

Company No 00018582
Charity Registration No 313999

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD
AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

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UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE GROUP,
ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018**

Company registered number	00018582
Charity registered number	313999
Registered and principal office of the Charitable Group	Worldwide House Thorpe Wood Peterborough PE3 6SB
Chief executive officer	Mr J Coles
Company secretary	Mr S Whiffen
Bankers	Barclays Bank PLC One Snowhill Snowhill Queensway Birmingham B4 6GN
Solicitors	Hewitsons LLP Elgin House Billing Road Northampton NN1 5AU Stone King LLP 91 Charterhouse Street London EC1M 6HR
Independent auditor	Grant Thornton UK LLP Chartered Accountants Statutory Auditor 4th Floor Victoria House 199 Avebury Boulevard Milton Keynes MK9 1AU

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITABLE GROUP,
ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS (Continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018**

**Senior Management team and key
management personnel
(as at 1 September 2018)**

Mr J Coles, Chief Executive Officer
Ms M Coalter, Director of People
Dame S Coates, Director of Secondary Education
Mr D Ellison-Lee, Director of Primary Education
Mrs L Johnston, Chief Financial Officer
Mr D Norrish, Group Director of Technology
Ms A Paige, Head of Strategy and Performance

Trustees

Sir A Greener (Chair) (resigned 14 December 2017)
Mr N Davidson (Chair)
Dr S Critchley
Mrs A Crowe (resigned 8 February 2018)
Mr M George
Mr B Gordon
Mr R Greenhalgh
Mr M Litchfield
Mr N Robson

Biographies for the Trustees and Senior Management team can be found at www.unitedlearning.org.uk

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

The Board presents its report together with financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2018.

Constitution and objects

United Church Schools Foundation Ltd ('UCSF') is registered with the Charity Commission (No. 313999) and is constituted as a Company limited by shares and registered in England and Wales, governed by Memorandum and Articles of Association, which were last amended in 1996.

The Company is established for charitable purposes and in accordance with its Memorandum of Association; its principal activity is to provide a liberal, practical and general education for children which includes religious instruction in the doctrine and duties of Christianity.

Details of the schools and academies operating within UCSF and its subsidiaries ('the Charitable Group') are listed later in this report.

Members of the Board (hereafter called "Trustees")

The present membership of the Board is set out under Reference and Administrative Details. All Trustees served throughout the year except where indicated. They are also the Directors of the Charitable Company for the purposes of the Companies Act.

All members of the Board of United Church Schools Trust ('UCST') hold one ordinary £5 share each for as long as they are members of the Board. There are 5 Trustees of UCST who each hold one £5 ordinary share. The Trustees of United Church Schools Foundation also hold 12,983 non-voting shares. The shares have no value.

Appointment of Trustees

Members of the Board of Trustees hold office for three years, and then resign at the end of that period. They may, with consent of the Board, remain in office for a further three years. They may then be re-appointed for a further year upon the proposal of the Chairman. At that point, they are subject to annual proposal and re-election.

The Charitable Company may increase or reduce the number of Trustees and determine their rotation. Any casual vacancy arising may be filled by the Board, the person holding office until the next General Meeting.

The training and induction provided for new Trustees is dependent upon their existing experience. Where necessary, induction will provide training on charity and educational legal and financial matters. All new Trustees are given tours of the Charitable Group's schools and academies and the chance to meet with staff and students. They are provided with copies of policies, procedures, minutes, accounts, budgets, plans and other documents that they will need to undertake their role as Trustees. Induction is tailored specifically to the individual. The Company Secretary works with the Trustees to identify training needs and steps to keep the trustees updated regarding the regulatory environment.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Governance of the Charitable Group

During the year, the Board of Trustees of UCSF held five meetings. Attendance at these meetings was as follows:

Trustee	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mr N Davidson (Chair)	3	5
Dr S Critchley	5	5
Mrs A Crowe	3	3
Mr M George	4	5
Sir A Greener	2	2
Mr B Gordon	4	5
Mr R Greenhalgh	5	5
Mr M Litchfield	5	5
Mr N Robson	5	5

