

**Schools
North East**



A company limited by guarantee

Annual Report

*For the year ended
31 July 2024*

Charity number 1129594
Company number 06450637

The Trustees are pleased to present their annual Directors' report together with financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 July 2024, which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a Directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Our 2023/24 Annual Report

- Outlines the structure and model of Schools North East
- Provides an overview of our work over the past twelve months
- Reports on Schools North East as the Voice, Glue, and Bridge for our schools
- Reviews financial performance

Objectives

The advancement of education for the public benefit of children and young people up to the age of 25

Work together to support, inform and influence key regional strategies

Enable schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of education and build links with the employment sector

The Trustees of Schools North East confirm that they have read and given due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The Trustees confirm that they have complied with their duties under Section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 with regard to public benefit. Having considered the guidance, the Trustees have concluded that the work of Schools North East directly supports and strengthens the advancement of education in the region.

Schools North East's annual report provides a valuable and welcome opportunity to reflect on the work of the charity over the past academic year; in particular, to take stock of how it has continued to develop over the last 12 months and to consider its future direction.



JOBS IN SCHOOLS | North East





A message from Colin Lofthouse Chair of Trustees



I am delighted to present the Schools North East Annual Report for the first time as Chair of Trustees.

The 23/24 academic year has certainly been one for the books – notable from the beginning right through to the end. September 23 forced us to navigate the challenges associated with crumbling school buildings, while July 24 was all about coming to terms with a crumbling government...

And throughout the year, schools were confronted with high rates of absences, crisis levels of mental health and behavioural issues, recruitment and retention difficulties, and the ongoing cost of living crisis.

However, despite the significant obstacles that at times have felt almost impossible to overcome, that's exactly what we did as a community of North East schools. As such, it has left us with much to celebrate as a charity and a network organisation.

As always, we must recognise the challenges we face without letting them diminish our achievements. Let's take a moment to applaud all schools for overcoming these persistent difficulties and demonstrating to children, parents, communities, and politicians the outstanding work our region's schools consistently accomplish.

And of course, let's give praise to Schools North East for serving as the Voice, the Glue, and the Bridge of North East education; amplifying local concerns in national education debates, fostering connections within our community, and connecting our region's schools with external institutions for the support and resources that they might have otherwise missed out on.

Celebrating our regional success is vital, but so is shedding light on the issues and challenges that must be addressed by central and local governments to enable all of our children to thrive as they deserve. As we say year on year, it's a balancing act that Schools North East does so well.

For the Schools North East team it has been another busy year with lots of new milestones reached, as reported in this document and reflected in our annual accounts.

As we embrace another academic year, already with some significant news and changes to deal with, we're confident that our region's schools will stand strong and united in the face of whatever challenges the new academic year may have in store, under a brand new government.

And it goes without saying, Schools North East will be there for us, putting a strong regional accent on the education debate and ensuring that everyone knows that in the North East WE LEAD NOT PLEAD.

COLIN LOFTHOUSE
CHAIR OF TRUSTEES, SCHOOLS NORTH EAST

A message from Chris Zarraga, Director



Schools North East is a movement for change, giving a voice to North East schools in the national education debate. And it's a pleasure to do so.

Schools in the North East are truly remarkable. Despite facing unique challenges, they consistently demonstrate resilience, innovation, and a deep commitment to providing the best education possible for every child. From early years settings to secondary schools, our region's educators are dedicated to fostering a love of learning, building inclusive environments, and nurturing the potential of all students.

As The Voice of North East schools, we put a strong 'regional accent' on the education debate, helping to ensure that the national conversation reflects the urgent needs and concerns of North East school leaders. Schools North East is also a hub, gathering the diverse perspectives of our school leaders, spreading them far and wide to ensure that North East school voices are amplified and can help to shape the educational landscape. The Voice challenges myths.

Schools North East is for all North East schools – regardless of size, type, faith, structure or location. We bring our schools and trusts together to create a purposeful community for the benefit of all of our region's children and young people. Schools North East keeps the community connected and helps relationships between schools to flourish. Our events programme unites over 3,500 school colleagues from across the North East and beyond each year.

Schools North East is also the Bridge that connects our region's schools and trusts with the outside world. We ensure a strong link between the North East's schools and politicians, policymakers, universities, think tanks, and funding organisations that are based far from our region's chalk-face. Our Directors sit on a range of regional and national boards and stakeholder groups, ensuring that the region's schools are at the heart of strategic conversations.

