |
| <b>Net book value</b> |  |                                |   |                |
| At 31 August 2025     | 4,296                                      | 2                              | 179   | 4,477          |
|                       | —  | —                              | —   | —              |
| At 31 August 2024     | 4,324                                      | 9                              | 209   | 4,542          |
|                       | —  | —                              | —   | —              |

Land and buildings have been included in the financial statements at a value of £4,000,000 based on the deemed valuation by insurance. The legal title to land and buildings is held by Chester Diocesan Education Association, the Academy utilises the asset under a licence agreement and has done since its conversion to an academy on 4 July 2017.

Subsequent land and building improvements have been included at cost.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

#### 12 Debtors

|                                | 2025<br>£'000 | 2024<br>£'000 |
|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Other debtors                  | 6             | 10            |
| Prepayments and accrued income | 31            | 17            |
|                                | <u>37</u>     | <u>27</u>     |

#### 13 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

|                                    | 2025<br>£'000 | 2024<br>£'000 |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Trade creditors                    | 12            | 44            |
| Other taxation and social security | 32            | 26            |
| Accruals and deferred income       | 38            | 31            |
|                                    | <u>82</u>     | <u>101</u>    |

#### 14 Deferred income

|                                     | 2025<br>£'000 | 2024<br>£'000 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Deferred income is included within: |               |               |
| Creditors due within one year       | 19            | 19            |
|                                     | <u>19</u>     | <u>19</u>     |
| Deferred income at 1 September 2024 | 19            | 19            |
| Released from previous years        | (19)          | (19)          |
| Resources deferred in the year      | 19            | 19            |
|                                     | <u>19</u>     | <u>19</u>     |
| Deferred income at 31 August 2025   | 19            | 19            |

At the balance sheet date the academy trust was holding funds received in advance for UIFSM funding of £19,382 (2024: £19,349).



# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

### 15 Funds

|  | Balance at<br>1 September<br>2024<br>£'000 | Income<br>£'000 | Expenditure<br>£'000 | Gains,<br>losses and<br>transfers<br>£'000 | Balance at<br>31 August<br>2025<br>£'000 |
|--|--|-----------------|----------------------|--|--|
| <b>Restricted general funds</b>                |  |                 |                      |  |  |
| General Annual Grant (GAG)                     | -  | 898             | (898)                | -  | -  |
| Pupil premium                                  | -  | 33              | (33)                 | -  | -  |
| Other DfE/ESFA grants                          | -  | 118             | (118)                | -  | -  |
| Other government grants                        | -  | 37              | (37)                 | -  | -  |
| Pension reserve                                | (15)                                       | -               | 8                    | 7  | -  |
|  | (15)                                       | 1,086           | (1,078)              | 7  | -  |
| <b>Restricted fixed asset funds</b>            |  |                 |                      |  |  |
| Inherited on conversion                        | 4,469                                      | -               | (52)                 | -  | 4,417                                    |
| DfE group capital grants                       | 63   | 6               | (16)                 | -  | 53                                       |
| Capital expenditure from<br>unrestricted funds | 16   | -               | (3)                  | -  | 13                                       |
|  | 4,548                                      | 6               | (71)                 | -  | 4,483                                    |
| <b>Total restricted funds</b>                  | 4,533                                      | 1,092           | (1,149)              | 7  | 4,483                                    |
| <b>Unrestricted funds</b>                      |  |                 |                      |  |  |
| General funds                                  | 68   | 99              | (75)                 | -  | 92                                       |
| <b>Total funds</b>                             | 4,601                                      | 1,191           | (1,224)              | 7  | 4,575                                    |

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

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

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

Restricted general fund comprise all other restricted funds received and include grants from the Education and Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education.

