

Summary Annual Report 2022/23



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Chair's Introduction

During the year, Lady (Jacqueline) Evans stepped down as Chair of the Trust Board after many years of exemplary service. During this time she oversaw the establishment and growth of the Trust and demonstrated great commitment to the Christian ethos and quality of education of the Trust to the benefit of all its pupils and staff.

I am proud to have been appointed Chair since April 2023, and to have the opportunity to work with our Trustees and leadership to deliver outstanding education and teacher teaching and development to provide the very best education for our children and young people. The Board of Trustees and Executive group, led by Sir Ian Bauckham CBE, have been working tirelessly, guided by a clear sense of purpose and underpinned by the values of wisdom, hope, community and dignity.

Our strategic aims focus our work across the organisation:

1. To provide high quality education to all pupils in all our schools across the age range through a broad, knowledge-rich curriculum that unlocks 'the best of what has been thought and said'
2. To provide rich personal development to form children and young people as confident, committed and engaged adults who are ready and able to make a positive contribution to the society in which they will live, in a safe and nurturing environment
3. To be the centre of outstanding teacher training and development, providing rigorous, evidence-based professional training for teachers at all stages on a local and regional scale
4. To grow the Trust sustainably as a family of schools, attracting new schools that fit the tapestry of our Trust family

Tenax is a Church of England academy trust located in West Kent and East Sussex, and currently comprises 7 primary schools (one of which is a free school and one is a school with no faith designation) alongside a large secondary school, Bennett Memorial.

The Trust also includes the Teach Kent & Sussex SCITT (School Centred Initial Teacher Training) and the Kent Teaching School Hub, operated by Bennett, as the DfE's designated Teaching School Hub for East Kent and West Kent.

The name 'Tenax' is the Latin word for 'tenacious' or 'steadfast'. We chose it because we are steadfast in our vocation to be deeply Christian and at the same time to serve the common good in all aspects of our work.

For more detailed information please see our website at www.tenaxschoolstrust.co.uk.

Finally, I would like to thank all our staff for their support and achievements during the year.

Simon Curtis
Chair of Trustees

Review of activities

During this year the Trust comprised eight schools educating 3,412 pupils aged 2-18 and employing 503 staff.

The Trust continues to work with all schools to further develop the quality of education, with a particular focus on refining curriculum planning, improving pedagogy through evidence-based teacher development, and enabling all pupils, including the disadvantaged and those with special educational needs, to achieve highly. Further, the Trust has focused on continuing to improve attendance, behaviour and personal development across our schools as the recovery from the pandemic continues. Safeguarding continues to be a priority across the Trust, and the Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies are closely attentive to their responsibility to ensure safeguarding practice is strong in all schools.

The Trust's School Centred Initial Teacher Training provision (SCITT), known as Teach Kent and Sussex, having been judged by Ofsted to be Outstanding shortly before the pandemic, has continued to operate successfully.

During the second year of operation, the Kent Teaching School Hub had significant impact across East and West Kent. We worked with 363 schools, and 1695 teachers benefited from at least one of our professional development programmes. We worked with 73% of secondary schools and 45% of primaries in our region, and our programmes are also accessed by specialist provision and Pupil Referral Units.

In this reporting period, the academic year 2022-2023, Ofsted inspections took place at Fordcombe and West Malling Primary Schools. Fordcombe was inspected in October 2022 and judged to continue to be a Good school. West Malling Primary School and The McGinty Speech and Language unit was inspected in January 2023 and also judged Good in all areas.

Financial Performance Highlights

£ Million	2023	2022	
Income	22.6	21.4	
Expenditure	(22.2)	(22.0)	
Net Income	0.4	(0.6)	
Actuarial gains	0.9	7.0	<i>Actuarial gain on Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)</i>
Funds brought fwd	29.3	22.9	
Funds carry fwd	30.6	29.3	
Pension liability	-	(0.7)	<i>Notional actuarial valuation of LGPS</i>
Restricted asset reserve	27.1	26.9	<i>Notional valuation of land & buildings</i>
"Free reserves" ¹	3.4	3.1	
Cash at Bank	5.7	4.5	

(1) *Includes a contribution to KCC for the Bennett expansion project, fee income for the delivery of the Early Career Framework and National Professional Qualifications for teachers and leaders, and remaining School Capital Allocation Funds*

Our future plans

The Trust's ethos and strategic aims are set out above. As well as prioritising the development of our schools' distinctive ethos, these aims envisage further sustainable growth in the size and number of academies. As it grows, the Trust will both continue to make the case locally and nationally for Church of England schools and fulfil its mission to incorporate non-denominational schools which share the Trust's values and approach to education. As of autumn 2023, the Trust has been asked to sponsor a further primary school, which will grow the size of the Trust once the school has been incorporated.

The Trust will continue to ensure that in all schools the curriculum is well designed, properly sequenced and enriching for pupils, and that evidence-informed and effective pedagogy is at the heart of teacher practice and professional development.

Through the work of The Kent Teaching School Hub, and our partnership with the Ambition Institute, the Trust will continue to develop its delivery of the Early Career Framework and reformed National Professional Qualifications, and we will continue actively to promote teacher development opportunities across the Trust and more widely. Following Government decisions to focus Appropriate Body (AB) responsibilities (for the recognition of teachers completing their statutory early career induction) in Teaching School Hubs, the Trust aims to become the AB of choice in the East Kent and West Kent areas.

As our communities recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and live through the challenges of rising costs of living, we will do all we can to support pupils and families to access the fullest possible range of educational opportunity.

In November 2023, it was announced that the current CEO, Sir Ian Bauckham CBE, had been appointed as interim Chief Regulator at Ofqual from January 2024. This means he will leave the Trust on 31st December 2023. Consequently, the Board has put in place an interim CEO and will recruit a new substantive CEO through open national recruitment in the early part of 2024.

We will continue to make a distinctive and high-profile contribution to education at national level through participation in national debate, review work and support for school improvement and national initiatives and projects.

All of these link to our charitable purposes.