

Registered number: 10253931

Whinless Down Academy Trust
Whinless Down, Walsby, Lincolnshire

LN11 9JL

01509 251100

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Company number: 10253931

Whinless Down Academy Trust

Whinless Down, Walsby, Lincolnshire

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Annual report and financial statements

2016/17

For the year ended 31 August 2017

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Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Contents

	Page
Reference and administrative details	1 - 2
Trustees' report	3 - 11
Governance statement	12 - 14
Statement on regularity, propriety and compliance	15
Statement of Trustees' responsibilities	16
Independent auditors' report on the financial statements	17 - 19
Independent reporting accountant's assurance report on regularity	20 - 21
Statement of financial activities incorporating income and expenditure account	22
Balance sheet	23
Statement of cash flows	24
Notes to the financial statements	25 - 47

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Whinless Down Academy Trust
10253931

Reference and administrative details
For the year ended 31 August 2017

10253931
10253931

Members

10253931

Mrs Sheila Wilding
Mrs Rhian Potts
Mrs Claire Jones
Mrs Patricia Sherling
Mrs Alison Mackintosh

Trustees

Mr Malcolm Bowler
Mrs Alison MacKintosh, Chair of Trustees
Mrs Michelle Noden
Mr Andrew Nunn (resigned 25 May 2017)
Mrs Carol Rayfield
Mrs Patricia Sherling
Mrs Anne Siggins
Mrs Victoria Smith
Mrs Katie Wratten (resigned 12 October 2017)

Company registered number

10253931

Company name

Whinless Down Academy Trust

Principal and registered office

Priory Fields School
Astor Avenue
Dover
Kent
CT17 0FS

Senior management team

Mrs Anne Siggins, Executive Head Teacher
Mrs Michelle Noden, Academy Business Manager
Mrs Helen Seeley, Head of School, Priory Fields School
Mrs Rachel Appleby (Suckling), Head of School from 1 September 2016, St Martin's
Mrs Katie Wratten, Head of School until 31 August 2016, St Martin's
Mrs Denise Moore, Assistant Headteacher until 30 April 2017, Priory Fields
Miss Kelly Brown, Assistant Headteacher from 1 September 2016, Priory Fields
Miss Veronica Tutthill, Assistant Headteacher, St Martin's

Independent auditors

Kreston Reeves LLP
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
37 St Margaret's Street
Canterbury
Kent
CT1 2TU

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Reference and administrative details
For the year ended 31 August 2017

Advisers (continued)

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc
25 Gresham Street
London
EC2V 7HN

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' report
For the year ended 31 August 2017

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements and auditors' report of the charitable company for the year ended 31 August 2017. The Annual Report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report, and a director's report under company law.

The trust operates 2 primary academies for pupils aged 4 to 11 in Dover Kent. On 1 August 2016 Priory Fields School and St Martin's School converted to an Academy Trust. Priory Fields School is part of the Priority School's Building Project and the new build is expected to be completed by September 2018. Its academies have a combined pupil capacity of 660 and had a roll of 622 in the school's autumn census 2016.

Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

The Academy Trust is a company limited by guarantee and an exempt charity. The charitable company's memorandum and articles of association dated 28 June 2016 are the primary governing documents of the Academy Trust.

The Trustees act as the Trustees for the charitable activities of Whinless Down Academy Trust and are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law. The charitable company is known as Whinless Down Academy Trust.

Details of the Trustees who served during the year are included in the reference and administrative details on page 1.

On 1 August 2016 Priory Fields School and St Martin's School converted to academy trust status under the Academies Act 2010 and all the operations and assets and liabilities were transferred to Whinless Down Academy Trust from Kent County Council for £Nil Consideration.

Members' Liability

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

Trustees' Indemnities

The Academy Trust has opted into the Department of Education's risk protection arrangement (RPA), an alternative to insurance where a UK government funds cover losses that arise. This scheme protects the Trustees and officers from claims, arising from negligent acts, errors or omissions occurring whilst on academy business, and provides cover up to £10,000,000.