UCSF has two subsidiary charitable companies, United Church Schools Trust ('UCST') which is responsible for running the Charitable Group's Independent Schools and United Learning Trust ('ULT'), which is responsible for running the Charitable Group's Academies. The Trustees of UCST and ULT have delegated their powers and functions to a committee of both Boards known as the Group Board. All Trustees from both UCST and ULT are members of the Group Board. The Group Board met for a total of 9 meetings during the year. Attendance during the year at the meetings of the Group Board was as follows:

	Group Board Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Dame Y Bevan	7	9
Mr J Coles	9	9
Mrs A Crowe	3	3
Ms Mary Curnock Cook	3	4
Mr N Davidson	8	9
Mr M George	8	9
Dr R Given-Wilson	1	5
Mr B Gordon	9	9
Sir A Greener	1	2
Mr R Greenhalgh (Chair)	9	9
Mrs L Heaver	2	2
Dame R Keeble	5	6
Mr M Litchfield	9	9
Mr D Robinson	7	9
Mr N Robson	9	9
Mrs S Squire	7	9

The Board of Trustees delegates clear responsibilities to the Schools' Local Governing Bodies ("LGBs"), whose purpose is to provide support and challenge to the school on behalf of the Board. The functions and duties of the LGBs are set out in the LGB Members' Handbook. The Group Board maintains links with the LGBs through the Company Secretary, and designated Directors for the schools. The Chairs and Vice Chairs of the LGBs are invited to attend meetings of the Education Board, which meets three times in the academic year and provide advice on strategy and education, relevant continuing

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Governance of the Charitable Group (continued)

professional development and the opportunity for sharing of best practice with their peers. The Education Board meetings further enhance communications between LGBs and the Directors.

Current governance arrangements have been reviewed. The Group's scheme of delegation has been updated and is currently going through our internal approval process. The Group Board has carried out a self-evaluation in the year, which provided reassurance about its effectiveness. The review also includes an evaluation of the quality of the data provided to the Board and its Committees. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the Chair of the Group Board has also been undertaken.

Board Committees

The Charitable Group has four committees that advise the Group Board on matters defined by their terms of reference. The Committees are the Finance Committee, the Risk and Audit Committee, the Nominations and Salaries Committee and the Education, Standards and Performance Committee. The minutes of the four Committees are made available to the Group Board and the Chair of the Risk and Audit Committee reports to the Group Board twice in the year.

The Finance Committee's purpose is to:

- ensure the Charitable Group properly plans the use of its finances and is adequately funded to undertake projected expenditure;
- review and recommend the annual budgets for approval by the Board of Trustees;
- monitor financial performance against agreed budgets;
- ensure, with the Risk and Audit Committee, that the Charitable Group's financial statements are supported accurately by management accounts
- monitor and review the Charitable Group's arrangements in relation to investments and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees in relation to the appointment and removal of investment advisors.

Attendance at Finance Committee meetings in the year was as follows:

Committee member	Meetings Attended	Out of a Possible
Mr N Davidson (Chair)	3	5
Dr S Critchley	5	5
Mrs A Crowe	3	3
Mr M George	4	5
Sir A Greener	2	2
Mr B Gordon	4	5
Mr R Greenhalgh	5	5
Mr M Litchfield	5	5
Mr N Robson	5	5

The Risk and Audit Committee for the Charitable Group advises the Trustees and met four times during the year to review the major risks to which the Charitable Group is exposed. The purpose of the Risk and Audit Committee is to:

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TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Governance of the Charitable Group (continued)

- ensure implementation of a risk management and a disaster recovery framework for the Charitable Group;
- ensure the accuracy of the Charitable Group's annual financial statements;
- ensure effective audit functions are in place (both external and internal);
- ensure adequate risk management processes are in place;
- ensure an adequate internal control environment is established.

Attendance at meetings during the year was as follows:

Committee member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Professor C Coulson-Thomas (Chair)	4	4
Mrs K Bowles	4	4
Dr S Critchley	4	4
Mr D D'Arcy Hughes	3	4
Mr N MacDonald	3	4

A Group Nominations and Salaries Committee exists to oversee the appointments of the Group Chairman and Directors and to approve Executive salaries and remuneration. The Committee is chaired by the Chair of the Group Board and includes Board members of UCSF, UCST, ULT and the Chief Executive. It is advised by the Director of People and the Company Secretary as appropriate.

