

**Schools  
North East**



A company limited by guarantee

# **Annual Report**

For the year ended 31 July 2023

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 2023, 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 2022/23 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.

## Message from Chair of Schools North East, John Hardy

Welcome back! I am delighted to present the Schools North East Annual Report for another year.

The 22/23 academic year was predicted to be the most 'normal' since 2019, and while there are elements of truth to this claim, many might agree that this period was still a far cry from pre-2020 levels.

Although we didn't have to navigate lockdowns and virtual learning in 22/23, we were still dealing with the enormous and ongoing repercussions of having to do so in 20/21.

Schools have been confronted with high rates of absences, crisis levels of mental health and behavioural issues connected to the pandemic, as well as significant recruitment and retention difficulties and the 'cost of living' crisis.

However, despite the significant challenges that we have all had to face, this academic year has also left us with much to celebrate - as both an organisation and as a community of North East schools.

As always, we should acknowledge the challenges but prevent them from overshadowing our achievements. Let us once again applaud all schools for rising above these ongoing difficulties and showing children, parents, communities, and politicians what an amazing job the region's schools do; year after year.

And of course, let's give praise to Schools North East for providing a Voice for our school community to be heard, as well as a platform to promote a positive narrative of North East education.

Celebrating our regional success is important, but so is shedding light on the issues and challenges that must be addressed to enable all of our children to thrive. It's a balancing act that Schools North East does so well.

For the Schools North East team it has been a busy year which has brought activity back to pre-pandemic levels, as reported in this document and reflected in the accounts.

As we venture into another academic year, we're confident that our region's schools will stand strong and united in the face of whatever challenges - RAAC seemingly the first - the new academic year may have in store. And invariably, Schools North East will be there for us, serving as the Voice, Glue, and Bridge that helps all North East schools to thrive.

**Finally, I'd like to take this moment to say that I will be stepping down as the Chair of Schools North East, having served my maximum term (and more!). It's been an absolute pleasure working as part of an organisation so passionate and dedicated as this.**

**And while I'm sad to be closing this chapter, I know that Colin Lofthouse will do a fantastic job in this role. I wish everyone the best.**



**Chair of Trustees John Hardy OBE,  
St John Vianney Primary School**



## Introduction from Director of Schools North East, Chris Zarraga

The North East is a truly special place, and we'll go to any lengths to ensure our region's schools get the support and resources that they and their children deserve.

Schools North East is very much a grassroots organisation. We exist because of the people that believe in us – Head Teachers, CEOs, trustees, SBMs, governors, teachers, and school leaders. In short, the truly incredible community of North East schools.

Schools North East is here to "lead not plead"; we'll scream good news from the rooftops, but we'll also step up to demand the changes we know our region's schools are in desperate need of.

This organisation is your network and our programme is entirely driven and directed by you. Through our AGM, events, consultations, surveys, and ongoing discussions with individuals and local networks, we're able to be:



**The Voice**



**The Glue**



**The Bridge**

Schools North East is The Voice of NE schools - putting a strong regional accent on the education debate. And as we enter this election cycle, having a Voice becomes more and more vital if we want policy that is fit for purpose, effective, and worthy of our schools and young people.

As the Voice of North East schools, 2022-23 has been our most successful year yet. There has been a massive increase in engagement with the media: BBC - regional and national, TV and radio, ITV, C4, iNews, Schools Week, The Guardian, FT, GB News, The Times, Tes, regional news outlets, and more.

We even reached my mother-in-law in Belfast!

None of this, however, would be possible without our work as the Glue that holds NE schools together, despite all of the forces that seem to work at pushing them further apart.



This work ensures that we can hear and reflect your experiences, lobby those in power about the issues most important to you, and can act as the greatest cheerleader there is about the excellence that exists in all schools across our region.

Schools North East is now a comprehensive, organic, platform that enables NE schools to engage with us and with each other to catalyse change.

We now have networks that bring together CEOs, Head Teachers, DHTs, CFOs/ SBMs, Nursery School Heads, and SEND/ AP Heads.

Our surveys, focus groups, single issue roundtables, and MP roundtables enable us to gather huge amounts of data, opinion, and comment from schools in every part of our region. This in turn enabled us to be well 'ahead of the game' on major issues throughout the last academic year.

Schools North East is also the Bridge linking our community of schools to the outside world; to those politicians, policymakers, universities, think tanks and funding organisations that drive policy.

It was wonderful to hear SNE described as 'the gateway to impact in the NE' when an organisation was referred to us by a current partner! Building a broad coalition to work on the priorities of NE schools means that partners magnify our messages, taking them into the wider world, lobbying in the media and parliament; the region's MPs lobby Ministers, asking questions in the House of Commons, re-framing the narrative from a sloppy, inaccurate trope, to an evidence-based, factual recounting of the everyday reality you face in school.