We exist to amplify voices and shed light on the real concerns and challenges that face our school staff, and we're delighted to say that we were able to exceed expectations for the 23/24 academic year.

Our event programme united 3,500 school colleagues from across the region and beyond, giving them the opportunity to network, learn, and grow – both personally and professionally. Keynote speakers included Gillian Keegan former Secretary of State for Education and Catherine McKinnell, Minister of State at the Department for Education. We also received a staggering 124 requests from the media for the North East perspective on a wide range of topics, including RAAC, attendance, budgets, and Ofsted.

We are an inclusive network led by Head Teachers creating a unique culture of collaboration and mutual support, and together, we make the ultimate team, working to ensure that all schools and young people in the North East can thrive as they deserve.

My sincerest thanks for your ongoing support.

CHRIS ZARRAGA,
DIRECTOR, SCHOOLS NORTH EAST

Our Vision

There is a positive narrative of North East schools that supports education at every level.

In the North East we have evidence-based policy making that recognises regional context and depoliticises education.

Schools receive targeted support to ensure all pupils can access an appropriate curriculum, no matter how disadvantaged their communities.

From Early Years to leaving school and beyond, North East students, through education and opportunity, are skilled, confident people achieving their full potential.

Our Values



Strategy

Mission Statement

- We are the **Voice** of North East Schools
- We are the **Glue** that holds our schools together
- We provide the **Bridge** that connects schools with the external world



The Voice

As **The Voice** we put a strong regional accent on the education debate, injecting the national conversation with local concerns to demand the right support for our schools.

The Voice challenges myths. We Lead not Plead.

We serve as a hub for the latest information and diverse perspectives from school leaders, spreading them far and wide to ensure the North East's voices are heard in shaping the educational landscape.



The Glue

As **The Glue** we bring together CEOs, Head Teachers, DHTs, SBPs, Nursery School Heads, SEND/ AP Heads and CEOs to create a purposeful community that benefits our region's children.

The Glue keeps the community connected and helps relationships flourish.

Our events programme unites over 3,500 school colleagues from across the North East and beyond.



The Bridge

As **The Bridge** we connect our region's schools with the outside world. Our Directors sit on numerous regional and national boards and stakeholder groups.

The Bridge ensures our schools are at the heart of strategic conversations.

For maximum impact, we link our region's schools to politicians, policymakers, universities, think tanks, and funding organisations that operate beyond our region's borders.

How we create and sustain value for our stakeholders



Manifesto for North East Education

The end of this academic year saw the calling of the 2024 general election, held on Thursday 4th July. In response to that, we published a refreshed 'Manifesto for North East Education', updating our 2019 manifesto in light of the unprecedented challenges to education in the years since then.

This is a call to action for all political parties wanting to take seriously the long-term challenges of education in our region. We updated the details of our recommendations, using data and 'lived experience', from our regular roundtables, surveys, and reports, of our school leaders.

Our manifesto sets out the perennial challenges that impact educational opportunities in our region, and the principles needed to inform any educational policy wanting to seriously address these challenges.



[VIEW HERE](#)



- 1. Recognise the regional context**
- 2. Promote a positive narrative around North East education**
- 3. Depoliticise Education**
- 4. Evidence-based policy making**
- 5. Long-term view**
- 6. Greater Support for Early Years**
- 7. A joined up approach from cabinet to the chalkface**
- 8. Support North East school staff at every level**
- 9. Ensure all pupils can access an appropriate curriculum**
- 10. Targeted support for those with the greatest needs**

Schools North East at a glance (23/24)

Governance	Board of Trustees Head Teacher Advisory Board School Business Management Council
Memberships	704 Partner Schools 58 Partner Trusts 305 Jobs in Schools North East Subscribers 306 NNoSS Members 140 Commercial Supporters
Engagement	3,020 School Colleagues 1,128 Schools 3,500 Event Delegates
Media and Policy	124 Media Requests 36 Bitesize Briefings and 15 Stakeholder Briefings 3 Written Evidence Submissions 3 Letters to Ministers
Networks	National Network of Special Schools for SBPs CEO Network SEND and AP Network 40 Events giving valuable Networking Opportunities SBM Networks across the North East
Events	9 Annual Conferences and Events 15 Webinars 4 Online Conferences 7 Roundtables 1 Single Issue Event
Communications	40 Newsletters sent to 6,000+ subscribers 90 Good News Stories from NE Schools shared 28 Partner School opportunities 26,000 Followers on Social Media channels
Financial Review	In year surplus of £113,500 Gift aid received £149,500 Highest turnover to date

