

Registration number: 07697698

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

Thompson Jenner LLP
Statutory Auditors
28 Alexandra Terrace
Exmouth
Devon
EX8 1BD

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Contents

Reference and administrative details	1 to 2
Trustees' report	3 to 11
Governance statement	12 to 16
Statement of regularity, propriety and compliance	17
Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities	18
Independent Auditor's Report on the Financial Statements to the Members of Chulmleigh Academy Trust	19 to 22
Independent Reporting Accountant's Assurance Report on Regularity to Chulmleigh Academy Trust and the Education and Skills Funding Agency	23 to 24
Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 August 2023 (including Income and Expenditure Account)	25 to 26
Balance Sheet as at 31 August 2023	27
Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 August 2023	28
Notes to the Financial Statements	29 to 53

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Reference and administrative details

Members	S Baber S Phillips Revd. T Rockey S Marshall (EDEN representative)
Trustees (Directors)	R T Algar (appointed 19 October 2022) S C Baber (Chair of Trustees) S Bellworthy (resigned 24 February 2023) B E Down (appointed 19 October 2022 and resigned 29 September 2023) K A Greenwood M E Johnson (accounting officer) N Sedgwick L N Smith M J White N J Willis D J Worden E Mayo (appointed 31 January 2023)
Company Secretary	A Wade
Senior Management Team	M E Johnson, Executive Headteacher N Payne, Secondary Deputy Executive Headteacher T Pullen, Estates Manager C A Harrison, Business Manager S Healey, Primary Deputy Executive Headteacher M Evely, Head of School (CPS) S Pinn, Head of School (EWS) J Wright, Head of School (LPS) L Miller Marshall, Academy SENDCo A Wade, Operations and Compliance Manager
Principal and Registered Office	Chulmleigh Community College Chulmleigh Devon EX18 7AA
Company Registration Number	07697698

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Reference and administrative details (continued)

Auditors Thompson Jenner LLP
Statutory Auditors
28 Alexandra Terrace
Exmouth
Devon
EX8 1BD

Bankers Lloyds Bank plc

Solicitors Michelmores LLP

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Trustees' report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the charitable company for the period for the year ended 31 August 2023. The annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report, and a directors' report and strategic report under company law.

In 2022/23 the Trust operated academies for pupils aged 2 to 16 in Chulmleigh and surrounding areas. The Trust comprises of three primary schools and one secondary school. It has a pupil capacity of 1041 and had a roll of 1013 in the school census on 6 October 2022.

From September 2021, the Trust has lowered the age range of the three primary schools: Chulmleigh Primary, East Worlington Primary and Lapford Community Primary to 2-11 years.

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 Chulmleigh Academy Trust are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company operates as Chulmleigh Academy Trust.

Details of the Trustees who served during the year, and the date to which these accounts 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

Trustees benefit from indemnity insurance purchased at the Academy Trust's expense to cover the liability of the Trustees which by virtue of any rule of law would otherwise attach to them in respect of any negligence, default or breach of trust or breach of duty of which they may be guilty in relation to the Academy Trust, provided that any such insurance shall not extend to any claim arising from any act or omission which the Trustees knew to be a breach of trust or breach of duty or which was committed by the Trustees in reckless disregard to whether it was a breach of trust or breach of duty or not and provided also that any such insurance shall not extend to the costs of any unsuccessful defence to a criminal prosecution brought against the Trustees in their capacity as Directors of the Academy Trust. The limit of this indemnity is £5,000,000.

Method of Recruitment and Appointment or Election of Trustees

On incorporation, the first Trustees of the newly formed Academy were appointed for a term of four years from the date of incorporation.

Since May 2022, the Trust holds 'Majority Church Articles'. The Academy's Board of Trustees comprises the Executive Headteacher (who is the Chief Executive Officer), two Foundation Trustees, and up to nine other Trustees. In addition, the Secretary of State has the right under certain circumstances to appoint further Trustees as provided for in the Articles of Association.