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 of Schools North East



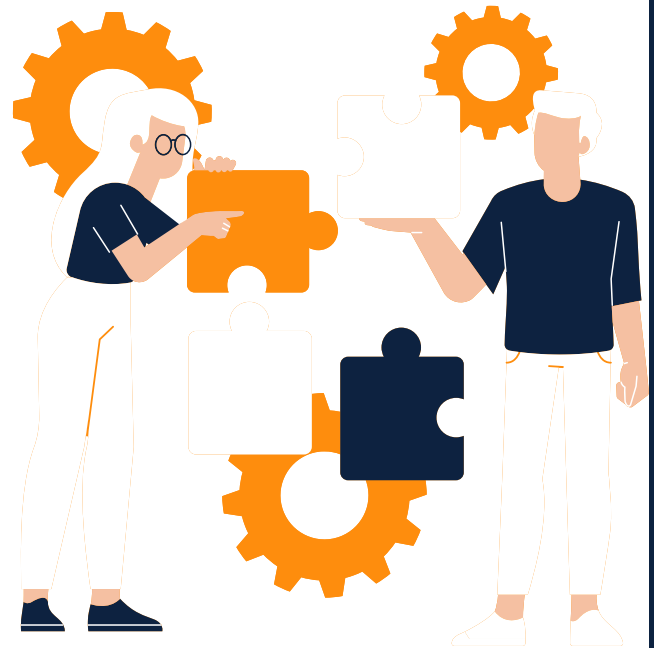
# Our Vision

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 the disadvantage.

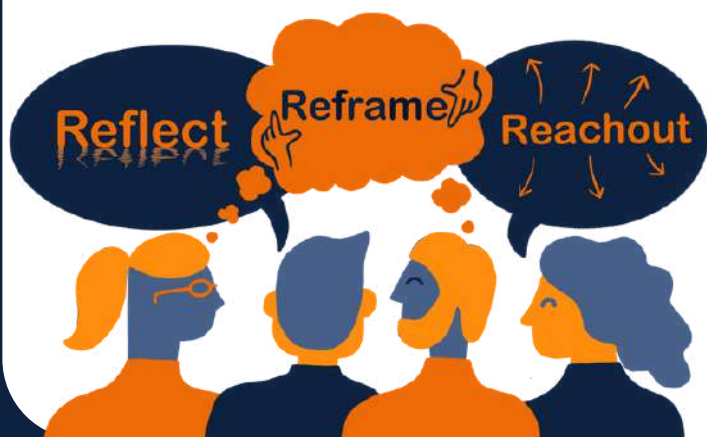
From Early Years to leaving school and beyond, North East students, through education and opportunity, are skilled, confident people achieving their full potential.



# Our Values

As a charity, we are **independent** but not neutral. We are for all North East schools - regardless of size, type, faith, structure or location. Our **inclusivity** defines us, **innovation** is at our core.

We are constantly seeking fresh solutions to shape the future of education in the region. We have a strong social purpose at the foundation of all our work. Our **integrity** defines us as we ensure the best possible outcomes for each young person in the North East.



# Strategy

## Mission Statement

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



### Voice

We put a strong regional accent on the education debate. As **The Voice**, we reflect any issues in the education sector to ensure the North East gets the support it deserves.

It's **The Voice** that aims to gather and spread the most up to date information regarding NE schools, and the opinions of their leaders, and disseminate these as widely as possible.

The Voice challenges myths. We Lead not Plead.



### Glue

As **The Glue**, we bind schools together to create a purposeful community that benefits our region's children.

Our networks bring together CEOs, Head Teachers, DHTs, SBPs, Nursery School Heads, and SEND/ AP Heads and CEOs.

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

As **The Glue**, we bring them together, and we bind them together, too.



### Bridge

There's no point doing all this fantastic work if the outside world can't see it!

As **The Bridge**, we help our region's schools and the outside world to connect with each other.

For maximum success and impact, our region's schools must be connected to politicians, policymakers, universities, think tanks, and funding organisations that operate beyond our region's borders.

That's where our role as **The Bridge** becomes invaluable.



# How we create and sustain value for our stakeholders

## Inputs



People



Networks



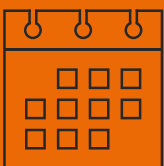
Memberships



Media



Policy



Events

## How we create value

For the advancement of education for the public benefit of children and young people up to the age of 25, we have created a strong and powerful network in the North East

We are a trusted voice. We have a strong business model that ensures we are only answerable to our schools

We are completely self funded with strong engagement from members. Annual surplus is reinvested to support our vision

We work with Stakeholders and Members to identify challenges that face our schools and trusts

We have a wide and varied events programme, both physical and online, bringing together colleagues from across the region and beyond

We take that voice and amplify it, making it heard by decision and policy makers, and the media. We promote a positive narrative around our schools and the region

**We invest in our team**

Our small but dedicated team are committed to the vision



# Manifesto for North East Education



We use our Manifesto as a lens and this underpins all of our work

Recognise the regional context

Education policy that supports positive outcomes for North East schools must take into account the context in which it is implemented.

Promote a positive narrative around North East education

All parties must sign up to promoting a positive narrative of North East education that encourages teachers to remain in and join the profession.