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' report (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2017

Principal Activities

The Academy Trust's main objective is to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing the schools within the Trust. This is achieved by offering a broad and balanced curriculum within settings and providing an ethos where everyone is able to achieve, feel valued and safe and secure.

Method of Recruitment and Appointment or Election of Trustees

The Members of the Academy Trust shall comprise the signatories to the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The number of Trustees shall not be less than three, but shall not be subject to a maximum.

The Charity's Articles of Association set out the constitution and method of appointment of the Trustee body, including parent Trustees who are elected in accordance with Department of Education guidelines. Suitability of Trustees is determined by their interest in the work of the charity, eligibility and personal competence and to ensure the Trustee body has the breadth of skills and knowledge necessary to advance the Academy Trust in all areas.

The Board of Trustees is intended to be made up of 9 trustees:

- The Chair of each Local Governing Body (LGB)
- One staff Trustee,
- Five Co-opted Trustees
- The Executive Headteacher.

Currently, there are two co-opted vacancies on the Board. Recruitment procedures are in place to fill the vacancies. Parent representation is provided on the Local Governing Body.

Minimising the number of Trustees that also hold a Local Governing Body position is the next step in the development of the Board and this is an aim for the coming year. Recruitment will be skills based and recruitment will be a rigorous process. The Board will, if unsuccessful in a local campaign use The Academy Ambassadors Programme or Inspiring Governance.

Policies and Procedures Adopted for the Induction and Training of Trustees and Governors

The Trustee body and Executive Headteacher believe that it is essential that all Trustees and governors receive an appropriate induction package. This would include a tour of the Academy Trust and a chance to meet staff, pupils, the Head of Schools and the Chairman of the Board with a view to ensuring the Trustee has good understanding of the Academies vision and values and the day to day operation. All Trustees and LGB Members are required to complete a skills audit to enable the board to identify training needs and gaps within our skills base.

Although no formal training programme exists for the Trustees within the Academy Trust they are allocated a 'Buddy' for support. Trustees are encouraged to participate in training programmes, through participation in appropriate and relevant training course arranged by the Academy Trust. Training that has taken place over the year includes, data dashboard, pupil premium, finance, understanding data.

We see training and development of Trustees and Governors as an important requirement to ensure they are able to undertake their duties which will lead to more effective governance.

The Academy Trust has a comprehensive policy schedule which ensures that policies are reviewed in a timely manner. Policies are available on the secure section of the website and are password protected.

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' report (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2017

Organisational Structure

The management structure of the academy consists of four levels: The Whinless Down Academy Trust Board, The Finance Strategy and Audit Committee (FSAC), The Local Governing Bodies and the Academy Leadership Teams.

The Board of Trustees role in the Academy Trust is essentially a strategic one acting on advice from the Executive Headteacher. The Board of Trustees are responsible for setting general policy, adopting an annual plan and budget monitoring for the Academies by the use of budget reports and making strategic decisions about the direction of the Whinless Down Academy Trust, capital expenditure and senior staff appointments.

The Board of Trustees has delegated the day to day management of the academies to the Executive Headteacher. The key role of the Executive Headteacher is following the strategy and vision of the Trust, building its culture and the creation and development of teams that work in and across the Trust. The Board holds the Executive Headteacher to account.

The Trust Board delegate functions to the FSAC committee as per the Scheme of Delegation. They meet three times a year and are involved in the monitoring and preparation of the budgets for each school. They ensure that both internal and external audits are completed and actions are promptly addressed.

The Trust Board delegate functions to the Local Governing Bodies as per the Scheme of Delegation. They meet six times a year and are involved in the monitoring of the whole range of school activities and statutory requirements.

The Academy Leadership Team consists of Executive Headteacher, Head of Schools, Assistant Headteachers and the Academy Business Manager. These leaders control the Academy Trust at school level implementing the policies laid down by themselves, the Local Governing Bodies or the Board of Trustees. As a group, the senior leadership team is responsible for the authorisation of spending within agreed budgets and the appointment of non-senior staff. Appointments for the post of Executive Headteacher, Head of School, Academy Business Manager will require Trustees authorisation.