The Academy Trust shall have no fewer than five Trustees, including the following Trustees as set out in its Articles of Association and funding agreement:

- The Chief Executive Officer may be appointed to act as a Trustee by the members if he or she agrees so to act

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Trustees' report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

- A minimum of two Trustees shall be appointed by the members
- A minimum of two parent Trustees shall be elected (or appointed as the case may be), unless Local Governing Bodies are established and provision made for parent local governors on each Local Governing Body.
- A minimum of three Trustees appointed by the Exeter Diocesan Education Network (EDEN) provided that the number of Trustees so appointed shall not exceed a simple majority of the total number of Trustees

Trustees are appointed for a four-year period, except that this time limit does not apply to the Chief Executive Officer. Subject to remaining eligible to be a particular type of Trustee, any Trustee can be re-appointed or re-elected.

When appointing new Trustees, the Board will give consideration to the skills and experience mix of existing Trustees in order to ensure that the Board has the necessary skills to contribute fully to the Academy's development.

Policies and Procedures Adopted for the Induction and Training of Trustees

The Academy has an Induction and Development of Directors policy available from the Company Secretary.

The training and induction provided for new Trustees will depend upon their existing experience but would always include a tour of the Academy and a chance to meet staff and pupils. All Trustees are provided with copies of those policies, procedures, minutes, accounts, budgets, plans and other documents that they will need to undertake their role as Trustees. Induction tends to be done informally (but in accordance with the Induction and Development of Directors policy) and is tailored specifically to the individual. New Trustees are also encouraged to attend relevant training course for new governors.

There is a Trustees' Away Day organised each year which includes training sessions to keep the Trustees updated on relevant developments impacting on their roles and responsibilities.

Organisational Structure

The Board of Trustees meets at least four times a year. The Board establishes an overall framework for the governance of the Academy and determines membership, terms of reference and procedures of Committees and other groups. It receives reports including policies from its Committees for ratification. It monitors the activities of the Committees through the minutes of their meetings. The Board may from time to time establish Working Groups to perform specific tasks over a limited timescale.

In this period there were four main committees as follows;

- **Business & Finance Committee** - this met at least once a term and is responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reviewing policy and performance in relation to financial management, compliance with reporting and regulatory requirements, receiving reports from the internal auditors and drafting the annual budget including setting staffing levels. The committee also deals with personnel matters, and will monitor, evaluate and review Academy policy, practice and performance in relation to Personnel and staffing issues. The committee also deals with premises and facilities issues, including Health and Safety matters and ICT.
- **Standards Committees** – one for the Secondary Phase, and one for the Primary Phase. These meet at least once a term to monitor, evaluate and review Academy policy, practice and performance in relation to curriculum planning, communications, target setting and assessment, examinations and all pastoral issues.

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Trustees' report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

• **Audit Committee** – this committee was formed to deal with any necessary audit. It has met three times during the year on 23rd November 2022, 2nd February 2023 and 3rd May 2023, to receive and review the internal audit reports. The annual financial statements were discussed and recommended to the Board of Directors for approval at the meeting 23rd November 2022.

In addition, committees are formed on an ad hoc basis where required to cover other matters such as Exclusions.

The following decisions are reserved to the Board of Trustees: to consider any proposals for changes to the status or constitution of the Academy and its committee structure, to appoint or remove the Chairman and/or Vice Chairman, to appoint the Executive Headteacher.

The Trustees are responsible for setting general policy, approving the Academy Improvement Plan and budget, approving the statutory accounts, monitoring the Academy by the use of budgets and other data, and making major decisions about the direction of the Academy, capital expenditure and senior staff appointments.

The members and Board of Trustees have devolved responsibility for day to day management of the Academy to the Executive Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT). In 2022/23 the SLT comprised of the Executive Headteacher, Secondary Deputy Executive Headteacher, Primary Deputy Executive Headteacher, Academy SENDCO, Estates Manager, Business Manager, Operations and Compliance Manager, and 3 Heads of Primary Schools.

The SLT controls the Academy at an executive operational level, implementing the policies laid down by the Trustees and reporting back to them.

Some spending control is devolved to Budget Holders, who are authorised in line with the Scheme of Delegation. The Executive Headteacher is responsible for the appointment of staff.

The Academy Trust comprised of three primary schools and one secondary school during this period. Each school is an Academy in its own right forming part of the chain of academies within the Academy Trust, with a single Board of Directors overseeing the whole academy chain.

The Executive Headteacher is the Accounting Officer.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The Trustees set the pay and remuneration of key management personnel considering benchmarking data.

Trade union facility time

There were two employees (2.0 FTE) who were a relevant union official during the period. There was no time spent on facility time during this period.

Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisations

Chulmleigh Recreational Association, a registered charity, has use of the Academy's leisure facilities and there is a shared use agreement between them and the Academy.

In addition to the three primary schools within the Academy, the Academy has strong collaborative links with five further feeder primary schools. Links have also been formed with primary schools outside the transport area to facilitate transition.

Set up in 2015, Chulmleigh Academy Trust Preschools Ltd is a Director run company, incorporating East Worlington Preschool, Chulmleigh Preschool and Lapford Preschool. From September 2021, the primary schools have extended the age range to 2-11 years and therefore incorporate the three preschools.

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Trustees' report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

There are no related parties which either control or significantly influence the decisions and operations of Chulmleigh Academy Trust. The Academy encourages strong communication links between the various parent and community forum groups which are linked to individual schools. The Parents' Advisory Group meets every term.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objects and Aims

The principal object and activity of the Academy is to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom, in particular by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing a chain of schools offering a broad range of curriculum for pupils of different abilities.

The Trust's designated catchment area covers 210 square miles, which includes Witheridge, Morchard Bishop, High Bickington, Winkleigh and Kings Nympton. However, Chulmleigh College also attracts pupils from outside its designated catchment area, due to parental choice. Therefore, pupils are admitted from areas such as Crediton, North Tawton, Okehampton, Great Torrington, Beaford, Dolton, Barnistaple, Tiverton and South Molton. The Trust complies with the School Admissions Code and the oversubscription criteria can be found on the Trust's website.

The aims of the Academy during the year ended 31 August 2023 are summarised below:

- to provide an outstanding education for each child in the Academy Trust.
- to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, including extra-curricular activities.
- to develop pupils as more effective learners.
- to enhance the tertiary provision and outcomes.
- to develop the Academy sites so that they enable pupils to achieve their full potential.
- to ensure that every child enjoys fair access to a high-quality education in terms of resourcing, tuition and care.
- to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of the Academy by keeping the curriculum and organisational structure under continual review.
- to maximise the number of pupils who achieve 5 GCSE grades (9-5) including English and Maths.
- to provide value for money for the funds expended.
- to develop greater coherence, clarity, and effectiveness in school systems.
- to comply with all appropriate statutory and curriculum requirements.
- to develop the Academy's capacity to manage change, and
- to conduct the Academy's business in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, probity, and openness.

At Chulmleigh Academy Trust, we aim to get the best for, and from, each child. We intend to enable each child to realise his or her full academic, creative, and physical potential and to develop positive social and moral values. Our Academy is a community in which children, staff and parents are part of an environment where high aspiration and standards are achieved as the result of the exemplary practice from the professionals in each of the schools.

Objectives, Strategies and Activities

Key priorities for the year are contained in our Academy Improvement Plan, which is available from the Company Secretary at the College.

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Trustees' report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

Next year the priorities will be based around:

- Continuing to make the quality of teaching and learning our number one priority and remaining agile in order to give pupils the very best learning opportunities.
- Continuing to improve levels of attainment and progress.
- Taking opportunities to use our resources flexibly, in the best interests of the children and in a way that makes best use of our freedoms as a group of academy schools.
- Spreading the outstanding practice within the schools.
- Increasing pupil numbers in our three primary schools.
- Ensuring that staffing structures in the school meet need and that succession of key roles is planned for.
- Preparing for Ofsted.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in Section 17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit in exercising their powers or duties. They have referred to this guidance when reviewing the Academy's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities.

The Academy aims to advance for the public benefit education in Chulmleigh and the surrounding areas. In particular, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, by estimating, maintaining, managing, and developing schools, offering a broad curriculum for all.

The Academy provides facilities for recreational and other leisure time occupation for the community at large in the interests of social welfare and with the interest of improving the life of the said community.

STRATEGIC REPORT

Achievements and Performance

The Academy is in its 12th year of operation.

The college gained regionally significant results again and the Primary schools' attainment and progress showed significant improvement on the previous year.

Attendance has been a concern nationally, particularly in secondary schools, and we have put much effort into improving attendance. Attendance in all the schools is some way above average.

Chulmleigh Community College 2022/23

GCSE Results 2023

GCSE Results 2023

The college gained some of the best results on the southwest peninsular, again, this year.