Governance & People 23/24

Trustees

The Board of Trustees provides guidance on the Charity's activities and is responsible for its governance with overall legal responsibility for the Charity, its financial sustainability, and its strategic direction. Trustees are elected by Partner Schools, with further Trustees co-opted to add specific expertise where required. In a time when ever-increasing demands on our schools can be a barrier to collaboration, the role of the Board is to ensure that Schools North East meets and responds dynamically to the needs of North East schools and the children and young people they serve, now and in the future.



Chair of Trustees Colin Lofthouse
SMART Multi Academy Trust



Vice Chair
Kieran McGrane
Pele Trust



Vice Chair Jo Heaton
OBE
Northern Lights
Learning Trust



Kieran McLaughlin
Durham School



Dame Maura Regan



Zoe Carr OBE
WISE Academies



John Hardy OBE
St John Vianney RC
Primary School



Pete King
Federation of
Mowden Schools



Kate Chisholm
Oakfield Schools
Federation



Mike Butler
The Education
Village Academy
Trust



Monica Shepherd
Carmel College



Christina Jones
River Tees Multi
Academy Trust

Schools North East is supported by a range of dedicated North East educators

Advisory Board

A representative group of Head Teachers and CEOs from across the region.

Members



School Business Management Council

A representative group of School Business Leaders from across the region.

Members





Schools North East is a self funding charity. This keeps us completely **independent**, and answerable only to our schools.

Partner Schools

In 2023/24 our Partner School membership grew by 3%, with 704 schools now members. We also have 58 Partner Trusts, where all schools in the trust are Partner Schools.

We maintain a high renewal rate of 98% and this year we have had 21 new schools join.

View our Partner Schools

Proud to be a
Schools North East
Partner Trust



Commercial Supporters

Commercial organisations continue to have strong engagement with the charity, supporting our vision for our region, our events programme, and our schools.

At the end of 2023/24, we had 140 Commercial Supporter members, ranging from pension and payroll services, to catering and classroom resources.

All Commercial Supporters have a profile on our MarketPlace and regularly advertise special offers available to members.

View our Commercial Supporters

Proud to be a
Schools North East
Commercial Supporter



Subscriptions to the Jobs in Schools | North East recruitment portal also continue to grow year on year. At the end of 2023/24 there were 305 schools using the benefits of the platform, an increase on the previous year.

JOBS IN SCHOOLS | North East

Visit Jobs in Schools | North East



Membership Snapshot

704

Partner Schools

58

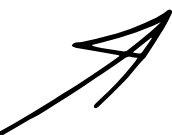
Partner Trusts

305

Jobs Board
Subscribers

140

Commercial
Supporters





Community Foundation

Over the past 2 years Schools North East partnered with the Community Foundation to make £97,000 of funding available for schools looking to develop their cultural, sporting or careers provision for disadvantaged and looked-after children. Funding of around £4,000 was available per bid for schools in Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, Northumberland, North and South Tyneside.

The purpose for this grant was to provide funding in two key areas:

Developing dedicated cultural and sporting enrichment opportunities for students.

Developing high quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG).

This year saw the final projects completed with a staggering 5270 children taking part in 25 projects across the region.

[Read the full report](#)



Projects

- Healthy Me
- History Enrichment
- The Tour of the North East
- Providing Cultural and Social Opportunities for disadvantaged pupils in order to further develop cultural capital
- Tag Archery Enrichment
- Reading Rocks
- Stereotypes
- Hooked on History
- Drama to improve spoken and receptive language
- Rich Experience: Motion for the Ocean
- Community - Explored through The Rivers
- Character Development in Sport & Culture
- Welbeck Academy Football
- Saints Scholar Program
- Embedding cultural capital through outdoor education, physical activity and sport
- Higher Education - Aspirations and Barriers
- Aspirations at Town End
- World of Work Project
- Aspire Project
- Titanic Project
- Sounds from the Quayside
- Churchill Pledges
- PACE
- Girls Network
- Multi Outdoor Sports Area



Community Foundation Funding Snapshot

25

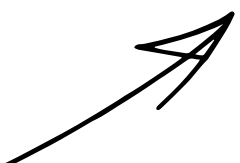
Projects

£97K

Funding for
Projects

5,270

Children Positively
Impacted



Mental Health & Staff Wellbeing

Mental health and wellbeing in schools is a key strategic pillar in the work of Schools North East. Our 'State of the Region' surveys, conducted once a term and asking the same set of core questions, track the mental health and wellbeing of both staff and students.