The Executive Headteacher is the accounting officer.

Arrangements for setting pay and remuneration of key management personnel

The Trustees will agree the salary level prior to the commencement of the recruitment process of a new Principal/Executive Headteacher. Trustees are required to review the Executive Headteacher's performance against previously set targets and to set new targets for the upcoming year. All pay increases must be linked to performance targets. This is delegated to a panel responsible for the Executive Headteacher's appraisal.

Head of School pay is set using the formula within the pay and conditions document applicable at the time of appointment and within a range set by the Local Governing Bodies.

With existing members of the leadership team (including Head of School) the Executive Headteacher is required to review the leadership's team's performance against previously set targets and set new targets for the coming academic year. The Executive Headteacher then may apply an inflationary increase and any discretionary increase as authorised by the Trustees. All pay increases must be linked to performance targets.

The Academy Trust adheres to the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document.

Clear expectations form the basis for all good performance relationships. The Executive Headteacher feeds back to the Local Governing Body on pay awards for staff other than senior leaders and feeds back to the Trustees for senior leaders. The committee responsible for the Executive Headteacher's appraisal feeds back to the Trustees regarding any pay decisions having consulted with an external advisor.

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' report (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2017

Related Parties and other Connected Charities and Organisation

Owing to the nature of the Academy Trust's operations and the composition of the Board of Trustees being drawn from a cross section of the local and wider community, transactions may take place with organisations in which a Trustee has an interest. In the event of any transactions involving such connected organisations, interests are declared and transactions conducted at arm's length and in accordance with the Academy Trust's financial regulations and normal procurement procedures.

Objectives and Activities

The main objective of the Academy Trust during the year ended 31st August 2017 are summarised below;

Objects and Aims

The principal object of the Academy Trust is specifically restricted to the following; to advance for the public benefit education in the United Kingdom, in particular but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing by establishing, maintaining, carrying on, managing and developing schools offering a broad and balanced curriculum.

The goal of the Whinless Down Academy Trust is to improve the quality of education provided to all children in all schools within the Academy Trust. The schools within the Trust use each other as a resource to:

- Improving the quality of teaching
- Improving the quality of leadership
- Improving the breadth of curriculum opportunities

These will lead to our ultimate goal: To improve and sustain the best Educational Outcomes for Primary Aged Children.

The Academy Trust values children's wellbeing and their education above all else, and puts the needs of children at the centre of its decision making.

Objectives, Strategies and Activities

The vision is for all Academies within the Academy Trust to provide an education that prepares each and every child well for the next stage of their learning journey which in turn will ensure success throughout their adult life. To achieve this, the ethos within each academy is every child matters and every lesson counts. To realise this The Whinless Down Academy Trust is:

- Committed to improving the life chances of every child with whom they work.
- Committed to developing a culture in which the quality of teaching is seen as central.
- Committed to developing school leaders ensuring the highest quality leadership systems that work on drawing expertise across the Academy Trust.
- Committed to ensuring that all staff and children without fear of discrimination will be able to achieve success, feel safe, lead a healthy lifestyle and accomplish beyond original expectations.
- Committed to provide a wide range of sporting, cultural, musical and artistic experiences as well as an absolute understanding of the core skills.

The Whinless Down Academy Trust values diversity and seeks to give everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live free from discrimination or prejudice. We will work together to develop the potential of all pupils across all areas of learning, social, moral and cultural experiences and opportunities.

Pupils will be happy and motivated by the wider curriculum experienced at school. They will become independent learners, aware of how to learn and to manage their emotions to maximise their own learning experiences enabling them to face challenge and difficulty.

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' report (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2017

All staff will have the opportunity to develop further as self-directed, reflective learners, through working collaboratively with others to enhance their own expertise and to work on their own initiative. Through their passion, teachers will enthuse and inspire others to explore new ideas.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing the charity's aim and objectives and in planning future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set.