The Nominations and Salaries Committee regularly reviews the terms of office, skills and attributes of the Board of Directors. On the basis of this, the Committee plans succession in order to ensure that the Board has available to it the range of skills and experience required to discharge its responsibilities. The Committee makes recommendations to the Board as to the need for new Directors and leads the process of recruitment of Directors as required, making recommendations of appointment to the Board. The Committee ensures that appointment is on merit, but also seeks to ensure that the Board reflects the diversity of the communities it serves.

In considering Executive pay, the Committee takes account of the needs of the organisation for skills, experience and personal capabilities to enable it to achieve its objectives and the price of such skills in the labour market. The Committee considers that in order to attract and retain leaders with the skills to achieve organisational objectives, senior pay must be competitive in the marketplace, taking account of the pay rates of comparably senior and skilled employees in other organisations – particularly in comparable organisations in education, in public service and in the charitable sector, and taking account of the transferability of skills into other sectors. The Committee is also mindful of the need for charities and organisations in receipt of public funding to set pay rates which are publicly defensible and seen to be appropriate.

The Committee considers annual pay in relation to the performance of the organisation, and of individuals against their objectives and in their broader contribution and in any changes to job role.

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Governance of the Charitable Group (continued)

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Director	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mr R Greenhalgh (Chair)	3	3
Mrs A Crowe	1	1
Sir A Greener	1	1
Mr N Robson	3	3
Mr D Robinson	2	3
Mrs S Squire	1	1

The Group Education Standards and Performance Committee's purpose is to:

- ensure that the highest possible standards of education are set and maintained across all schools to ensure all pupils make the best progress they can
- advise the Group Board with respect to group strategic educational priorities and key performance indicators
- support the Chief Executive Officer in the creation, implementation and monitoring of the Group strategic educational priorities and key performance indicators
- review, on a regular basis, the performance, constitution, membership, terms of reference and scheme of delegation of local/regional governing bodies to ensure they are operating at maximum effectiveness

The Committee has been appointed by the Directors and will comprise no more than seven and no fewer than three members, a majority of whom will be Directors.

Attendance at meetings in the year was as follows:

Committee member	Meetings attended	Out of a possible
Mr N Robson (Chair)	3	3
Dame Y Bevan	2	3
Mr J Coles	2	3
Mrs A Crowe	1	1
Mr R Greenhalgh	2	2
Mrs L Heaver	1	1
Dame R Keeble	1	1

The 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 Charitable Group 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 the Charitable Group for the year 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and financial statements.

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Governance of the Charitable Group (continued)

Capacity to Handle Risk

The Board of Trustees has reviewed the key risks to which the Charitable Group 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 Charitable Group's significant risks, that has been in place for the year 1 September 2017 to 31 August 2018 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 Charitable Group has a risk register that identifies the key strategic risks facing the Charitable Group, the actions taken to mitigate those risks and the owners of those actions. Risk control is exercised by the senior management team, which reviews the risk register on a monthly basis. The Risk and Audit Committee considers the risk register at each of their meetings. Its views are reported to the Group Board via the Committee's minutes and the Chair's reports. Further details of the key risks are shown in risk assessment section on page 20.

The Risk and Control Framework

The Charitable Group'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 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 Group employs an internal auditor who has a direct reporting line to the Chair of the Risk and Audit Committee. The internal audit service operates with best practice professional standards and guidelines. The internal auditor independently and objectively reviews, on a continuous basis, the extent to which the internal control environment supports and promotes the achievement of the Trust's objectives, and contributes to the proper, economic, efficient and effective use of resources.

The internal auditor's role includes giving advice on internal control and performing a range of checks on the Charitable Group's core financial systems. In particular, the checks carried out in the current period included testing of payroll and purchase systems, testing of control accounts, bank reconciliations and fixed assets, testing of compliance with the scheme of delegation and internal control, a review of financial reporting, fraud investigations, testing of other fundamental financial and non-financial systems and departments, and a review of strategic and operational risks.

On a quarterly basis, the internal auditor reports to the Group Board through the Risk and Audit Committee on the operation of the systems of control and on the discharge of the Board of Directors' financial responsibilities.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Governance of the Charitable Group (continued)

For the year ended 31 August 2018, based on the work undertaken, an internal audit opinion of reasonable assurance was given on the adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's risk management, internal control and governance arrangements. The internal audit plan for the year ended 31 August 2018 was delivered as planned and no material control issues were identified.