Depoliticise education

Politicians and policymakers must sign up to a set of non-partisan principles to underpin education policy.

Evidence-based policymaking

All policy should be able to show a clear evidence base supporting it, with the voice of the teaching profession front and centre.

A long term view

A 10 year view of education, including funding, must be adopted by all parties to allow for realistic plans and the assessment of what is or isn't effective.

Greater support for Early Years

Greater support for Early Years is crucial for tackling the disadvantage gap in attainment, and this support must focus on quality teaching and learning, not just childcare.

A joined up approach from cabinet to the chalkface

Schools are not an island, and policymakers must recognise schools alone cannot be the answer to all social issues.

Support the North East's teaching profession at every level

More must be done to attract the best teachers and staff to the North East, by ensuring clear continuous professional development and giving more support to school leaders when improving schools.

Ensure all pupils can access an appropriate curriculum

Support is needed for a curriculum that develops more than just academic skills, and to ensure schools can provide a minimum 'curriculum guarantee' to all pupils.

Targeted support for those with the greatest needs

Funding and resources must target the region's pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, with the ambition of making the support they receive the envy of the world.

# Schools North East at a glance

2022-23

## Governance

Board of Trustees  
Head Teacher Advisory Board  
School Business Management Council

## Memberships

683 Partner Schools  
57 Partner Trusts  
293 Jobs in Schools | North East Subscribers  
298 NNoSS Members  
144 Commercial Supporters

## Engagement

3,221 School Colleagues  
1,155 Schools  
3,591 Event Delegates

## Media and Policy

107 Press Requests  
40 Bitesize Briefings and 26 Stakeholder Briefings  
3 Written Evidence Submissions  
2 Letters to Ministers  
7 MP Roundtables

## Networks

National Network of Special Schools for SBPs  
CEO Network  
SEND and AP Network  
44 Events giving valuable Networking Opportunities  
SBM Networks across the North East

## Events

6 Major Conferences  
9 Webinars  
4 Online Conferences  
25 Single Issue Events

## Communications

40 Newsletters sent to 8,000 subscribers  
117 Good News Stories from NE Schools shared  
35 Partner School opportunities  
21,000 Followers on Social Media channels  
37,000 Blog Views

## Funding for Schools

£90,000 to Fund School Projects  
25 Projects  
3,500 Children Benefited

## Financial Review

In year surplus of £84,500  
Gift Aid received £111,000  
Highest turnover to date

# Governance & People 2022-23

## 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 John Hardy OBE  
St John Vianney RC Primary School



Colin Lofthouse  
SMART Multi Academy Trust



Christina Jones  
River Tees Multi  
Academy Trust



Jo Heaton OBE  
Northern Lights  
Learning Trust



Kieran McGrane  
Pele Trust



Dame Maura Regan  
Bishop Hogarth CET



Zoe Carr OBE  
WISE Academies



Pete King  
Federation of  
Mowden Schools



Kate Chisholm  
Oakfield Schools  
Federation



Mike Butler  
The Education  
Village Academy  
Trust



Monica Shepherd  
Carmel College



Kieran McLaughlin  
Durham School

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



And 3,500  
School  
Voices



### School Business Management Council

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

Members





# Membership 2022-23

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

## Partner Schools

In 2022-23 our Partner School membership grew by 5%, with **683 schools** now members. We also have 57 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 39 new schools join.

## View our Partner Schools



## JOBS IN SCHOOLS | North East

Subscriptions to the Jobs in Schools | North East recruitment portal also continue to grow year on year. At the end of 2022-23 there were **293 schools** using the benefits of the platform, an increase of 7% on the previous year.

## Visit Jobs in Schools | North East



## Commercial Supporters

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

At the end of 2022-23 we had **144 Commercial Supporter** members, our highest number to date.

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

## View our Commercial Supporters



# Membership Snapshot

683

Partner Schools

57

Partner Trusts

293

Jobs Board  
Subscribers

144

Commercial  
Supporters





# Support for Schools

## Community Foundation

Schools North East partnered with the Community Foundation to make £90,000 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).

Case studies can be found on our Blog.



**Community  
Foundation**



## 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

**£90K**

Funding for  
Projects

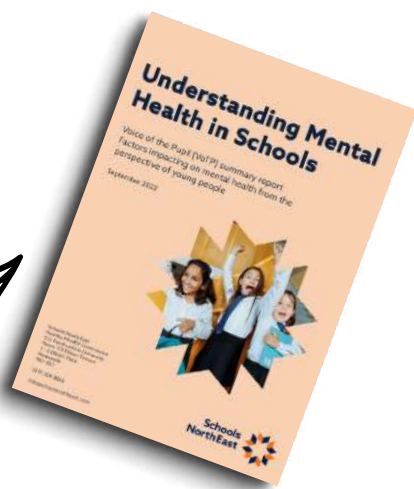
**3,500**

Children Positively  
Impacted



## Mental Health

The Schools North East Healthy MindED Commission is working towards establishing a clearer picture of the state of mental health in schools in the North East. One of the main strands of the Healthy MindED Commission was the Voice of the Pupil project. The project engaged children and young people to establish their concerns and experiences, giving the region's pupils a voice to inform direct action in schools that would affect better outcomes for them.