Our most recent State of the Region survey, conducted in the 2024 Spring term, highlighted improving staff wellbeing, following poor wellbeing in the previous academic year. Schools are focusing more on staff wellbeing to support retention, and this was seen as a key driver of increasing positive wellbeing.

Drivers of negative wellbeing relate to the increasing demands and responsibilities on schools and staff, both in terms of the numbers of students and the additional needs those students have. Concerns were expressed around staff resilience and exhaustion as a result of this workload

Student wellbeing also improved in the 2023/24 academic year, with 70% of responses to our survey reporting positive student wellbeing. The vast majority of students have a positive experience of school, and supporting wellbeing since the pandemic, to ensure students are ready and able to learn, has been a key priority for schools. The full results of our most recent survey can be read at the following [link](#).



In May, we hosted the annual Healthy MindED conference, bringing together educational professionals from across the region to explore ways we can nurture our wellbeing in order to "build resilience" among both pupils and staff in our schools. The conference featured a brilliant line-up of speakers, including Paul Dix, author of *When the Adults Change*. Paul delivered an engaging session on "relational practice" and its immediate, practical application in the classroom.

*This event is my favourite event of the year,
it uplifts and inspires when day to day work can at times be so deflating.
Thankyou and well done for a wonderful event.'*

Healthy MindED 2024 attendee





Jobs in Schools | North East

With challenges in Recruitment and Retention across the board, we continue to support schools with a low cost recruitment portal: Jobs in Schools | North East.

The portal was set up in 2016 by schools for schools and is the place to advertise all North East school vacancies, no matter the role. **Almost 2000 posts per year are advertised**

We continue to invest in improvements to the portal, and hold social media campaigns throughout the year aimed at candidates.

Schools and Trusts pay an annual subscription, which can be as low as £110 but no more than £490, to advertise unlimited jobs.

As part of the service ALL vacancies advertised get:

- Emailed to a bank of almost 4,000 potential candidates
- Promotion across social media channels
- A listing on our website

From CEOs and Head Teachers to senior leaders and class teachers, and from School Business Leaders through to classroom support and facility teams our platform has helped connect prospective candidates with their next opportunity.

23/24 also saw us launch 'Featured Jobs'. For just £95 per advert, subscribing schools and trusts can experience an array of additional benefits – on top of what they already receive as a standard subscriber– to make their recruitment process that much more refined.

Extra benefits include (but are not limited to) the pinning of their advert on both our X (formerly Twitter) page and on the website and featuring in the Schools North East newsletter, the Weekly Update.



JOBS IN SCHOOLS | North East

Jobs in Schools | North East Snapshot

1,818

Jobs Advertised

248k

Job Views

4,000

Candidate Bank



We are the VOICE



Media Engagement 23/24



- BBC Look North
- Schools Week
- Inews
- Tes
- ITV Tyne Tees
- Global Radio
- Evening Standard
- BBC Radio Newcastle
- BBC News Online - North East and Cumbria
- Sky News
- Telegraph
- Northern Echo
- Independent
- Observer
- BBC Radio Tees
- Times Radio
- Chronicle
- Guardian
- BBC News
- Channel 5
- Sunday Times
- Radio 5 Live
- BBC Radio 4
- The Voice
- ITV News
- The QT
- Metro
- Daily Mirror
- LBC
- EdWord

Schools North East is seen as a leading voice in education. Once again media engagement this year out grew previous years.

In the 23/24 academic year we were consistently approached by local and national media, from TV, radio, and print.

Media requests were often in response to issues raised by Schools North East in our own press releases and stakeholder briefings.

We had in total 124 media requests in 23/24 covering 43 different topics.



Media Snapshot

124

Media Requests

43

Different Issues Covered

7

Press Releases



Policy 23/24

Stakeholder Briefings

The regular feedback from our surveys and roundtables on the key issues and challenges our schools are facing inform our Stakeholder Briefings.

These briefings share the feedback with influential figures within the education sector, to help them understand the detail of what our schools are facing. Our stakeholder briefings are sent to a range of contacts, including DfE, Ofsted, the region's MPs and elected mayors, and local and national media.

