

# Summary

# Annual Report

# 2020/21



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## Chair's Introduction

During this year, I have continued to be particularly impressed by the quality of our leadership and our colleagues' passion and dedication for providing outstanding education, especially in these exceptional circumstances during COVID-19. The Board of Trustees and Executive group, led by Ian Bauckham CBE, have been working tirelessly, guided by a clear sense of purpose.

Our educational philosophy derives from our founding values:

- We believe in the value and potential of every child and young person.
- We are committed to high standards of achievement and embrace a positive mindset that insists all students can make exceptional progress.
- We provide a rich curriculum designed to prepare pupils for future learning as they grow in knowledge and confidence.
- We invest in the expertise of our teachers by providing best in class professional development for all. We value our support staff and offer competitive employment packages for all. We aim to be an employer of choice.
- We focus on giving our pupils the richest personal development possible, so that they grow in character and acquire strong values to stand them in good stead in adult life.
- The Trust aims to maintain and further enhance its reputation for excellence in all aspects of its work.

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 runs a successful School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT), and this year Bennett was designated as the Teaching School Hub for both East and West Kent.

The name 'Tenax' is the Latin word for 'tenacious' or 'steadfast'. We chose it because we are steadfast in our belief in the value of Church of England education, and the consequent commitment to high achievement and personal growth for all young people.

For more detailed information please see our website at [www.tenaxschoolstrust.co.uk](http://www.tenaxschoolstrust.co.uk).

Finally, I would like to thank all our staff for their support and achievements during the year. I am both very proud and extremely grateful for how they have enabled our schools to remain at the forefront of developments and offer support to parents, communities and pupils.

Lady (Jacqueline) Evans  
Chair of Trustees

## Review of activities

During this year the Trust comprised eight schools educating 3309 pupils aged 2-18 and employing 428 staff.

An important focus during the 2020-2021 academic year was the continued provision of education for all our children and young people during the disruption to education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. During most of the spring term 2021 the majority of pupils were educated remotely as a result of the national closure of schools for normal attendance. The Trust continued to educate children of key workers and vulnerable pupils in school whilst providing high quality remote education to other students who were at home.

While there were no national assessments (SATs) in summer 2021, students taking qualifications including GCSEs and A Levels received Teacher Assessed Grades, and the staff and leadership at Bennett Memorial Diocesan School worked hard to ensure that these were fair and robust.

As pupils returned to school in the spring of 2021 schools across the Trust focussed on re-establishing normal school routines and expectations and on identifying and addressing gaps in learning.

Our School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT), Teach Kent and Sussex, finished its fourth operational year successfully and 59 new trainees have begun their training in September 2021.

In January 2021, Bennett Memorial Diocesan School was designated by the DfE as the Teaching School Hub for two Teaching School Hub areas covering both East and West Kent. The Kent Teaching School Hub is working in partnership with Ambition Institute to deliver the Early Career Framework (ECF) to Early Career Teachers at schools across East and West Kent, in addition to delivering the reformed suite of National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) and acting as Appropriate Body, quality assuring the statutory induction of ECTs.

This year senior leaders continued their work to develop further a knowledge-rich, subject-specific curriculum in foundation subjects in all primary schools across the Trust, and to continue the development of the teaching of early reading through effective teaching of phonics and use of appropriate early reading books.

At Bennett Memorial Diocesan School, there has been a continuing focus on growing teacher expertise in the application of research evidence to curriculum design and planning, and classroom pedagogy.

Our CEO continues to be recognised as a respected leader of education, and this year continued to support the wider sector by advising the DfE on a number of areas, including leading a Market Review of Initial Teacher Training. He continues to support the governance of Oak National Academy, and, effective January 2021, he was also appointed as Interim Chair of Ofqual.

The Trust continues to promote robust and proper business and financial management and the CFO continues to be a respected leader in this field, and a member of the ESFA's Academies Finance and Assurance Working Group. The Trust's wider central support services continue to benefit from the expertise of its HR and project management professionals, which are also at sector leading standards, and has been further strengthened by a newly-appointed Group Financial Controller and full-time Head of Governance.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trust's leadership has provided very close guidance to schools on managing the crisis, supported by frequent communication on all operational issues. The response from schools and headteachers has continued to be that the Trust offered exceptional support in all areas including provision of remote education, communications with parents and other stakeholders, risk assessment and planning for partial and then full return.

## Financial Performance Highlights

<i>£ Million</i>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	
Income <sup>1</sup>	21.0	30.7	
Expenditure	(20.3)	(18.1)	
Net Income	0.7	12.6	
Actuarial (losses)/gains	(0.4)	(0.2)	<i>Actuarial loss/gain on Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)</i>
Funds brought fwd	22.6	10.1	
Funds carry fwd	22.9	22.5	
Pension reserve	(6.5)	(5.1)	<i>Notional actuarial valuation of LGPS</i>
Restricted asset reserve	26.9	25.3	<i>Notional valuation of land &amp; buildings</i>
"Free reserves" <sup>2</sup>	2.4	2.4	
Cash at Bank <sup>3</sup>	4.3	3.7	

(1) *Prior year reflects donation of land & buildings.*

(2) *Includes a contribution to KCC for the Bennett expansion, funding for the Teaching School Hub, accumulation of reserves for school premises improvement, and remaining strategic school improvement funds.*

(3) *Increase reflects that the Trust was holding funds received in advance of the 2021/2022 financial year.*

## Our future plans

The strategic plan for the Trust envisages further growth in converter and sponsored academies, as well as new schools and expansions where demand for places exceeds current supply or where high quality provision is absent or insufficient. The Trust will continue to grow sustainably and will continue to make the case locally and nationally for Church of England schools, whilst also fulfilling its mission to incorporate non-denominational schools which share the Trust's values and approach to education.

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, the Trust will support the delivery of the Early Career Framework and reformed National Professional Qualifications. Similarly, we will continue to deliver high quality and evidence-led initial teacher training through our SCITT, Teach Kent and Sussex.

The Trust will continue to communicate its approach to the development of resilience and character in young people both through the taught curriculum, by explicit understanding on the part of teachers on how to achieve this, and through planned activities and opportunities beyond the taught curriculum.

Finally, 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.