The findings of the project were published in the 22/23 academic year. The report recommends building greater capacity in the system with closer working between schools and external agencies, more regular engagement with young people to develop understanding of what can be done to support good mental health, and an approach to curriculum delivery that ensures tasks and tests are achievable, enjoyable, and rewarding.

Our annual Healthy MindED Conference was held in May 2023. The findings of the Voice of the Pupil project were presented at the conference, and we are now planning to rerun the project, with an initial roundtable in September 2023.

## Staff Wellbeing

During and since the pandemic, staff wellbeing has been raised as a key concern. We have continued to investigate staff wellbeing through our 'State of the Region' surveys in 22/23. These surveys are conducted once a term, monitoring the development of key issues.

Staff wellbeing showed an improvement between the Autumn and Spring terms of the 22/23 academic year, however it declined in the Summer term, with fewer school leaders reporting positive wellbeing amongst staff. In the Summer term, 63% of responses said that staff wellbeing was worse or much worse in comparison with a pre-pandemic Summer term.

The main drivers of poor staff wellbeing are workload (especially as a result of increasing numbers of students with complex needs), Ofsted pressures, and increased parental expectations.

You can read our most recent State of the Region results at the following [link](#).



# Recruitment and Retention



## 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 what the role.

Following discussions with schools we invested in improvements to the portal during this year, and held 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 caretakers and catering assistants, to senior leaders and class teachers, our platform has helped connect local, hard working education staff with their next opportunity.

## Policy

In April 2023, we held a virtual roundtable on recruitment and retention, to inform a Schools North East written evidence submission to the House of Commons Education Select Committee.

The key issues that came up were: the increasingly competitive employment environment; the workload challenges caused by schools taking on significant additional responsibilities; the lack of well-developed teacher training that is responsive to the changes in education, and; the failure of education policy to trust and engage with the teaching profession.

While operational challenges around supply have improved since the pandemic, owing to declining Covid-related staff absences, recruitment and retention has consistently been mentioned in feedback in our surveys and roundtables with school leaders in the North East.

You can read the full submission at the following [link](#).



## Jobs in Schools | North East Snapshot

2,068

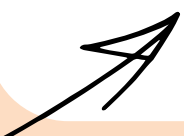
Jobs Advertised

232K

Job Views

4,000

Candidate Bank



# Media Engagement 2022-23

Schools North East, an organisation representing Head Teachers in the region, congratulated students for their results, but warned national data highlighted the unequal legacy of Covid across the country.



- BBC Radio Newcastle
- Tes
- BBC Look North
- Northern Echo
- iNews
- ITV Tyne Tees
- Schools Week
- The Chronicle
- The Guardian
- ITV News
- The Mirror
- LBC
- BBC Radio 5
- BBC Newsnight
- GB News
- The Financial Times
- Spark Sunderland
- Capital Radio
- BBC Newsround
- Hexham Courant
- BBC News
- BBC Radio Tees
- 5 News
- The Sunday Times

Schools North East is seen as a leading voice in education.

In the 22/23 academic year we were routinely approached by local and national media, from TV, radio, and print.

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

We had in total 107 press requests in 22/23 covering 40 different topics. We published 14 press releases.

Read Chris's comment in The Chronicle [here](#)

Read Schools North East's opinion in ITV Tyne Tees [here](#)

## Media Snapshot

107

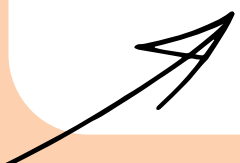
Press Requests

40

Different Issues Covered

14

Press Releases





# Policy 2022-23

## 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.

In the 22/23 academic year, we sent out 26 stakeholder briefings.

## Bitesize Briefings

To help support North East schools, we send out Bitesize Briefings about recently published research and analyses on education policy 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 sent out 40 Bitesize Briefings in the 22/23 academic year.

## Parliament

We sent two letters to ministers in 22/23. The first went to Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak (both at the time as candidates for Prime Minister), looking at the North-South divide in exam results. The second went to the Secretary of State for Education, on school buildings and the condition improvement fund.

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

- Persistent absence and support for disadvantaged pupils
- Teacher recruitment, training, and retention
- Ofsted's work with schools

**BITESIZE BRIEFING** 



## Policy Snapshot

40

Bitesize Briefings

26

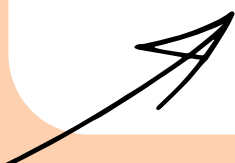
Stakeholder Briefings

3

Written Evidence Submissions

2

Letters to Ministers



# Roundtables



Our roundtables are a forum for leaders to discuss the unique challenges of their settings and have proved an excellent forum for feedback on key issues and for school leaders to collaborate and support each other.