These briefings have generated numerous press requests and queries from the North East's elected representatives, as well as questions in the House of Commons and House of Lords. In the 23/24 academic year, we issued 15 stakeholder briefings.

Bitesize Briefings

To help support North East schools, we create Bitesize Briefings from recently published research and analyses on education policy and send these out to our Partner Schools. These are one page briefings containing the key findings of a given report, as well as setting out the implications for the North East. We issued 36 Bitesize Briefings in the 23/24 academic year.

BITESIZE BRIEFING 

36

Bitesize Briefings

15

Stakeholder Briefings

3

Written Evidence Submissions

3

Letters to Ministers

Parliament

Following the Labour victory at the 2024 general election, we wrote to the new Prime Minister, Sir Keir Starmer, to draw his attention to our Manifesto for North East Education and the perennial challenges facing schools in our region. Prior to that, we jointly issued a letter to the then Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt MP, ahead of the Autumn Statement 2023, and a letter to the then Minister of State for Schools, Damian Hinds MP, about free school meal auto-enrolment. This is a subject that Schools North East has campaigned on for a number of years. Middlesbrough, Durham, and Redcar and Cleveland local authorities have now introduced pilot schemes for FSM auto-enrolment.

We also submitted written evidence to the House of Commons Education Select Committee for the following inquiries:

Ofsted's work with schools
Children's Social Care

We also contributed written evidence to the National Audit Office's consultation on Support for children and young people with SEND.

Policy Snapshot



Roundtables



Our roundtables are a forum for North East leaders to discuss the unique challenges of their settings and to connect with senior influential figures in education, within and without the region. They have proved an excellent forum for feedback on key issues and for school leaders to collaborate and support each other. We hold roundtables both virtually and in-person, often with an external speaker and a focus on a particular policy issue.

Guest speakers at roundtables in 23/24 were:

- Leora Cruddas, Chief Executive at the Confederation of School Trusts
- David Withey, Chief Executive at the Education, Skills, and Funding Agency
- Mary Glindon, MP for North Tyneside (for North Tyneside school leaders only)
- Kim McGuinness, Mayor of the North East
- Sir David Bell, Vice-Chancellor at the University of Sunderland
- Russell Hobby, CEO at Teach First

Additionally, we had roundtables scheduled with Rachel de Souza, the Children's Commission, and Olivia Blake MP, Chair of the SEND APPG. However, these have had to be rescheduled to the 24/25 academic year, due to the 2024 general election 'purdah' period.

As part of our regular roundtables for our SEND and AP group, we included a visit to an AP school in the region, to look at the support and practice they provide for students.



We are the GLUE



Partner Schools

This year we have continued to work with, and provide support for, our amazing community of Partner Schools, ensuring they have access to the full range of benefits the network provides.

They ensure the charity meets and responds to the needs of all North East schools and the children and young people they serve, now and in the future. They determine the direction of the charity through a democratic structure that is inclusive and values all schools equally.

Each year our Partner School membership grows and now almost 65% of North East schools are Partner Schools.



The Annual Patron's Dinner was held in March and welcomed almost 500 Partner School colleagues. Together they enjoyed an evening of networking and celebration along with special guests from business and academia. This free event for Partner Schools is our way of thanking them for their commitment to the charity.

Partner School Opportunities

Each year, we share exclusive opportunities with our Partner Schools ranging from participating in vital research to taking advantage of discounts and awards. This academic year, we sent out 28 opportunities.

Reach

As well as the increase in Partner Schools this year, we also saw high levels of engagement with both schools and school colleagues, at over 1,100 and 3,000 respectively.

This year we continued our roundtables, holding online meetings for CEOs, SEND and AP Leaders, every half term. These provide a safe space for colleagues to share, discuss and debate challenges they face while supporting – and being supported by – peers.

**Schools North East
are experts in
developing and
growing networks.
We will continue to
develop communities,
meeting the needs of
our schools.**





National Network of Special Schools for School Business Professionals



In 2020 Schools North East was commissioned by the Department for Education to facilitate a new National Network of Special, Hospital and Alternative Provision settings for School Business Professionals. The DfE provided a small amount of funding for the first two years, which finished in 2022. The network is now completely self-funding through memberships and sponsorship from Commercial Partners.

At the end of the year there were 306 members from almost every local authority across England.

Members meet online three times a year and in person at a national conference, held in Birmingham in April. Members have access to the Schools North East webinar programme bringing at least 9 webinars throughout the academic year.