Ebacc Entry – 83.85

Ebacc Average Point Score (APS) 5.27

Good Pass in Basics (Grade 5+) 65%

Standard Pass in Basics (Grade 4+) 86%

Attainment 8 – 55

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Trustees' report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

Progress 8 - +0.68

Key Performance Indicators

The main financial performance indicator is the level of reserves held at the Balance Sheet date. In particular, the management of spending against General Annual Grant (GAG) requires special attention. In the period under review, the restricted fund balance of £472,840 was carried forward representing 8% of GAG.

Going Concern

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

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial Review

Most of the Academy's income is obtained from the DfE via the ESFA in the form of recurrent grants, the use of which is restricted to particular purposes. The grants received from the DfE during the year ended 31 August 2023 and the associated expenditure are shown as Restricted Funds in the Statement of Financial Activities.

The Academy also receives grants for fixed assets from the DfE which are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities as restricted income in the Fixed Asset Fund. The Restricted Fixed Asset Fund balance is reduced by annual depreciation charges over the useful life of the assets concerned, as defined in the Academy's accounting policies.

During the year ended 31 August 2023, the Trust received extra COVID-19 funding as detailed in Note 3. The Trust received COVID-19 catch up funding which was used to support small groups of pupils, from disadvantaged backgrounds. The schools in the Trust used experienced teachers, or trained support staff to provide the support.

During the year ended 31 August 2023, total expenditure (excluding restricted fixed assets funds and pensions reserves) of £7,079,590 was covered by recurrent grant funding from the DfE, together with other incoming resources totalling £7,225,108. The excess of income over expenditure for the year excluding restricted fixed asset funds, pension reserve and transfers to Restricted Fixed Asset funds was £145,518.

At 31 August 2023 the net book value of fixed assets was £12,709,302 and movements in tangible fixed assets are shown in the financial statements. The assets were used exclusively for providing education and the associated support services to the pupils of the Academy.

The balance of the former school's budget shares was transferred across on conversion and is shown as Unrestricted Funds.

The Academy has taken on the deficit in the Local Government Pension Scheme in respect of its non-teaching staff transferred on conversion. The deficit is incorporated within the Statement of Financial Activity with details in Note 24 to the financial statements.

Key financial policies adopted or reviewed during the year include the Finance Policy which lays out the framework for financial management, including financial responsibilities of the Board, Executive Headteacher, managers, budget holders and other staff, as well as delegated authority for spending. Other key policies such as, GDPR, Equality & Accessibility, Health & Safety, and Charging & Remissions policies were reviewed and updated.

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Trustees' report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

Reserves Policy

The Trustees review the reserve levels of the Academy annually. This review encompasses the nature of income and expenditure streams, the need to match income with commitments and the nature of reserves. The Trustees take into consideration the future plans of the Academy, the uncertainty over future income streams and other key risks identified during the risk review, including 3-year budgets, projecting funding income and expenditure.

The Trustees have determined that the appropriate level of free cash reserves should be £400,000. The reason for this is to provide sufficient working capital to cover delays between spending and receipt of grants and to provide a cushion to deal with unexpected emergencies such as urgent maintenance. The Academy's current level of reserves (total funds less restricted fixed asset funds and pension reserve) is £1,182,514, of which £709,674 is free reserves.

The defined benefit pension scheme reserve has a negative balance. The effect of the deficit position of the pension scheme is that the Academy Trust is paying higher employers' pension contributions over a period of years. The higher employers' pension contributions will be met from the Academy Trust's budgeted annual income. Whilst the deficit will not be immediately eliminated, there should be no actual cash flow deficit on the fund, nor any direct impact on the free reserves of the academy Trust.

Investment Policy

All funds surplus to immediate requirements may be invested in accordance with the Academy's Investment Policy Statement.

Due to the nature of funding, the Academy may at times hold cash balances surplus to its short-term requirements. The Trustees have authorised the opening of additional short term bank investment accounts or invested in individual fixed income securities such as Certificates of Deposit, UK Treasury Bonds, and other similar instruments with an average duration of less than one year to take advantage of higher interest rates. No other form of investment is authorised.

Trustees are committed to ensuring that all funds under their control are managed in such a way as to maximise return whilst minimising risk. Any investment shall therefore be with providers covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme. Day to day management of the surplus funds is delegated to the Executive Headteacher and Business Manager in accordance with the Academy's Investment Policy Statement.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the major 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 principal risks and uncertainties facing the Academy are as follows:

Financial - the Academy has considerable reliance on continued Government funding through the ESFA. In the last year virtually all of the Academy's incoming resources were ultimately Government funded. More than 85% of funding is based on pupil numbers, and there is no assurance that Government policy or practice will remain the same or that public funding will continue at the same levels or on the same terms.