We host regular roundtables for North East CEOs and for special and AP school leaders in the region. These are held virtually once every half term.

## MP Roundtables

Schools North East also holds MP roundtables, both virtually and in-person. Our MP roundtables are an opportunity for school leaders to engage with their local MP, and to enable the region's representatives in parliament to understand the key issues facing schools. In 22/23, we held roundtables with:

- Peter Gibson, Conservative MP for Darlington
- Catherine McKinnell, Labour MP for Newcastle upon Tyne North
- Richard Holden, Conservative MP for North West Durham
- Chi Onwurah, Labour MP for Newcastle upon Tyne Central
- Paul Howell, Conservative MP for Sedgefield
- Ian Lavery, Labour MP for Wansbeck
- Alex Cunningham, Labour MP for Stockton North

## Policy Roundtables

We also hold roundtables on individual policy issues and themes:

- In November 2022, we held an in-person roundtable with Ofqual Chief Regulator, Jo Saxton, to discuss GCSE and A Level exams.
- In March 2023, we held an in-person roundtable with the Northern Powerhouse Partnership. These discussions explored the potentials of regional devolution for education, and will contribute to a report by the NPP.
- In April 2023, we held a virtual roundtable on recruitment and retention, to inform a Schools North East written evidence submission to the House of Commons Education Select Committee.
- In June 2023, we held a virtual roundtable with the North East Child Poverty Commission and IPPR North. These discussions will inform a report by these two organisations, looking to develop a child poverty strategy for the North East.



## Roundtables Snapshot

6

CEO  
Roundtables

6

SEND and AP  
Leader  
Roundtables

7

MP  
Roundtables

4

Policy  
Roundtables



# We are the Glue



## Partner Schools

This year we have continued to work with and provide support for **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 60% of North East Schools are Partner Schools.



The **Annual Patron's Dinner** was held in March and moved to a new venue to accommodate our growing Partner Schools. Over 400 Partner School colleagues 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 pass on opportunities to our Partner Schools ranging from participating in research and national voices to awards and offers.

This year we sent out 35 such opportunities.

## Reach

As well as the 5% increase in Partner Schools this year, we also saw growth in the amount of individuals engaging with the Charity, which was up 34% on last year. And, as we returned to a more normal year of physical events following the pandemic, delegate numbers were up 13% on last year.

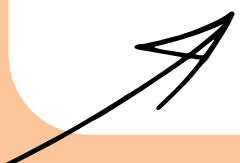
We continued our **roundtables** holding online meetings for CEOs, SEND and AP Leaders, every half term.

These provide a safe space for colleagues to share, discuss and debate challenges they face while supporting and being supported by peers.

## Governor/Trustee Matching

To further support schools we launched a Governor/Trustee matching campaign through our database and social media.

We will add to this work in 23/24 with schools able to advertise Governor and Trustee vacancies through the recruitment portal Jobs in Schools | North East.





# 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 298 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, as well as systems, to support outcomes in specialist settings in England.

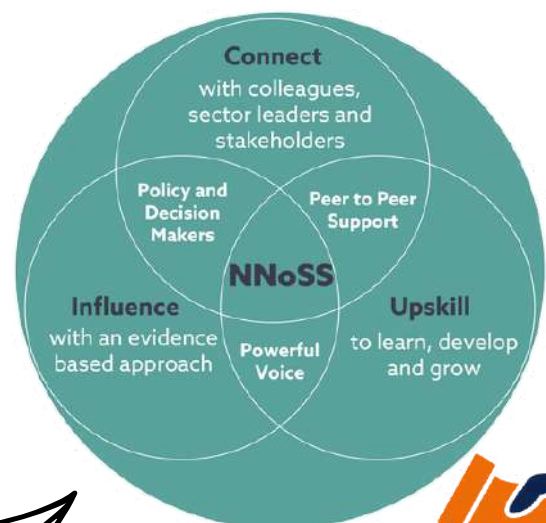
We have amplified the voice of members on the unfair distribution of grants, such as the SSG, to the sector. The DfE listened to these views and are starting to take a more direct approach in their guidance to LAs on additional funds that should be passed on to schools. We will continue to engage with decision makers, ensuring they are aware of the impact of certain decisions on schools.

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

- Responding to the SEND Review
- Highlighting growing costs, including those schools with Hydro Pools
- Unfunded pay awards for school staff, in particular support staff
- Deficit budgets caused by growing costs

Peer to peer support is strong within the network and over the past year almost 1,000 different threads have shared advice, support, resources and ideas. As well as an active email group the network has an online community.

During the past year members have given views directly to the DfE on the SEND review and discussed challenges with benchmarking in the sector with Entrust.



# Events 2022-23



## Overview

Our annual events programme provides valuable opportunities for North East school staff to network with colleagues from across the region, and collaborate on key issues affecting their roles and schools. It is also a forum for staff to hear from leading and senior figures in the education sector and to offer quality continuous professional development which will support them in their roles. This year was the first 'normal' year since returning to physical events post-Covid. We are delighted to see attendee and sponsorship levels return to 'normal' and some of our events, including the Patrons Dinner and the Academies Conference, were the biggest to date. As well as our annual physical events, we had a successful year hosting 9 'general' webinars within our 3 main strands plus 9 single issue webinars.