NNoSS is a collaborative network to connect and upskill colleagues, and influence decision makers. Working in a culture of collaboration and innovation, the network meets the challenges faced by members and works to create a highly effective and sustainable infrastructure, to support outcomes in specialist settings in England.



In the past year we have continued to highlight challenges faced by the sector, including:

- Funding: Tom Goldman, Deputy Director Policy Funding Unit, DfE attended the conference and acknowledged some of the challenges with funding
- The impact of unfunded pay awards for support staff
- Deficit budgets caused by growing costs

NNoSS has been featured in the media:

- Right Support, Right Place, Right Time: The Voice, Matthew Smith
- Special School Funding is in Crisis: Schools Week
- DfE considered reforming £10K-per-place system: tes
- Medical Interventions: tes
- Tips for Successful Networks: tes
- Collaboration: The Edword

Members are highly supportive of each other sharing hundreds of resources and thousands of insights, advice and support.

The DfE had a vision where SBPs working in the specialist sector no longer worked in isolation but were instead part of a peer to peer network.

Schools North East is proud of bringing the solution and continue to support this valuable network.

NNoSS recognises the importance of having a School Business Professional in every setting and the contribution they make as part of the senior leadership team



Overview

Our annual events programme offers invaluable opportunities for North East schools to network with colleagues from across the region and collaborate on the key issues impacting their roles. It serves as a platform for attendees to hear from leading senior figures in the education sector, and provides quality continuous professional development to support them in their roles.

2023/24

7 Annual Conferences

2 Annual Events

15 Webinars

4 Online Conferences

7 Roundtables

1 Single Issue Events

4 CPD Accreditations

3,332 Delegates

Highlights from 23/24

- Our Schools North East Annual Summit featured one of the most impressive agendas to date, with highlights including **Professor Steve Peters**, a fireside chat with **Secretary of State for Education Gillian Keegan**, and an address by the **Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza**.
- The region welcomed **leading figures in education**, including Mary Myatt and Paul Dix, who delivered inspiring keynote sessions at our events.
- A **Record-breaking attendance** at our Patron's Dinner, with almost 500 attendees, gathering at the Grand Hotel for an unforgettable evening, featuring a special performance by the **Middlesbrough OPEN orchestra**.
- We hosted our fourth annual **NNoSS Conference**, drawing over 120 School Business Professionals from Special and Alternative Provision schools nationwide.

Vision for the future

At Schools North East, our events are designed with our members at the heart. We believe that our events are a reflection of the schools we support, and we are committed to ensuring they address the most relevant and pressing topics in education.

In 24/25 we are actively seeking input from our members to help shape our agendas, making sure our events meet the needs, and reflect the priorities of schools across the region. By listening to our community, we strive to create a meaningful and impactful events programme that truly supports and benefits North East school children and staff.



Event Support

2023/24

257 Event Sponsors
234 Event Exhibitors
4 CPD Accreditations

Sponsors and exhibitors play a crucial role in the success of Schools North East events, as their support is integral to our mission. Their contributions enable us to host a wide range of events and conferences throughout the region.

Without their backing, our extensive events programme would not be possible. The connections we have with our sponsors and exhibitors ensure that we can continue to offer high-quality experiences and resources to educators, children, and the broader community across the region.



Providing Opportunities

The Schools North East events programme serves as a catalyst for educational and professional growth across the region by creating unique opportunities for students, educators, and the community. The SNE events facilitate invaluable interactions, not only for the attendees, but also for the event speakers. The live Q&A session at the Curriculum Conference offered an exceptional opportunity for dedicated SNE supporter Alex Fairlamb, allowing her to engage directly with one of her educational inspirations, Mary Myatt.

Our SNE events have also provided numerous school staff members with the opportunity to speak and share their best practices with attendees. While public speaking may have been a new experience for many, they have found it to be highly rewarding-

“
It was such a positive experience, thank you to the SNE team for making it seamless for us. It pushed me out of my comfort zone but I am so pleased I did it and with such a great group of colleagues. I would really encourage anyone to give it a go
”

Claire McDonald, NEAT Academy Trust, SBM Conference Speaker

Additionally, the Schools North East events offer hands-on experiences that pave the way for future careers. Two college students, passionate about event management, were given the opportunity to gain practical work experience at St James' Park during the Annual Summit, which included a conversation with the Secretary of State for Education. These opportunities not only highlight our commitment to nurturing talent and ambition but also create memorable experiences that can significantly impact the future careers and lives of young individuals.