The academy trust is not subject to GAG carried forward limits.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

### 15 Funds

(Continued)

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

|  | Balance at<br>1 September<br>2023<br>£'000 | Income<br>£'000 | Expenditure<br>£'000 | Gains,<br>losses and<br>transfers<br>£'000 | Balance at<br>31 August<br>2024<br>£'000 |
|--|--|-----------------|----------------------|--|--|
| <b>Restricted general funds</b>                |  |                 |                      |  |  |
| General Annual Grant (GAG)                     | 8  | 870             | (878)                | -  | -  |
| Pupil premium                                  | -  | 26              | (26)                 | -  | -  |
| Other DfE/ESFA grants                          | -  | 105             | (105)                | -  | -  |
| Other government grants                        | -  | 39              | (39)                 | -  | -  |
| Pension reserve                                | (45)                                       | -               | 4                    | 26   | (15)                                     |
|  | <u>(37)</u>                                | <u>1,040</u>    | <u>(1,044)</u>       | <u>26</u>                                  | <u>(15)</u>                              |
| <b>Restricted fixed asset funds</b>            |  |                 |                      |  |  |
| Inherited on conversion                        | 4,526                                      | -               | (57)                 | -  | 4,469                                    |
| DfE group capital grants                       | 89   | 6               | (33)                 | -  | 62                                       |
| Capital expenditure from<br>unrestricted funds | 14   | -               | (5)                  | 7  | 16                                       |
|  | <u>4,629</u>                               | <u>6</u>        | <u>(95)</u>          | <u>7</u>                                   | <u>4,547</u>                             |
| <b>Total restricted funds</b>                  | <u>4,592</u>                               | <u>1,046</u>    | <u>(1,139)</u>       | <u>33</u>                                  | <u>4,532</u>                             |
| <b>Unrestricted funds</b>                      |  |                 |                      |  |  |
| General funds                                  | 52   | 67              | (44)                 | (7)  | 68                                       |
| <b>Total funds</b>                             | <u>4,644</u>                               | <u>1,113</u>    | <u>(1,183)</u>       | <u>26</u>                                  | <u>4,600</u>                             |

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

#### 16 Analysis of net assets between funds

|  | Unrestricted<br>Funds<br>£'000 | Restricted funds:<br>General<br>£'000 | Fixed asset<br>£'000 | Total<br>Funds<br>£'000 |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Fund balances at 31 August 2025 are represented by:</b> |                                |                                       |                      |                         |
| Tangible fixed assets                                      | -                              | -                                     | 4,477                | 4,477                   |
| Current assets   | 156                            | 18                                    | 6                    | 180                     |
| Current liabilities  | (64)                           | (18)                                  | -                    | (82)                    |
| <b>Total net assets</b>                                    | <b>92</b>                      | <b>-</b>                              | <b>4,483</b>         | <b>4,575</b>            |

|  | Unrestricted<br>Funds<br>£'000 | Restricted funds:<br>General<br>£'000 | Fixed asset<br>£'000 | Total<br>Funds<br>£'000 |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Fund balances at 31 August 2024 are represented by:</b> |                                |                                       |                      |                         |
| Tangible fixed assets                                      | -                              | -                                     | 4,542                | 4,542                   |
| Current assets   | 62                             | 107                                   | 5                    | 174                     |
| Current liabilities  | 6                              | (107)                                 | -                    | (101)                   |
| Pension scheme liability                                   | -                              | (15)                                  | -                    | (15)                    |
| <b>Total net assets</b>                                    | <b>68</b>                      | <b>(15)</b>                           | <b>4,547</b>         | <b>4,600</b>            |

#### 17 Pension and similar obligations

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

The latest actuarial valuation of the TPS related to the period ended 31 March 2020, and that of the LGPS related to the period ended 31 March 2022.

Contributions amounting to £18,326 were payable to the schemes at 31 August 2025 (2024: £21,078) and are included within creditors.

##### Teachers' Pension Scheme

###### Introduction

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) is a statutory, contributory, defined benefit scheme, governed by the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014. Membership is automatic for teachers in academy trusts. 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.