**Annual events 22/23**  
What's happening this year?

**Summit 2022**  
Date: Thurs 6 October  
Venue: St James' Park, Newcastle Upon Tyne  
Time: 9:00 - 16:00\*  
Audience: Head Teachers, School Senior Leaders

**Ofsted Update 22**  
Date: Thursday 24 November  
Venue: Linskill Centre, North Shields  
Time: 2 x Half day events  
Audience: School leaders, SLT, Teaching & Learning Leads, Chairs of Governance

**Academies Conference 2023**  
Date: Thurs 26 January  
Venue: St James' Park, Newcastle Upon Tyne  
Time: 9:00 - 16:00\*  
Audience: CEOs, CFOs, COOs, Head Teachers, SBMs, Senior Leaders

**Governance Conference**  
Date: Weds 15 & Thurs 16 Feb  
Venue: Virtual via Zoom  
Time: 16:00 - 18:00\*  
Audience: Chairs, Governors, Clerks, School Leaders

**Curriculum Conference 23**  
Date: Thursday 2 March  
Venue: The Fed, Gateshead  
Time: 9:00 - 16:00\*  
Audience: SLT, Teaching & Learning Leads, Head of Departments

**Annual Patron's Dinner 23**  
Date: Thursday 16 March  
Audience: School Leaders, Partner Schools only

**Healthy MindED 23**  
Date: Thursday 18 May  
Venue: Riverside Stadium, Middlesbrough  
Time: 9:00 - 16:00\*  
Audience: School Leaders, SENCOs, Wellbeing Leads, Pastoral

**SBM Conference 23**  
Date: Thursday 15 June  
Venue: St James' Park, Newcastle Upon Tyne  
Time: 9:00 - 16:00\*  
Audience: SBMs, CFOs, COOs, HR, Finance, Admin, School Leaders and other SBPs

**Partner Schools Summer Reception 23**  
Date: Summer 2023  
Audience: School Leaders, Partner Schools only

**Annual NNoSS Conference**  
Date: Thursday 27 April  
Venue: Birmingham football club, Birmingham  
Audience: School Business Professionals from Special, AP and Hospital Schools

**Webinars**  
SBM, Governance, Recruitment & Retention

**The Northern Celebration of Education 2023**  
Date: Friday 7 July  
Audience: Teaching practitioners of all levels

\*Times subject to change

Search for our full calendar of events at [www.schoolsnortheast.com/events](http://www.schoolsnortheast.com/events)

PS Partner Schools only | Events for all to attend | NNoSS event. Powered by SNE | Ednorth EdNorth event. Powered by SNE

## Highlights

- Over 270 trust leaders attended the Academies Conference 2023.
- We were joined by over 400 guests at our annual Patron's Dinner, our largest dinner to date along with guest speaker Rt Reverend John Sentamu.
- Bridget Phillipson MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Education who addressed an audience of trust and academy leaders at our annual Academies Conference 2023.
- Held 7 MP roundtables around the region.
- Provided five events officially accredited by the CPD Certification Service - Healthy MindED Conference 2023, annual Governance Conference 2023, annual Curriculum Conference 2023, School Business Management Conference 2023 & Cyber Resilience Event.
- Supported Ednorth and NNoSS (the National Network of Special Schools) with the planning and delivery of their events including TeachMeets, networking conferences and the second physical NNoSS Conference.

**WEBINARS 22/23** SNE Events

<b>NOVEMBER</b> Energy Market Update	<b>NOVEMBER</b> Healthier Together App	<b>NOVEMBER</b> Acemisation: Top Tips for Governors
<b>DECEMBER</b> Safer Recruitment & Online Searches	<b>DECEMBER</b> Creative Careers & Pathways	<b>JANUARY</b> NHS Health Update
<b>FEBRUARY</b> Dealing with Complaints in Schools	<b>MARCH</b> Taking Your Catering in-house and the Benefits	<b>MARCH</b> Tackling the Teaching Assistant Shortage
<b>MAY</b> How to Maximise your Employment Benefits	<b>JUNE</b> Benefits of Buying from Compliant Frameworks	<b>MAY</b> Update on Governors Duties - Lessons Learnt from this year

As a Partner School, you have access to Schools North East Webinars completely FREE.

To support you further, we are now sharing this document with you so you can access the 22/23 webinar recordings throughout the next academic year. Click on the webinar you would like to view the recording for, register if you haven't already and view the webinar wherever, whenever.

**CLICK HERE TO SUGGEST A WEBINAR TOPIC FOR 23/24**

# Event support “

Schools North East had more opportunities than ever for organisations and our Commercial and Educational Supporters to get in front of school decision makers and leaders during 23/24. Our annual Summit, School Business Management Conference, Healthy MindED Conference, Curriculum Conference and NNoSS annual conference exhibitions were all sold out.