Local Government Pension Scheme – the Board of Trustees recognises that the defined benefit pension scheme deficit represents a significant potential liability. However, as the Trustees consider that the Academy trust is able to meet its known annual contribution commitments for the foreseeable future, the risk from this liability is minimised.

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Trustees' report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

Pupil Numbers - Funding where over 85% is dependent on pupil numbers with limited protection for small schools is a risk for the Trust. The College remains very popular but sparsity results in an insufficient number of pupils from the designated transport area. This risk has been reviewed and the Trust has taken the decision to invest in the provision of transport option for families outside the designated transport area.

Failures in governance and/or management - the risk in this area arises from potential failure to effectively manage the Academy's finances, internal controls, compliance with regulations and legislation, statutory returns, etc. The Trustees continue to review and ensure that appropriate measures are in place to mitigate these risks.

Reputational - the continuing success of the Academy is dependent on continuing to attract pupils in sufficient numbers by maintaining the highest educational standards. To mitigate this risk Trustees, ensure that pupil success and achievement are closely monitored and reviewed.

Safeguarding and child protection - the Trustees continue to ensure that the highest standards are maintained in the areas of selection and monitoring of staff, the operation of child protection policies and procedures, health and safety and discipline.

Staffing - the success of the Academy is reliant on the quality of its staff and so the Trustees monitor and review policies and procedures to ensure continued development and training of staff as well as ensuring there is clear succession planning.

Fraud and mismanagement of funds - The Academy has appointed an internal auditor to carry out checks on financial systems and records as required by the Academy Financial Handbook. All finance staff receive training to keep them up to date with financial practice requirements and develop their skills in this area.

Trust estate - The Trust's responsibilities to ensure the estate is safe, well maintained and complies with the relevant regulations is supported by each of the schools receiving Health and Safety and Facilities management reviews by an external provider.

The Academy has continued to strengthen its risk management process throughout the year by improving the process and ensuring staff awareness. A risk register is maintained and reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

FUNDRAISING

The fundraising at the Trust has been under the auspices of the Parent and Teacher Associations at each of the schools.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

The Academy will continue to strive to provide outstanding education and improve the levels of performance of its pupils at all levels. The Academy will continue to aim to attract high quality teachers and support staff in order to deliver its objectives.

The Academy will continue to work with primary schools from the designated transport area, as well as those outside it, to improve the educational opportunities for pupils in the wider community.

Full details of our plans for the future are given in our Academy Improvement Plan, which is available from the Company Secretary.

FUNDS HELD AS CUSTODIAN TRUSTEE ON BEHALF OF OTHERS

The Academy and its Trustees do not act as the Custodian Trustees of any other charity.

AUDITORS

Insofar as the Trustees are aware:

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Trustees' report for the Year Ended 31 August 2023 (continued)

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

The trustees' report, incorporating a Strategic Report, was approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees, as company directors on 21/11/2023 and signed on its behalf by:



S C Baber

Trustee

Chulmleigh Academy Trust

Governance statement

Scope of Responsibility

As Trustees we acknowledge we have overall responsibility for ensuring that Chulmleigh 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 into account, the guidance in DfE's Governance Handbook and competency framework for governance.

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

Governance

All meetings of the Board of Trustees and the sub-committees met virtually during 2022-23. The impact of this was greater attendance by Directors and therefore ensured they met their responsibilities. Directors continue to use the online platform, which was formed to provide the Directors with all the key documents in order for them to fulfil their duties. This has been a positive solution, following the COVID-19 pandemic.

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 met 6 times during the year. Attendance during the year at meetings of the Board of Trustees was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Stephen Baber (Chair of Trustees)	6	6
Keith Greenwood	5	6
Michael Johnson	6	6
Lisa Smith	4	6
Nicola Willis	6	6
Rosalind Algar (joined 19.10.22)	5	5
Martin White	6	6
Bridget Down (joined 19.10.22)	5	5
Emily Mayo (joined 31.01.23)	3	4
David Worden	6	6
Nigel Sedgewick	5	6
Stuart Bellworthy (resigned 24.02.23)	0	2