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

#### 17 Pension and similar obligations

(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 ensure scheme costs are recognised and managed appropriately and the review specifies 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 2020. The valuation report was published by the Department for Education on 27 October 2023, with the SCAPE rate, set by HMT, applying a notional investment return based on 1.7% above the rate of CPI. The key elements of the valuation outcome are:

- Employer contribution rates set at 28.68% of pensionable pay (including a 0.08% administration levy). This is an increase of 5% in employer contributions and the cost control result is such that no change in member benefits is needed.
- Total scheme liabilities (pensions currently in payment and the estimated cost of future benefits) for service to the effective date of £262,000 million and notional assets (estimated future contributions together with the notional investments held at the valuation date) of £222,200 million, giving a notional past service deficit of £39,800 million.

The result of this valuation has been implemented from 1 April 2024. The next valuation result is due to be implemented from 1 April 2027.

The employer's pension costs paid to the TPS in the period amounted to £123,311 (2024: £96,870).

A copy of the valuation report and supporting documentation is on the Teachers' Pensions website.

Under the definitions set out in FRS 102, the TPS is an unfunded multi-employer pension scheme. The academy trust is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities of the plan. Accordingly, the academy trust 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. The academy trust has set out above the information available on the scheme.

##### Local Government Pension Scheme

The LGPS is a funded defined benefit pension scheme, with the assets held in separate trustee-administered funds. The total contributions are as noted below. The agreed contribution rates for future years are 21% for employers and 5.5% to 12.5% for employees.

Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, to a guarantee that, in the event of 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.

| Total contributions made | 2025<br>£'000 | 2024<br>£'000 |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Employer's contributions | 41            | 48            |
| Employees' contributions | 11            | 12            |
|                          | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |
| Total contributions      | 52            | 60            |
|                          | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

|  |                    |              |
|--|--------------------|--------------|
| <b>17 Pension and similar obligations</b>  | <b>(Continued)</b> |              |
| <b>Principal actuarial assumptions</b>   | <b>2025</b>        | <b>2024</b>  |
|  | <b>%</b>           | <b>%</b>     |
| Rate of increase in salaries   | 3.4                | 3.35         |
| Rate of increase for pensions in payment/inflation   | 2.7                | 2.65         |
| Discount rate for scheme liabilities   | 6.5                | 5.00         |
|  | =====              | =====        |
| The current mortality assumptions include sufficient allowance for future improvements in mortality rates. The assumed life expectations on retirement age 65 are: |                    |              |
|  | <b>2025</b>        | <b>2024</b>  |
|  | <b>Years</b>       | <b>Years</b> |
| Retiring today   |                    |              |
| - Males  | 20.2               | 20.0         |
| - Females  | 24.4               | 24.4         |
| Retiring in 20 years   |                    |              |
| - Males  | 21                 | 20.8         |
| - Females  | 25.6               | 25.6         |
|  | =====              | =====        |
| <b>Sensitivity analysis</b>  |                    |              |
| Scheme liabilities would have been affected by changes in assumptions as follows:  |                    |              |
|  | <b>2025</b>        | <b>2024</b>  |
| 0.1% decrease in Real Discount Rate  | 13                 | 15,000       |
| 1 year increase in member life expectancy  | 24                 | 27,000       |
| 0.1% increase in the Pension Increase Rate   | 13                 | 15,000       |
|  | =====              | =====        |
| <b>Defined benefit pension scheme net asset/(liability)</b>  | <b>2025</b>        | <b>2024</b>  |
|  | <b>£'000</b>       | <b>£'000</b> |
| Scheme assets  | 730                | 652          |
| Scheme obligations   | (592)              | (667)        |
|  | =====              | =====        |
| Net asset/(liability)  | 138                | (15)         |
| Restriction on scheme assets   | (138)              | -            |
|  | =====              | =====        |
| Total liability recognised   | -                  | (15)         |
|  | =====              | =====        |