In total, 141 organisations exhibited across our events in 22/23.

“Extremely well organised. The audience was very much aligned with what we were promoting. I feel like the event was targeted to the correct people and therefore was exactly what we were looking for.”

School Business Management Conference 2023 Exhibitor”

“

“It was a very well attended event and there were many areas in which our company could offer support to delegates and their schools/MATs.”

Academies Conference 2023 Exhibitor”



Image: School Business Management Conference 2023 exhibition.

While 2022/23 saw a near return to normal of the events programme following the pandemic, it still brought some challenges. Three of our large events were impacted by teacher strikes and we took the decision to postpone our annual Northern Celebration of Education (CelebrateEd), which fell on the final strike date of the academic year.

A selection of our events are CPD accredited.



## Events snapshot

6

Major Conferences

3500

Delegates

17

Single Issue Events

9

Webinars

4

Online Conferences



# 2022/23 Events



- Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- Annual Summit 2022
- MP Roundtable - Darlington
- MP Roundtable - Newcastle North
- White Paper Academisation Event North
- White Paper Academisation Event South
- SBM Webinar - Energy Market Update & Contract Advice
- NNoSS Virtual Networking Conference
- NHS Healthier Together Website Webinar
- Roundtable - Ofqual Chief Regulator, Jo Saxton
- Ednorth TeachMeet - Attendance
- MP Roundtable - North West Durham
- Ofsted Update Event AM
- Ofsted Update Event PM
- Academisation: Top Tips for Governors Webinar
- Safer Recruitment & Online Searches Webinar
- Creative Careers and Pathways Webinar
- NHS Health Update for Schools Webinar
- Ednorth TeachMeet - Feedback
- Annual Academies Conference 2023
- NNoSS Virtual Networking Conference
- Annual Governance Conference ONLINE 2023
- Annual Curriculum Conference 2023
- MP Roundtable - Newcastle Central
- Taking your Catering in House Webinar
- Dealing with Complaints in Schools Webinar
- MP Roundtable - Sedgefield
- Annual Patron's Dinner 2023
- Ednorth TeachMeet - Literacy
- Tackling the Teaching Assistant Shortage Webinar
- Recruitment & Retention Inquiry Roundtable
- NNoSS Annual Physical Conference 2023
- How to Maximise your Employment Benefits Webinar
- Annual Healthy MindED Conference 2023
- Cyber Resilience Event
- Ednorth Teachmeet - SEND
- NNoSS Virtual Networking Conference
- Annual School Business Management Conference 2023
- Benefits of Buying from Compliant Frameworks Webinar
- MP Roundtable - Wansbeck
- Update on Governors Duties - Lessons Learnt from this Year Webinar
- MP Roundtable - Stockton North

**ANNUAL EVENTS 23/24** SNE Events

Booking forms will be linked once delegate bookings are open. For Partner School events, your schools point of contact will receive a direct invitation from Schools North East.

<b>AGM 2023</b> DATE Thursday 28 September TIME 12:30 - 15:30* VENUE The Linkskill Centre, North Shields AUDIENCE Exclusively for Schools North East Partner Schools, by invitation only	<b>ANNUAL SUMMIT 2023</b> DATE Thursday 19 October TIME 09:00 - 16:00* VENUE St James Park, Newcastle Upon Tyne AUDIENCE Head Teachers, School Senior Leaders, CEOs	<b>OFSTED UPDATE 2023</b> DATE Thursday 16 November TIME 09:00 - 13:00* VENUE The Durham Centre, Durham AUDIENCE School Leaders, Teaching & Learning Leads, Chairs of Governance
<b>GOVERNANCE CONFERENCE 2023</b> DATE Wed 29 & Thursday 30 November TIME 16:00 - 18:00* VENUE Virtual, via Zoom AUDIENCE Chairs, Governors, Clerks, School Leaders	<b>ACADEMIES CONFERENCE 2024</b> DATE Thursday 25 January TIME 09:00 - 16:00* VENUE The Grand Hotel, Gosforth Park, Newcastle AUDIENCE CEOs, CFOs, COOs, Head Teachers, SBMs, Senior Leaders	<b>CURRICULUM CONFERENCE 2024</b> DATE Thursday 29 February TIME 09:00 - 16:00* VENUE TBC AUDIENCE School leaders, Teaching & Learning Leads, Teaching Practitioners, Heads of Departments
<b>PATRON'S DINNER 2024</b> DATE Thursday 14 March VENUE The Grand Hotel, Gosforth Park, Newcastle AUDIENCE Exclusively for Schools North East Partner Schools, by invitation only	<b>HEALTHY MINDED 2024</b> DATE Thursday 16 May TIME 09:00 - 16:00* VENUE TBC AUDIENCE School Leaders, SENCOs, Wellbeing Leads, Pastoral	<b>SBM CONFERENCE 2024</b> DATE Thursday 13 June TIME 09:00 - 16:00* VENUE St James Park, Newcastle Upon Tyne AUDIENCE SBMs, CFOs, COOs, HR, Finance Admin, School Leaders and other SBPs
<b>NNOSS CONFERENCE 2024</b> DATE Thursday 25 April TIME 09:00 - 16:00* VENUE TBC AUDIENCE School Business Professionals from Special, AP and Hospital Schools	<b>KEY</b> Open to all Schools PS Partner Schools Only National Network of Special Schools Event, Powered by SNE Ednorth event, Powered by SNE	<b>NORTHERN CELEBRATION OF EDUCATION 2024</b> DATE Friday 5 July TIME 09:00 - 15:00* VENUE Students Union, Northumbria University, Newcastle AUDIENCE Teaching Practitioners of all levels