23/24 Events

- Improving your staff wellbeing and retention webinar
- Annual General Meeting 2023
- Voice of the pupil Roundtable
- NNoSS online conference
- Annual Summit 2023
- EdNorth TeachMeet- Metacognition
- Annual Ofsted Update
- Asthma in schools webinar
- Fire risks updates to legislation webinar
- Leora Cruddas Roundtable
- Annual Governance Conference
- Annual Academies Conference
- EdNorth TeachMeet- Reading
- NNoSS online conference
- KCSIE webinar
- Annual Curriculum Conference
- Can flexibility bring greater stability and a happier workforce webinar
- David Withey Roundtable
- Annual Patron's Dinner
- Key elements of effective safeguarding, current issues, scrutiny and impact webinar



Catch up on demand!



Coming up in 24/25

- Mary Glindon MP Roundtable
- Kim McGuinness Roundtable
- NNoSS Conference 2024
- EdNorth TeachMeet- Behaviour
- Service Level Agreements Event
- Maintained and Academy Trust governance guides a summary of key changes webinar
- Sir David Bell Roundtable
- Annual Healthy MindED Conference
- Data breaches: top tips for staying compliant webinar
- NNoSS Online Conference
- Unpacking the mental health and wellbeing of School Business Leaders 2024
- Russell Hobby Roundtable
- Annual Schools Business Management Conference
- NNoSS demo session
- Spotlight on executive and senior leadership recruitment and retention webinar
- EdNorth TeachMeet- Quality First Teaching



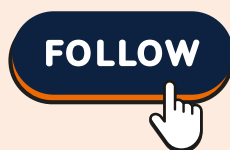


Podcast

2023/24 saw us launch our own podcast series, which was a huge milestone and achievement for the network.

The Schools North East Podcast is a source for better understanding the critical issues facing our education system today (from a North East England perspective).

In our first series, we gain invaluable insights from sector leaders and influential figures from the region and beyond, sharing their success stories to promote a positive narrative of North East schools, and sharing their challenges to lobby for the change our region's schools need to see.



Newsletter (Weekly Update)

Our weekly newsletter is now sent to over 6,000 engaged subscribers and is designed to educate, inform, and entertain our audience.

In 2023/24 we sent out 40 Weekly Updates and achieved a strong open rate and click through of 38% and 7% respectively.

Good New Stories

To showcase a positive narrative of North East education - and to highlight the fantastic work of our region's amazing schools - we publish 'good news' stories on our website and share via the Weekly update and on our social media channels.

In 2023/24 we shared 90 community stories ranging from successful school trips to impressive staff awards. [Take a look at our 'good news roundup video' here.](#)

Blog

As well as positive stories from the community, we also update our audience with sector news and updates, from policy changes to discussion points at roundtables.

We use our blog to host all stories; as well as sharing news in our Weekly Update, blog stories are also shared across our social media channels.

Social Media

We regularly updated our social media channels with information regarding our events, policy work, regional and national news, community updates, and more.

We currently have a combined following of almost 10,000 on our main X (formerly known as Twitter) accounts and 3,500 on LinkedIn.

To give ourselves a bigger platform to amplify our network's voice, this year saw us revive our Instagram and Facebook pages, which have already amassed 200 and 600 followers respectively.

From 4 September 23 to 19 July 24, we had 209,422 impressions on Twitter, and 149 new followers.

On LinkedIn, the Schools North East page achieved 3,268 views and 77,963 organic post impressions.



Schools North East Trading

This is the end of SNET's tenth full year of trading.

Income increased this year, as our events programme reverted back to physical events following the pandemic.

The Trading Arm was incorporated on 15 August 2014 as a wholly owned subsidiary of Schools North East. It is a company limited by guarantee and was set up to fulfill the Trustees' obligation to use a trading subsidiary where there is any potential of substantial risk to Schools North East through any of its activities. Schools North East Trading Ltd (SNET) donates all of its profits to Schools North East the charity, and makes a very significant contribution to its continuing financial success.

Financial Review 2023-24

Schools North East remains financially strong with income from all sources, maintaining a sustainable financial level post-pandemic.

The majority of expenditure is related to staffing and infrastructure, to service the needs of members and the delivery of events, CPD, communications and other support. The organisation's non-staff overheads remain very low, as a result of our longstanding relationship with, and support from, Northumbria University.