The Academy Trust runs an Academy for pupils in the primary phase (4-11) aspiring towards the highest possible standards for approximately 660 pupils. The schools within the Academy Trust are situated in the centre of Dover which has high social deprivation and many pupils are at the early stages of learning English.

The Academy aims to contribute benefit to the local community and has supported various community events during the period including the following;

- A range of local and national Charity events with donations going to, Kelly Turner, Race for Life, Sign to Sing, Sport Relief, Children In Need, Porchlight
- Our Christmas and Summer Fairs are open to the local community and stalls are available to sell a variety of gifts and produce.
- Opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of sporting opportunities through The Dover School Games and The Kent School Games.
- The Academy Trust belongs to a wider collaborative group including two other local schools. The range of activities that operate across the collaboration include, a Collaborative School Council tackling local issues such as recycling, dangerous parking in and around schools and litter, multi-various sports competitions, a singing extravaganza, and working with local secondary schools to secure improved transition.
- Links with local churches to support community events such as coffee mornings, carol concerts and harvest festivals and a 'I Sing Pop' concert.
- Pupils lay Poppy Wreaths at the Memorial in the town centre.
- A Healthy Living programme supported parents to understand the importance healthy choices for improved health.
- The Academy Trust supports many local activities organised by a range of different organisations including, The Astor Dance Festival, Christmas singing to the Aged, Music in the Town hall and the Local 'Switch On' event.
- The Academy Trust offers a Holiday Sports Camp for pupils.

The Trust adopts the admission policies of the Local Education Authority in which it works. For full details see the individual school websites.

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' report (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2017

Strategic Report

Achievements and Performance

Pupils enter the Schools from a wide range of social, cultural and economic backgrounds; The Academies pride themselves on being inclusive Schools.

Both Schools within the Academy Trust achieved floor targets in the 2016 statutory tests and have been achieving floor targets for at least the previous 10 years.

EYFS 2017 Attainment Outcomes at Good Level of Development

School	All	Pupil Premium
Priory Fields	78%	68%
St Martin's	77%	67%

Year 1 Phonics 2017 Outcomes

School	% Achieving expected (all Children)	% Achieving expected (Pupil Premium)
Priory Fields	76%	70%
St Martin's	83%	100% (1 Child)

Key Stage 1 Attainment Outcomes 2017

School	Reading (All)	Writing (All)	Maths (All)	Reading (All)	Writing (PP)	Maths (PP)
Priory Fields	79%	77%	81%	80%	76%	84%
St Martin's	80%	71%	82%	73%	55%	73%

Key Stage 2 Attainment 2017 Outcomes Combined – Reading, Writing and Mathematics, GPS

School	% Achieving expected (all Children)	% Achieving expected (PP)	GPS (All Children)
Priory Fields	60%	60%	65%
St Martin's	52%	50% (2 Pupils)	83%

To ensure that standards are continually raised the Academy operate a programme of internal and external reviews of curriculum areas and standards of teaching. This is externally quality assured through a rigorous monitoring programme with our external partners who include educational consultants and headteachers and leadership teams from other schools.

Going Concern

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

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' report (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2017

Key Performance Indicators

This is the first full year that the Trust has been in operation and early indications show that the schools are on an upward trend.

All Schools met the floor targets set by the government in 2017.

School	Combined	Reading Progress	Writing Progress	Mathematics Progress	Floor Targets Met
Priory Fields	66%	0.5	0.9	0.6	✓
St Martin's	52%	-0.8	-1.1	-4.4	✓

Key Financial Performance Indicators

The Trustees are of the opinion that the following are key financial performance indicators for the Trust:

- Percentage of income received from Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) spent on teaching staff and total staff costs;
- Pupil numbers which leads directly to ESFA funding level, and;
- General funding expenditure.

Financial Review

Most of the Academy Trust's income is obtained from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the Local Authority in the form of recurrent grants, some of which are restricted to particular purposes. In addition the schools receive other income including lettings and funds raised by parents. The budgets for the schools are prepared by the FSAC and approved by the Academy Trust Board. The budgets reflect the priorities of each school and The Academy Trust. The financial position of each school is monitored by the Board's Finance Strategy and Audit Committee and thereafter the Trustee Board. The financial policies and procedures which have been approved by the Trustees comply with the Academies Financial Handbook and are implemented by the Academy Trust and the schools.

