



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	1st	April	2023		31st	March	2024

Section A

Reference and administration details

Charity name THE DOWNS SCHOOL TRUST

Registered charity number (if any) 1094239

Charity's principal address

The Downs School

Compton

Newbury Berkshire

Postcode

RG20 6AD

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Mr C. Prosser			
2	Mr P Clark			
3	Mr A Tow			

Section B

Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Trust Deed
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Trust
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	Appointed by governing board of The Downs School

Section C

Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

The main activity of the charity is fundraising for the benefit of educational objectives.

Please note that all policies in place at The Downs School extend across the activities of The Downs School Trust.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these

Funds are raised in several ways including an annual Sponsored Walk and also a general appeal to parents for funds. This year specific

objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

fundraising was started for site improvements and new minibuses. The Trust also fundraises via the West Berkshire lottery, and this has produced a steady income stream. We have introduced some new fundraising events namely – The colour run, the pamper evening, a golf event, Bags2School and a Christmas pottery painting event, drinks at events and shows, quiz nights and golf days which have all been successful. Gift Aid is recovered from the Inland Revenue on donations where possible. This year all such funds have been distributed for the benefit of students at The Downs School. We have not transferred a significant amount of funds this year in order to save for a larger schedule of works in Summer 2024 and 2025.

The charitable status of the trust also enables it to make applications to a variety of grant making bodies when specific projects are identified. There has been 1 application for grant funding this year – Greenham Common Trust for improvements to our swimming pool improvement fund.

Section D Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

The grants we supply to The Downs School support the educational objectives of the school. The grants have supported the school in engaging students and with projects that would otherwise not have been possible.

Section E Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

Reserves are minimal, unless funds are restricted in which case reserves are held until the project is completed.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

None

Section F Other optional information

None

Section G Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s) *Rebecca Brophy*

Full name(s) Rebecca Brophy

Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc) SECRETARY

Date 21/5/2024

The Downs School Trust

Accounts to the year ending 31 March 2024

Income during the year:

Addams Family	(544.95)
Bags to School Fundraising 23-24	(777.00)
Bank Interest	(1,733.25)
Benevity Causes Donations 23-24	(4,291.73)
CAF Donations FY21-22	(40.00)
CAF Donations FY23-24	(5,820.00)
Cafe 6 Fundraising	(1,556.25)
Charities Trust Donations 23-24	(1,350.00)
Chieveley Parish Council	(959.68)
Colour Run 09.06.23	(2,252.55)
Diversity Day 09.03.23	(11.00)
Diversity Day 15.03.24	(257.73)
Diversity Day 2024	(1,123.50)
Easyfundraising	(417.01)
Empties Please Toner Recycling	(77.50)
Financial Contribution 2022-23	(107.00)
Financial Contributions FY23-24	(3,644.89)
Friends of The Downs School - Balance on closure	(2,500.00)
Fundraising Amazon Smile	(458.50)
Gift Aid	(5,407.18)
Golf Day 2022	(686.50)
House Dance 19.10.23	(63.50)
Inflatables 14.07.23	(6,857.00)
JM Entertainment Ltd (Refund)	(4,452.00)
Newbury Show - 1st Prize	(100.00)
PE Contribution 23-24	(798.00)
PE Financial Contribution 22-23	(77.00)
Pottery Event Nov 23	(146.80)
ProStrike Fundraising	(945.60)
Quiz 03.11.23	(1,497.94)
Quiz 12.05.23	(2,032.50)
Sponsored Walk 2023	(18,669.00)
Spooky Disco 20.10.23	(597.50)
Summer Fair 14.07.23	(365.00)
Tempest Photography	(1,409.30)
The Spirit of The Downs	(151.96)
West Berkshire Lottery FY23-24	(1,833.50)
Winter Celebration	(227.75)

Total income during the year (74,240.57)

Funds brought forward at 01 April 2023 (10,236.93)

Less :

Amazon-Event Sundries	55.96
Benevity Causes - Transaction Fees	489.84
CAF - Transactions Fees	141.40
Donnington Valley Ltd	670.00
Elaine Barefoot - Expenses related to events	25.98
JM Entertainment Ltd	4,452.00
Ministry of Colour	513.00
Rebecca Brophy - Expenses related to events	98.05
Schoolcomms - Transaction Fees	569.06
Summer Party - Stall Holder Refunds	60.00
SumUp Transaction Fees	8.42
Susie Segre - Expenses related to events	138.39
Tesco.com - Refreshements for events	1,067.61
The Downs School - Main School	16,581.36
West Berkshire Council - TENS Licenses	189.00

Total	25,060.07
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Balance	(59,417.43)
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Actual Balance at bank 31.03.24	59,417.43
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Difference	0.00
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The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis

West Berkshire Council – Internal Audit

Independent Examiners Report – The Downs School Trust Accounts 2023/24 (registered charity number 1094239)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Internal Audit was commissioned by the Trustees of The Downs School Trust to undertake an Independent Examination of the Trust's accounts for the year 2023/24.
- 1.2 The examination took place between the 10th and 13th June 2024. The scope was agreed before the work commenced, and the assurance provided was to be limited to confirming the accuracy of reported payments and receipts to the Trust, and the Trust balance at year end.
- 1.3 The examination was undertaken with regard to the good practice recommendations set out in the Charity Commission's guidance on Independent examination of charity accounts: Directions and guidance for examiners (CC32).
- 1.4 We would like to thank the School Business Manager (SBM) and Finance staff for their help and hospitality shown to us. The audit was undertaken by Jen Brunning, Principal Auditor.
- 1.5 Where we have made a recommendation we have used the following to categorise the significance.

	Category of weakness
Fundamental	May result in a complete breakdown of the service and or fraud or other irregularity
Significant	May result in a breakdown in the service and or fraud or other irregularity
Moderate	May result in some impact on the service
Minor	Limited impact on the service

In addition, we may raise Points to Note (PTN) where:-

- a) the control(s) in place is satisfactory, but during our sample checks we identified an occasion/a couple of occasions where the control was not being complied with; and/or
- b) we wish to make an advisory point which does not relate to a control weakness.

In these circumstances we consider it sufficient to bring these points to your attention for information/future reference without making a recommendation.

2. Approach and Findings

- 2.1. The Downs Trust is a charitable organisation established by the School to receive money raised from a variety of events in order that advantage can be taken of the Gift Aid tax refund scheme. Income is also received from other activities including West Berkshire lottery and community funds. The money raised is then distributed as grant funding to the main Downs School account.
- 2.2. The Trust's Accounts are maintained by the SBM and her staff at The Downs School using FMS ledgers. The Trust Accounts are maintained on the Downs School ledger (fund 95) under separate ledger codes. The Accounts (Income and Expenditure) spreadsheet was provided in the regular format, supplemented by an event spreadsheet recording the expenditure and funds raised for each event. We were provided with the Trust ledgers comprising a detailed breakdown of transactions, and we confirmed the accuracy of the figures on the Ledger Code Summary report.
- 2.3. We confirmed the continuity of the Trust's bank statements throughout the year and that they followed from the previous year end reconciliations. The monthly reconciliations as undertaken by The Downs School's finance team had been completed by reconciling the bank statement balance with the Unreconciled Items reports from FMS. This gave us assurance that the transactions in FMS matched those made through the bank account.
- 2.4. We note there is a substantial balance of £59,417 retained in the Trust bank account at year end; as per the year-end Trustees report, these funds are to be held by the Trust for planned projects which have not yet started. This may not comply with the terms of the charitable trust with regards to its purpose, which is to distribute funds / grants for the benefit of educational objectives.

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the School: -

- a) Determines how and when to distribute grants so that balances are not held indefinitely and run the risk of non-compliance with purpose of the charity.
- b) the ongoing need for, and use of, the Trust may need to be considered, should the School proceed with plans to pursue Academy status as part of a Multi Academy Trust. [Minor]

- 2.5. We selected and reviewed samples of income receipts, tracing monies received by direct credit, or via SchoolGateway (provided by SchoolComms) through to the Trust's bank account, verifying the source of the income and confirming that appropriate entries had been made in the ledgers for the relevant activity.
- 2.6. We reviewed payments from the Trust, comprising the grant made to the main School as set out in the Trustees Annual report, transaction fees to SchoolComms, and other payments made in relation to hosting events. We confirmed that payments were correctly approved and reported.
- 2.7. £10,886 was distributed to the main School in March 2024, via The Good Exchange, which is shown in the ledgers as 'funds distributed'. This was specifically for the refurbishment of Café 6, and the funds were held by the Trust until the work was done. We note that the accounts do not show this distribution separately from other payments to the School, which were to reimburse the school for event costs incurred, although we were advised that the Trust now operates a separate payment card, which minimises the need for reimbursement.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that the charitable distributions are shown separately in the accounts from cost reimbursements to demonstrate more clearly how the charity is meeting its stated purpose. [Minor]

- 2.8. Accounts are presented on a receipts and payments basis which is allowable under the applicable reporting guidelines. Therefore there was no examination required for accruals.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1. We conclude that the reported opening and closing balances, and payments and receipts are correctly stated in the statement of accounts.
- 3.2. The Downs Trust accumulated opening balance at 31st March 2023 was £10,237. Gross income was £74,240. The expenditure in the year was £25,060 including charitable funds distributed to the main school of £10,886. The closing balance at 31st March 2024 was £59,417, which was confirmed as the balance held in the bank account.

Jen Brunning, Principal Auditor

Julie Gillhespey, Audit Manager

July 2024