For 2023/24 Schools North East received £149,475 in gift-aid payments from Schools North East Trading Limited.

Schools North East employed two members of staff at the start of the 2023/24 financial year:

- DIRECTOR
- POLICY OFFICER
- Vacant post: MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

And, Schools North East Trading employed six members of staff:

- DEPUTY DIRECTOR
- EVENTS MANAGER
- EVENTS COORDINATOR
- BUSINESS MANAGER
- ADMINISTRATOR
- PROJECT COORDINATOR
- Vacant post: DEPUTY EVENTS MANAGER



Financial Review 2024-25

Financial Controls

Schools North East continues to develop more accurate and sophisticated approaches to financial and strategic planning. We can effectively monitor and forecast income and expenditure, manage cash-flow and maintain the financial health of the organisation. As we moved out of the pandemic, Trustees continued to monitor the financial position of the charity.

Review of the year

The results for the year and the company's financial position at the end of the year are shown in the attached financial statements.

During the year, the Charity had an income of £665,011 (2023: £589,774) and expenditure of £551,642 (2023: £505,335). Net income for the year was £113,369 (2023: £84,419)

At 31 July 2024 the Charity had net assets of £559,801 (2023: £446,432)

Governing Document

The organisation is a Charitable Company Limited by Guarantee. The Company was established under a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of the Charitable Company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of a winding up any member (who is a director) undertakes to contribute to the payment of liabilities, such amount as may be required not exceeding the total of £1.

Reserves policy/No reserves/Going concern

The Trustees reviewed the requirement for free reserves throughout 2023/24, which are those funds not invested in fixed assets or otherwise committed. Based on their reviews they continue to believe that Schools North East requires three months' worth of operating expenditure. At 31 July 2024, 'free' reserves amounted to £559,801, which is well in excess of that amount.

Recruitment and Appointment of the Board

The Directors of the Company are also Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are also its members. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, at the Annual General Meeting one-third of the Directors, who are subject to retirement by rotation, shall retire. Retiring Directors can be re-appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

Trustees are elected by Partner Schools on the basis of specialist skills and commitment to the objectives and aims of the organisation, having served on the Head Teacher Advisory Board. They are also Partner School Members.



Board Induction and Training

New Board Members are introduced to the work of the organisation and informed of their legal roles and responsibilities at an induction meeting. The induction and training programme for new Board Members includes:

- A briefing by the Director
- An explanation of roles and responsibilities as a Board Member
- Copies of the main company documents including the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Financial Statements
- Copy of the business plan and most recent evaluation report
- Copies of recent board papers including budgets and management accounts
- A copy of the Charity Commission publication "How to be an Effective Trustee"
- A copy of the governance structure

Risk Management

The Board is responsible for the management of the risks to which the Charity is exposed. A risk register is produced which considers financial, governance and delivery risks.

For each risk, the register identifies:

- Initial risk assessment in terms of impact and likelihood
- Initial risk rating
- Counter measures - Responsibility / ownership
- Timescale
- Amended risk assessment in terms of impact and likelihood
- Amended risk rating

The Board reviews the risk register throughout the year. Through the counter measures put in place in the risk register, and the regular reviews and updates, the Board is satisfied that the major risks identified have been adequately mitigated. It is recognised that this approach can only provide reasonable - but not absolute - assurance that major risks have been adequately managed.



Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisors 2023-24

Registered charity name:

Schools North East

Charity number:

1129594

Company registration number:

06450637

Registered office:

Room 115, Ellison Terrace
Ellison Place
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8ST

Bankers:

Barclays Bank
59 High Street
Gosforth
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE3 4AS

Independent Examiner

Doug Maltman FMAAT
Connected Voice Business Services Ltd
Higham House
Higham Place
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 8AF

Trustees and Members of the Board:

Colin Lofthouse (Chair)
Jo Heaton (Vice Chair)
Kieran McGrane (Vice Chair)
Zoe Carr
Kate Chisholm
Pete King
Kieran McLaughlin
Mike Butler
Maura Regan
Monica Shepherd
Christina Jones
John Hardy

Director and Senior staff members:

Director: Chris Zarraga
Deputy Director: Pauline Aitchison



Statement of Trustee Responsibilities

2023-24

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company Law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure of the charitable company for that year. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records that 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.

Approved by the Board on 17 September 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Colin Lofthouse (Chair)