When the accounts are consolidated, there is an overall funds of £1,544,376. This is following a actuarial valuation of pension deficit figure for the local government pension service.

A loan of £250,000 from KCC was drawn by the predecessor school prior to conversion to the Academy Trust to contribute to additional facilities as part of the PSBP for Priory Fields and is currently held in a 'short-term' investment bank account in preparation for the commencement of the repayment schedule. Repayments for the loan commenced in August 2016 which is reducing the capital borrowed and will continue to do so to a period of 10 years.

The new building has commenced and funds will be required over the year to pay for the additional facilities agreed in 2013. The contribution to additional facilities for the new building under PSBP for Priory Fields has increased by a sum of £11,000. The school is now liable for and will need to find the additional funding out of the GAG funding. A payment schedule has been agreed with the ESFA to enable the Trust to pay in instalments over two academic years.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Academy Trust is exposed, in particular those relating to teaching, provision of facilities and other operational areas of the Academy Trust and its finances. Appropriate systems, policies, procedures and controls have been put in place so as to ensure that the various risks do not impact adversely on the Academy Trust's operations including any operational procedures and internal financial controls. Appropriate insurances are in place.

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' report (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2017

The principal Risks to the Whinless Down Academy Trust have been identified as:

- 1) Failure to achieve the highest quality standards for children. In order to mitigate this risk Trustees ensure high quality recruitment and appraisal systems for all staff. Rigorous monitoring and accountability systems identify concerns promptly allowing for rapid interventions and swift actions to make the required changes.
- 2) Pupil numbers particularly should the EU Migrant Workers return to their homelands following Brexit. The Trustees are aware of fluctuations in pupil numbers and the ratios of teachers to pupils and regular reports ensure that these are kept within the parameters to prevent any future financial difficulties.
- 3) Maintenance budget for St Martin's School – Trustees are aware of the age of building and the need to ensure that a quality first education can be provided in a building designed for a 19th century system. Regular site walks and a maintenance programme support the upkeep. Application for CIF funding to be initiated in a timely manner should major works be required.
- 4) The effect of changes to future funding methodologies and general reductions in educational budgets. The Trustees produce and maintain budgets on a regular basis so that should any anticipated funding shortfalls occur suitable plans can be put in place to mitigate their effect.
- 5) The recruitment and retention of Local Governors with the necessary skills for the role.
- 6) The recruitment and retention of high quality teaching staff and support staff.

Reserves Policy

The Academy Trust aims to maintain a level of reserves sufficient to provide a buffer against future funding uncertainties and to provide a fund to pay for any unexpected or unplanned asset or maintenance need. The Trust will always ensure that they stay within the ESFA guidelines on levels and appropriate use of reserves.

The Trust's level of free reserves (total funds less the amount held in fixed assets and restricted funds) at the end of 31st August 2017 is £301,226.

The Academy Trust has a pension liability of £1,788,000 as at 31 August 2017 which is included in restricted reserves. The disclosure does not mean that the liability is already committed and is no longer available to the Trustees to further the Academy Trust's objectives. Parliament has agreed, at the request of the Secretary of State for Education, in the event of academy closure, outstanding Local Government Scheme liabilities would be met by the Department for Education. The guarantee came into force on 18 July 2013. In the short term, the cash flow impact of having a pension scheme liability may be that employer contributions may increase to reduce the liability. The Academy Trust will always pay the employer contribution rates set by the pension scheme administrators.

Investment Policy

Investments must be made only when approved by the Trustees.

The Trustees' policy is to invest surplus funds in low risk short term bank deposits that are easily accessible.

Plans for Future Periods

The Academy Trust plans to grow from two schools to three in January 2018. Following this, a period of consolidation will take place before further growth is considered. The Academy Trust has considered becoming a sponsor academy, but have rejected this currently to allow for a period of consolidation to embed good practice across existing schools and to allow opportunity for careful and in-depth planning to ensure success when the decision is reversed.