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

| 17 Pension and similar obligations                              | (Continued)                 |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| The academy trust's share of the assets in the scheme           | 2025<br>Fair value<br>£'000 | 2024<br>Fair value<br>£'000 |
| Equities  | 394                         | 346                         |
| Bonds   | 234                         | 215                         |
| Cash  | 7                           | 6                           |
| Property  | 95                          | 85                          |
| Total market value of assets                                    | 730                         | 652                         |
| Restriction on scheme assets                                    | (138)                       | -                           |
| Net assets recognised   | 592                         | 652                         |
| The actual return on scheme assets was £35,000 (2024: £54,000). |                             |                             |
| Amount recognised in the statement of financial activities      | 2025<br>£'000               | 2024<br>£'000               |
| Current service cost  | 33                          | 42                          |
| Interest income   | (34)                        | (30)                        |
| Interest cost   | 34                          | 32                          |
| Total amount recognised   | 33                          | 44                          |
| Changes in the present value of defined benefit obligations     | 2025<br>£'000               | 2024<br>£'000               |
| At 1 September 2024   | 667                         | 592                         |
| Current service cost  | 33                          | 42                          |
| Interest cost   | 34                          | 32                          |
| Employee contributions  | 11                          | 12                          |
| Actuarial gain  | (144)                       | (2)                         |
| Benefits paid   | (9)                         | (9)                         |
| At 31 August 2025   | 592                         | 667                         |

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

### 17 Pension and similar obligations (Continued)

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

|                              | 2025<br>£'000 | 2024<br>£'000 |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| At 1 September 2024          | 652           | 547           |
| Interest income              | 34            | 30            |
| Actuarial gain               | 1             | 24            |
| Employer contributions       | 41            | 48            |
| Employee contributions       | 11            | 12            |
| Benefits paid                | (9)           | (9)           |
|                              | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |
| At 31 August 2025            | 730           | 652           |
| Restriction on scheme assets | (138)         | -             |
|                              | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |
| Net assets recognised        | 592           | 652           |
|                              | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |

#### Restriction of pension scheme assets

The net gain recognised on scheme assets has been restricted because the full pension surplus is not expected to be recovered through refunds or reduced contributions in the future.

### 18 Reconciliation of net expenditure to net cash flow from operating activities

|  | Notes | 2025<br>£'000 | 2024<br>£'000 |
|--|-------|---------------|---------------|
| Net expenditure for the reporting period<br>(as per the statement of financial activities) |       | (32)          | (70)          |
| Adjusted for:  |       |               |               |
| Capital grants from DfE and other capital income   |       | (6)           | (6)           |
| Defined benefit pension costs less contributions payable                                   | 17    | (8)           | (6)           |
| Defined benefit pension scheme finance cost  | 17    | -             | 2             |
| Depreciation of tangible fixed assets  |       | 70            | 95            |
| (Increase) in debtors  |       | (10)          | (3)           |
| (Decrease)/increase in creditors   |       | (19)          | 20            |
|  |       | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |
| Net cash (used in)/provided by operating activities  |       | (5)           | 32            |
|  |       | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |

### 19 Analysis of changes in net funds

|      | 1 September<br>2024<br>£'000 | Cash flows<br>£'000 | 31 August 2025<br>£'000 |
|------|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Cash | 147                          | (4)                 | 143                     |
|      | <hr/>                        | <hr/>               | <hr/>                   |

# THE SMALLWOOD ACADEMY TRUST

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025

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#### 20 Long-term commitments

##### Operating leases

At 31 August 2025 the total of the academy trust's future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases was:

|                                   | 2025<br>£'000 | 2024<br>£'000 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Amounts due within one year       | 4             | 3             |
| Amounts due in two and five years | 7             | 8             |
|                                   | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |
|                                   | 11            | 11            |
|                                   | <hr/>         | <hr/>         |

#### 21 Related party transactions

Owing to the nature of the academy trust and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from local public and private sector organisations, transactions may take place with organisations in which the trustees have an interest.

The following related party transactions took place in the period of account, along with certain trustees' remuneration and expenses already disclosed in note 9.

During the year the school paid fees of £3,300 (2024: £3,300) to the Congleton Education Community Partnership in which the school is a member and the Head Teacher is a director.

During the year the school paid fees of £12,837 (2024: £Nil) to Brine Lease School, a school where K Brookes was a business manager, for services. At the year end, £1,500 (2024: £Nil) was in trade creditors in respect of these fees, K Brookes is the CFO of The Smallwood Academy.

#### 22 Members' liability

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