\*Times subject to change. Find out more about becoming a Partner School



# Communications 2022-23



## Amplifying your voice

Because of your support, the voice we give to our region's schools has grown louder and louder over the years.

In 2007, our range of activities were very limited, reflecting our age and budget. But 15 years later, it's now difficult to explain the full extent of SNE's activities; their complexity, scope, reach, and impact. Great work by everyone involved.

## Newsletter (Weekly Update)

Our newsletter continues to grow and is now sent to almost 8,000 subscribers, out performing industry averages with an open rate of 27% and a click through rate of 3.6% compared to the education industry averages of 23% and 2.9% respectively.

In 2022-23 we sent out 40 Weekly Updates.

## Good New Stories

To showcase a positive narrative of North East education, and to highlight the fantastic work of the region's schools, we strongly feature good news stories from across North East schools. In 2022-23 we featured 117 such stories. These can be found under 'Regional News' on our blog.

## Blog

We use our blog to host all stories, and in the past twelve months, this has been viewed more than 37,000 times.

As well as being in the 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 changes, regional and national news, and more.

We currently have over 8,800 followers on X (formerly known as Twitter), and over 2,300 on LinkedIn.

From 1 August 22 to 31 July 23, we had 188,189 impressions on Twitter, and 292 new followers.

On LinkedIn, the Schools North East page achieved 2,328 views and 551 new followers.

**COMING SOON: A Facebook and TikTok page!**



## Communications Snapshot

290k

Weekly Update  
Emails Sent Out

37k

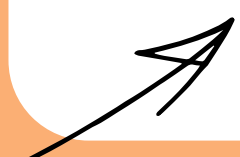
Views on Our Blog

11k

Combined Social  
Media Followers

17k

Total Email  
Contacts





# Schools North East Trading

This is the end of SNET's ninth 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 2022-23

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 2022/23 Schools North East received £111,288 in gift-aid payments from Schools North East Trading Limited.

**Schools North East employed four members of staff at the start of the 2022/23 financial year:**

- DIRECTOR
- RELATIONSHIP MANAGER
- POLICY OFFICER
- MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

**And, Schools North East Trading employed seven members of staff:**

- DEPUTY DIRECTOR
- EVENTS MANAGER
- DEPUTY EVENTS MANAGER
- EVENTS COORDINATOR
- FINANCE OFFICER
- ADMINISTRATOR
- DIGITAL APPRENTICE



# Financial Review 2022-23

## 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 £589,774 (2022: £569,663) and expenditure of £505,355 (2022: £523,014). Net income for the year was £84,419 (2022: £46,649)

At 31 July 2023 the Charity had net assets of £446,432 (2022: £362,013)

## 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 2022/23, 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 2023, 'free' reserves amounted to £446,432, 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 2022-23

## 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

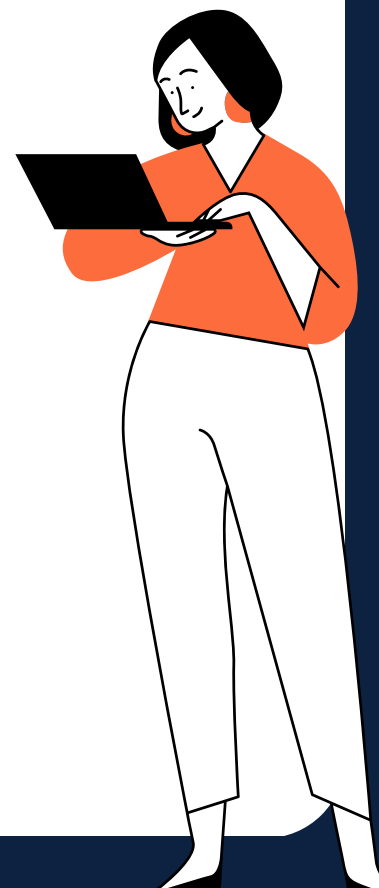
Doug Maltman FMAAT  
Connected Voice Business Services Ltd  
Higham House  
Higham Place  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 8AF

## Trustees and Members of the Board:

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

## Director and Senior staff members:

Director: Chris Zarraga  
Deputy Director: Pauline Aitchison



# Statement of Trustee Responsibilities

## 2022-23

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 13 September 2023 and signed on their behalf by:

John Hardy (Chair)