The Senior Leadership Team of the Academy Trust provides all Trustees with a copy of each of the Academy's Improvement Plans which is a working document with seasonal milestones for the Trustees to benchmark against their own strategic plans for each school within the Multi-Academy Trust enabling them to assess achievements and next steps.

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Trustees' report (continued)
For the year ended 31 August 2017

Each of the schools know their strengths and weaknesses based on continual self-assessment and the School Improvement plans are developed through the self-assessment process. Individual subject leaders assess their outcomes and plan developments accordingly.

The Academy Trust will continue striving to improve the levels of performance for all its pupils at all levels and continue to prepare pupils for the next steps in their learning journey.

The culture is one of openness and senior staff, teaching staff and support staff are clear about the need to collaborate and commit to their own professional development.

Funds held as Custodian Trustee on behalf of others

The Academy Trust does not hold such funds.

Provision of information to auditor

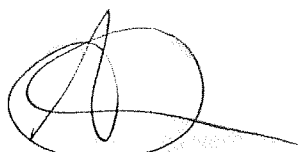
In so far as the Trustees are aware:

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

Auditors

The auditor, Kreston Reeves LLP, has indicated its willingness to continue in office. The Trustees will propose a motion re-appointing the auditor at a meeting of the Trustees.

This report, incorporating a strategic report, was approved by order of the board of Trustees, as the company's directors, on 30th November 2017 and signed on its behalf by:



Alison MacKintosh
Chair of Trustees

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Governance Statement

Scope of Responsibility

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

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

Governance

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

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mrs Alison MacKintosh, Chair of Trustees	4	4
Mrs Patricia Sherling	4	4
Mrs Carol Rayfield	2	4
Mrs Katie Wratten	2	3
Mr Andrew Nunn	1	1
Mr Malcolm Bowler	4	4
Mrs Victoria Smith	2	4
Mrs Anne Siggins	4	4
Mrs Michelle Noden	4	4

Currently there are two vacancies on the Trust Board and recruitment procedures have secured two new Trustees who will take up their place on the Board in November 2017.

The Board are working towards minimising the number of Trustees that are also members of the LGB and this should be achieved by April 2018.

The continued recruitment of highly skilled directors supports the development of the Academy Trust.

Governance Statement Reviews:

- The Trust Board uses the Competency Framework for Governance Matrix to ensure that we are able to provide appropriate training and to recruit Trustees with skills that have been highlighted a requirement by the Trust Board.
- The Trust Board will complete its governance self-evaluation in May 2018.

The Finance Strategy and Audit Committee (FSAC) is a sub-committee of the Trust Board and with Members from the LGB. Its purpose is to:

- To Prepare and set the Budget for the schools within the MAT.
- To monitor expenditure and income in line with set budget and school priorities as agreed within the individual school improvement plans.
- To challenge decisions and agree procurement routes through the consideration of competitive quotations and tendering process ensuring Best Value.
- To Benchmark school performance (both financial and academic) with local and national data and with 'like schools.'
- To be strategic in future planning and to assess potential risks to enable both sustainability and to plan for any funding implications.

During the year the Finance Strategy and Audit Committee intend to have 3 meetings over the coming year.

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Governance Statement (continued)

Review of Value for Money

As Accounting Officer, the Executive Headteacher has responsibility for ensuring that the Academy Trust delivers good value in the use of public resources. The Accounting Officer understands that value for money refers to the educational and wider societal outcomes achieved in return for the taxpayer resources received.

The Accounting Officer considers how the Academy Trust's use of its resources has provided good value for money during each academic year, and reports to the Board of Trustees where value for money can be improved, including the use of benchmarking data where appropriate. The Accounting Officer for the Academy Trust has delivered improved value for money during the year by:

- Applying the principles of Best Value
- Securing 2 quotation for purchases between £1,500 and £3,000
- Securing 3 quotations for purchases between £3,000 and £50,000
- Using Expertise in both schools to support new members of staff and CPD.
- Staff structuring that has enabled the reduction of external contracts.
- Sharing resources across the schools when possible.
- Regular resource audit to ensure purchases are 'need based.'