These arrangements can provide only reasonable and not absolute assurance that assets are safeguarded, transactions authorised and properly recorded, and that material errors or irregularities are either prevented or would be detected within a timely period.

Chief Executive

The Trustees delegate the day to day responsibility of the running of the Charitable Group to the Chief Executive.

Connected charities

There is a relationship between United Church Schools Foundation Ltd and other charities as set out in note 31.

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Strategic report

Objectives, strategies and activities

About United Learning

Founded in 1883 as an educational charity anchored in the Church of England, the Charitable Group manages the operation of a group of Independent Schools to provide education for students of different abilities between the ages of 2 and 18. Its admission policies welcome people from all employment, faiths and backgrounds.

In 2001, it created a subsidiary charity, United Learning Trust ("ULT") to extend its work into some of the most challenging inner city areas through the City Academy programme.

As at 31 August 2018, the Charitable Company sponsors 51 state sector academies through ULT.

The overall aim of the Charitable Group is to promote excellent education, providing strong schools which enable all young people to make a success of their lives. The roots of our charity can be traced back 135 years, and over this period, we have founded and developed a large number of schools, focused on the most important social and educational challenges of the day. Our strength as a group of schools lies in the unique collaboration between the state and independent sectors, in our national reach and growing regional clusters and in our dedication to continuous improvement and our pursuit of excellence. Our track record in some of the country's most challenging schools is based on structures and systems which ensure high expectations, rigour, enthusiasm and breadth.

As of 31 August 2018, United Learning – the trading name of the Charitable Group – comprises 12 independent schools operated within UCST, 51 state sector academies operated within ULT and a central office function that serves all our schools.

Framework for Excellence

Our 'Framework for Excellence' sets out the principles of an excellent education that we follow as a Group. At the heart of this framework are two principles which articulate what we think schools should provide for young people: 'powerful knowledge' and 'education with character'. The first is about giving young people the knowledge, understanding and cognitive skills they will need to make a success of their lives; the second is about the development of the broader traits, personal qualities and dispositions they will need.

Powerful Knowledge

Our most important purpose is to teach young people things they would not learn outside school, which free them to think and act more powerfully in their lives. This includes succeeding in examinations and gaining subject-based knowledge, but goes beyond it.

Improved Academic Performance

In terms of external examinations, our independent schools continue to perform well, with strong outcomes at the top grades.

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Objectives, strategies and activities (continued)

At A Level:

- 18% of entries were awarded A* (2017: 20.4%)
- 46.3% of entries were awarded A*-A (2017: 48.1%)
- 73.3% of entries were awarded A*-B (2017: 70.6%)
- The overall pass rate was 99.3% (2017: 98.9%)

Notable performances were seen at:

- AKS which saw the biggest improvement in the Group with the number of entries achieving A*-A and A*-C increased by 10 percentage points to 36% and 86% respectively;
- Hampshire Collegiate School where the number of entries achieving A*-A increased by 5 percentage points to 21%;
- Ashford School where 52% of entries achieved A*-A grades – up 4 percentage points;
- Guildford High School which maintained its strong performance with 100% of entries achieving A*-C grades.

At GCSE, the grading structure for most subjects changed this year to a numeric value with a 4 equivalent to a C in previous years. The overall percentage of entries awarded A*-A/7+ and A*-C/4+ remained unchanged from 2017 at 56% and 94% respectively. The percentage of students achieving the headline measure of five or more A* to C/9-4 including English and maths remained very high at 91%.

Particular GCSE success was seen at:

- Guildford High School where 98% of entries achieved A*-A/7+ grades;
- At Surbiton High School the equivalent figure was 77%;
- Ashford School which saw the number of students achieving 5+ A*-C/9-4 including English and maths improve by 6 percentage points to 94%;
- Dunottar School where the number of entries achieving A*-A/7+ grades rose 12 percentage points to 38%.

Over the course of the year, four schools received ISI Regulatory Compliance inspections. Banstead Prep School, Lincoln Minster School, St Ives School and Surbiton High School were judged to be compliant in all areas.

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Objectives, strategies and activities (continued)

At A Level, our academies achieved strong results:

- 16.6% of entries were awarded A* or A (17.3% in 2017)
- 40.9% of entries were awarded A*-B (42.6% in 2017)
- 96.2% of entries were awarded A*-E (97.9% in 2017)

The following academies saw notable increases in the number of entries achieving A*-B grades:

- **Paddington Academy** up 8 percentage points to 67%;
- **Kettering Buccleuch Academy** up 14 percentage points to 49%;
- **Shoreham Academy** up 6 percentage points to 45%.