Purpose of the System of Internal Control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of Academy Trust policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in Whinless Down Academy Trust for the year 1 September 2016 to 31 August 2017 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

Capacity to Handle Risk

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the Academy Trust is exposed together with the operating, financial and compliance controls that have been implemented to mitigate those risks. The Board of Trustees is of the view that there is a formal ongoing process for identifying, evaluating and managing the Academy Trust's significant risks, that has been in place for the year 1 September 2016 to 31 August 2017 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements. This process is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

The Risk and Control Framework

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

- comprehensive budgeting and monitoring systems with an annual budget and periodic financial reports which are reviewed and agreed by the Board of Trustees;
- regular reviews by the Finance Strategy and Audit Committee of reports which indicate financial performance against the forecasts and of major purchase plans, capital works and expenditure programmes;
- setting targets to measure financial and other performance;
- clearly defined purchasing (asset purchase or capital investment) guidelines.
- delegation of authority and segregation of duties;
- identification and management of risks.

The Board of Trustees has considered the need for a specific internal audit function and has decided to appoint Kreston Reeves LLP as internal auditor.

Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Governance Statement (continued)

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

- testing of payroll systems
- testing of purchase systems
- testing of income systems
- testing of control account/bank reconciliations

On a termly basis, the internal auditor reports to the Board of Trustees through the Finance Strategy and Audit Committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Trustees' financial responsibilities.

Review of Effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, the Executive Headteacher has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. During the year in question the review has been informed by:

- the work of the internal auditor;
- the work of the external auditors;
- the financial management and governance self-assessment process;
- the work of the executive managers within the Academy Trust who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework.

The Accounting Officer has been advised of the implications of the result of their review of the system of internal control by the Finance Strategy and Audit Committee and a plan to ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on 30 November 2017 and signed on their behalf, by:



Alison Mackintosh
Chair of Trustees



Anne Siggins
Accounting Officer

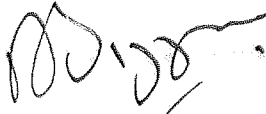
Whinless Down Academy Trust
(A company limited by guarantee)

Statement on Regularity, Propriety and Compliance

As Accounting Officer of Whinless Down Academy Trust I have considered my responsibility to notify the academy trust board of trustees and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) of material irregularity, impropriety and non-compliance with ESFA terms and conditions of funding, under the funding agreement in place between the academy trust and the Secretary of State for Education. As part of my consideration I have had due regard to the requirements of the Academies Financial Handbook 2016.

I confirm that I and the academy trust board of trustees are able to identify any material irregular or improper use of funds by the academy trust, or material non-compliance with the terms and conditions of funding under the academy trust's funding agreement and the Academies Financial Handbook 2016.

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



Anne Siggins
Accounting Officer

Date: 30 November 2017

Whinless Down Academy Trust
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Statement of Trustees' responsibilities
For the year ended 31 August 2017

The Trustees (who act as governors of Whinless Down Academy Trust and are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Strategic report, the Trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the Annual Accounts Direction issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP 2015 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2016 to 2017;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

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

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

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

Approved by order of the members of the Board of Trustees on 30 November 2017 and signed on its behalf by:



Alison MacKintosh
Chair of Trustees

Whinless Down Academy Trust
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Independent auditors' report on the financial statements to the members of Whinless Down Academy Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Whinless Down Academy Trust (the 'academy') for the year ended 31 August 2017 which comprise the Statement of financial activities incorporating income and expenditure account, the Balance sheet, the Statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law, United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland', the Charities SORP 2015 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2016 to 2017 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

This report is made solely to the academy's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the academy's members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the academy and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the academy's affairs as at 31 August 2017 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities SORP 2015 and the Academies Accounts Direction 2016 to 2017 issued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the academy in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the academy's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.