The vast majority of academies saw their students secure places at Russell Group universities. Several academies also celebrated Oxbridge successes: Northampton Academy, Paddington Academy and Richard Rose Sixth Form.

At GCSE, the grading structure for most subjects changed this year to a numeric value with a 4 equivalent to a C in previous years. The Group achieved a good set of results with improvement in attainment in almost all of the key performance measures:

- 60% of students achieved 5 or more grades at A*-C/9-4 including English and maths - up from 57% in 2017;
- 63% of students achieved the basics at 4+ in both English and maths and 42% achieved this at 5+ - both a 4 percentage point increase on 2017.

A number of schools enjoyed particular improvements and successes, including:

- **The Hyndburn Academy** where 58% of students achieved five or more A*-C/9-4 grades including English and maths – an increase of 21 percentage points;
- **Walthamstow Academy** where 76% of students achieved five or more A*-C/9-4 grades including English and maths – an increase of 12 percentage points;
- **The Hurlingham Academy** where 85% of students achieved five or more A*-C/9-4 grades including English and maths – an increase of 12 percentage points;
- **Swindon Academy** which saw 49% of students achieving a 5 or more in both English and maths – up by 17 percentage points;
- **Glenmoor and Winton Academies** which saw 77% and 60% of students respectively students achieving a 5 or more in both English and maths – up by 12 and 16 percentage points.

Wye School which opened as a brand new school in 2013, saw its first set of GCSE results. 72% of students achieved five or more A*-C/9-4 grades including English and maths.

Several of our academies received Ofsted inspections over the course of the year. **Richard Rose Morton Academy**, which joined us in Special Measures, **The Hurlingham Academy** and **The Regis School** were all judged 'Good'. **Barnsley Academy**, **Kettering Buccleuch Academy** and **Lambeth Academy** were given 'Requires Improvement' judgements.

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Objectives, strategies and activities (continued)

Improving Primary School Performance

At Key Stage Two, our primary academies saw improvements in every measure:

- On the combined measure, 58% achieved the expected standard – up from 50% in 2017;
- In Reading, 69% of pupils achieved the expected standard – up from 60%;
- In Writing, 73% achieved the expected standard – up from 71%;
- In Maths, 69% achieved the expected standard – up from 68%.

There were particularly strong results on combined measures at:

- **Langford Primary** where 85% of pupils achieved the expected standard;
- **Corngreaves Academy** where 80% of pupils achieved the expected standard;
- **Timbertree Academy** where 70% of pupils achieved the expected standard;
- **Silverdale Primary Academy** where 69% of pupils achieved the expected standard.

All but four schools increased their percentage of pupils meeting the required standard in reading, writing and maths combined. The largest increases were achieved by:

- **Grange Primary Academy** – up by 26 percentage points;
- **Beacon View Primary Academy** – up by 24 percentage points;
- **William Hulme's Grammar School** – up by 19 percentage points.

As at Key Stage Two, the academies saw strong progress at Key Stage One and achieved higher scores than those achieved in 2017. On the combined measure, 64% of pupils achieved the expected target compared in 61% the year before. **Kettering Buccleuch Academy**, **Swindon Academy** and **Goresbrook School** all made gains of at least 15 percentage points.

Five primary academies were inspected over the course of the year. **Wilberforce Primary**, which previously had been placed in Special Measures, was raised two categories and judged Good. **Walthamstow Primary Academy** and **High Hazels Nursery Infant School** were also judged Good whilst **High Hazels Junior School** and **Southway Primary School** were judged to Require Improvement.

A Common Curriculum

Over the past four years, we have developed a common curriculum for our schools, spanning both primary and secondary phases and covering a range of core subjects: English, maths, science, history, geography, MFL, computing, art and PE.

These curricula are sequenced in such a way as to develop subject mastery and to encourage regular, deliberate practice from students. This is to ensure that every child across our Group gets the same core grounding in the body of knowledge needed to succeed in further study and beyond.

Over the past year in particular, we have developed shared exemplification for each of these subjects to support teachers in aiming for excellence, as well as common summative assessments to monitor pupils' progress.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Objectives, strategies and activities (continued)

Education with Character

Alongside the intellectual development of young people encompassed within our concept of 'powerful knowledge', we place significant weight on the development of the whole person. We want young people to emerge from school with the personal qualities and wider skills to make the most of their cognitive abilities.

Across our Group, we expect all our pupils to contribute to their school and to society; to try things which they think they cannot do; to persist in the face of difficulty; to become resilient in overcoming obstacles; to manage themselves; to work independently on things which challenge them; to work with others and in teams; to be courageous and caring; to lead. We encourage our schools to develop each student's personal integrity, to ensure they learn to make the right choices even when the rules are not clear.

Our schools have also continued to devise and develop their individual pupil charters – the promise they make to children about what they can expect to experience each year in addition to their normal classroom learning. As part of this, schools have dedicated extracurricular programmes and bring the curriculum to life with visits from external speakers and trips out into their local communities and beyond.

Furthermore, we encourage sustained and meaningful collaboration between our schools and others through a range of group-wide activities, initiatives and competitions designed to further develop their confidence and soft skills and to ready them for the next stages of their school careers.

Through the United Learning Partnership Fund, our pupils have enjoyed exceptional academic, sporting and cultural experiences. This has included:

- Premiering **Wassail**, a specially-commissioned choral work by Alexander L'Estrange, at Southwark Cathedral and the Royal Northern College of Music. The two events brought together over 1,000 staff and students from across our schools and won the Classic FM Best Classical Music Education Initiative award;
- **RideABC**, a group-wide national bike challenge in aid of Sport Relief – taking two central office staff members 600 miles via over 20 of our schools – celebrating the importance of sport, dance and physical wellbeing;
- **UnitedApp** which challenged Year 9 students group-wide to design their own educational app idea;
- **UnitedIDEAS** which, building on the success of UnitedApp, offered primary pupils the chance to develop 'world-changing' ideas;
- Preparing students for university success through termly residential courses over a four year period, as part of **United Access**;
- Showing Sixth Formers what university can offer them through the **Fellowship Programme**;
- A series of weekly lectures designed to broaden students' interests and understanding as part of the **Scholars Club**;
- Working in partnership with **BBC Ten Pieces** for the Group's annual cultural festival to open up the world of classical music to young people;
- Nurturing storytelling and performance techniques through local and regional **StorySLAM** competitions;
- Celebrating students' artistry through our annual **Group Art Competition**, which runs alongside the International High School Arts Festival;

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Objectives, strategies and activities (continued)

- A set of centrally-run schemes as part of our SITUPS programme, delivering interventions using sport as the tool or hook to support students in our schools. This included a new pilot programme devised in partnership with the Dame Kelly Holmes Trust (DKHT), targeted at students receiving the Pupil Premium;
- Regional cluster-based **sports competitions**;
- Continued **Sports Ambassador** visits across our schools.

Outstanding People and Leadership

Successful Staff Engagement

Our success as a group is dependent on the excellent people and leadership at all levels of our schools – across the country and centrally. This was reflected in the response rate to our Group Staff Survey which remained high at 82%. Likewise, our Overall Employee Engagement score (defined by Ipsos Mori as “an employee’s willingness to put discretionary effort into their work in the form of time, thought and energy”) was 75%. Scores on staff’s pride in their school, motivation and attitudes towards the Group’s aims and values well exceeded the UK, public sector and education norms.

Key findings include:

- 91% of staff agreed that their school strives to provide an excellent education;
- 88% said they are proud to work in their school/department;
- 82% said they understood their department/team’s objectives;
- 85% said they valued their school/department’s culture.

Developing Leaders

Our flagship Leadership Development Residential helps develop Middle and Senior Leaders towards promotional opportunities. These popular two-day training programmes are always fully subscribed and continue to be consistently evaluated as good or outstanding, with 58 leaders attending over the course of the year.

The 4 colleagues who took part in the pilot for our Trainee Headship Programme completed their training and school placements; this is a senior leadership opportunity for our most experienced Vice Principals and Deputy Heads. This offer forms part of our talent management strategy, as well as our school improvement work, which seeks to grow our group leadership pipeline. Next year, a further 9 colleagues will start the programme, which going forward includes the opportunity to complete the National Professional Qualification for Headship.

Our System Leadership programme entered year two of the programme, with 14 school leaders who are operating at a system level, attending business management training via Ashridge Business School. This three-year initiative is a central part of our growth strategy. In order to achieve our ambitions, we will need a strong supply of talented leaders able to operate at system level, whether as an Executive Head or in regional or national roles within the Group.

17 schools have also now completed our Middle Leaders Schools Programme, following its successful introduction in 2016. Another 8 of our schools are signed up to the programme for next year.

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Objectives, strategies and activities (continued)

United Teaching

During the year, 59 people signed up to United Teaching, our Initial Teacher Training Scheme, with 56 of these graduating successfully and 74% of those working in our schools as NQTs. Of those who graduated during the academic year, 92% of trainees completed their course rated Good or Better, with 54% judged to be Outstanding.

Ahead of the 2018/19 academic year, just under a further 100 trainees were recruited and attended our Summer Institute.

Growth of the Group

On 1 September 2017 the Banstead Preparatory School opened following the merger of The Priory School and Bramley School, along with Greenacre Junior School.

During the year, we were pleased to welcome the following new schools into our group:

- **Bacon's College** – a secondary school in south east London, close to several of our schools, including Lambeth Academy and The Hurlingham Academy;
- **King Richard School** – now known as Castle View Academy – a secondary school in Portsmouth located near Beacon View Primary Academy and The Victory Primary School;
- **Newstead Wood School** – a secondary school in Orpington, which joins our cluster of schools in London and the South East and will work closely with our independent schools in the area, including Surbiton High School and Guildford High School;
- **The Hyndburn Academy** – a secondary school in Lancashire which works closely with Accrington Academy;
- **Hill View Primary School** - which joins our exiting Oxfordshire cluster alongside North Oxfordshire Academy and Hanwell Fields Community School.

This year, we also agreed a three-year support contract with **Sedgehill School** in south London. Under this agreement, we provide significant educational and back office support.

Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Board of Trustees has a reasonable expectation that the Charitable Group 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 Accounting Policies.

Financial Review

The total surplus for the year amounted to £79.5m (2017 – deficit of £25.2m). Included within these results was an actuarial gain on defined benefit pension schemes of £21.8m (2017 – £35.0m). The Charitable Group is not liable to pay corporation tax. The results also include the effect of acquisitions made during the year, as disclosed on the face of the Statement of Financial Activities as acquired operations. Further details of the financial effect of the acquisitions are given in note 7 to the financial statements.

UNITED CHURCH SCHOOLS FOUNDATION LTD AND ITS SUBSIDIARY UNDERTAKINGS

TRUSTEES' REPORT INCORPORATING THE STRATEGIC REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2018

Objectives, strategies and activities (continued)

The independent schools operated by the Charitable Group during the year are as follows:

AKS
Ashford School
Banstead Preparatory School
Bournemouth Collegiate School
Dunottar School
Guildford High School
Hampshire Collegiate School
Hull Collegiate School
Lincoln Minster School
Rowan Preparatory School
St Ives (Haslemere)
Surbiton High School

The Charitable Group is a sponsor of United Learning Trust ("ULT"), a subsidiary undertaking. ULT's aim is to found and manage a group of academies under the government initiative. Academies opened/joined to date are:

Manchester Academy	September 2003
Lambeth Academy	September 2004
Northampton Academy	September 2004
Salford City Academy	September 2005
Barnsley Academy	September 2006
Paddington Academy	September 2006
Sheffield Park Academy	September 2006
Sheffield Springs Academy	September 2006
Walthamstow Academy	September 2006
North Oxfordshire Academy	September 2007
William Hulme's Academy	September 2007
Swindon Academy	September 2007
Stockport Academy	September 2007
Accrington Academy	September 2008
Midhurst Rother College	January 2009
Kettering Buccleuch Academy	September 2009
Shoreham Academy	September 2009
The Regis School	January 2012
Southway Primary School	January 2012
Beacon View Primary Academy	January 2012
Hanwell Fields Community School	February 2012
Carter Community School	April 2013
Corngreaves Academy	June 2013
Timbertree Academy	June 2013
Nova Hreod Academy	January 2013
Winton College	September 2013
Wye School	September 2013
Wilberforce Primary School	September 2013
Glenmoor School	September 2013
The Victory Primary Academy	September 2013