DEBATE MATE SCHOOLS LIMITED

England & Wales · Charity number 1121222

Details

Other names	DEBATE MATE LIMITED, URBANUNLTD LIMITED
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	06279466
Registered	2007-10-15
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Unit 4 The Viaduct Business Centre 364A Coldharbour Lane London SW9 8PL
Phone	07941559731
Email	info@debatemate.com
Website	www.debatemate.org

Activities

Objects: TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES, SO AS TO DEVELOP THEIR CAPABILITIES THAT THEY MAY GROW TO FULL MATURITY AS INDIVIDUALS AND MEMBERS OF SOCIETY.

Activities: Through debating, Debate Mate delivers key skill to young people in areas of high child poverty. University undergraduate debaters run after-school debating clubs in inner-city schools across the UK. Debate Mate also runs regional and national inter-school debating competitions. Learning to debate develops core skills identified by business and the government as missing in mainstream education.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training
- **Who:** Children/young People

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Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNDEFINED. IN PRACTICE NATIONAL
- Scotland
- Throughout England

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-08-31	£1,166,355	£1,200,663	£-59,804	15
2023-08-31	£1,333,722	£1,360,391	£-25,496	17
2022-08-31	£1,318,861	£1,263,109	£1,173	15
2021-08-31	£995,085	£945,696	£-54,579	17
2020-08-31	£1,057,163	£1,230,319	£-103,968	20

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
BRITT LINTNER	Chair	2013-04-25
Adebayo Odusola		2020-12-08
DANIEL TROTTER		2017-10-05
Debra Judith Sara Thompson		2016-06-28
FIONA ANN EDWARDS-STUART		
Keanna Williams		2020-12-08
Sherifat Alimi		2020-12-08

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DEBATE MATE SCHOOLS LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 1121222

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06279466
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1121222

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

31 August 2024

CAS HOUSE LIMITED
Chartered accountants & statutory auditor
151 Askew Road
London
W12 9AU

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 August 2024

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Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 August 2024

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2024.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Debate Mate Schools Limited
Charity registration number	1121222
Company registration number	06279466
Principal office and registered office	Tripod, Lambeth Town Hall 1 Brixton Hill London SW2 1RW
The trustees	Fiona Edwards-Stuart Jude Thompson Britt Lintner Tayo Alimi Adebayo Odusola Marcus Trotter Keanna Williams
Company secretary	M McCabe
Auditor	CAS House Limited Chartered accountants & statutory auditor 151 Askew Road London W12 9AU

Structure, Governance and Management

Board of Trustees

Trustees have been selected on the basis of extensive experience and knowledge of the charitable, finance and education sectors, with specialist skills in business, law, elite debating and fundraising.

The Board meets quarterly, with more regular contact between the Chair and CEO. The CEO reports to the Trustees. Trustees serve tenure of three years with the Chair's discretion to extend. Trustees are not in receipt of any benefits.

Prospective Trustees are provided with the following prior to potential appointment: A copy of:

- The Certificate of Incorporation.
- The Memorandum of Association.
- The Articles of Association.
- Change of Name Certificates.
- Financial Statements for the last three years.
- An induction document setting down the Duties of Trustees of Debate Mate Schools Limited.
- A Declaration confirming, inter alia, receipt and understanding of the above documents.
- A Declaration of Eligibility to act as a Trustee.
- A request for personal information to enable the registration of a new Director at Companies House.
- A Toolkit of Good Governance comprising Six Benchmarks of Effective Governance for Charity Boards.

Organisational Structure and Management

The company is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Chief Executive Officer, Margaret McCabe. Margaret has over twenty years' experience as a commercial barrister, combined with two decades in the voluntary sector, including work with Centrepoint (a homelessness charity for under 25s), the NSPCC Justice for Children programme, and as an advisor to Human Rights Watch. Margaret is a recipient of the UnLtd Award, recognising her contribution as a social entrepreneur with the launch of Urbanunltd Limited (name changed to Debate Mate Limited in July 2010, and to Debate Mate Schools Limited in July 2017) and the Debate Mate programme.

Strategic and significant financial decisions are made by the Board of Trustees to ensure that the charity's activities are in-keeping with its objectives. Decisions regarding operations, education and programme delivery are delegated by the CEO to the Executive Director and the Director of Operations.

The CEO is supported by the management and core team of:

- 1 Executive Director
- 1 Director of Operations
- 1 Director of Programmes
- 1 Director of Educational UK
- 1 Executive Progamme Director
- 2 Senior Programme Directors
- 5 Programme Directors
- 1 Partnerships and Admin Assistant

Objectives and Activities

Aims

Our charity's purposes, as set out in the objectives contained in the company's memorandum of association, are:

- The promotion, for the benefit of the public, of urban and cultural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation.
- The advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly amongst young people, and providing people with work experience; in particular by capitalising on the opportunities provided by the internet in providing skills and training, and with particular emphasis on confidence building by focusing on communication and interpersonal skills, as well as providing networking opportunities for the dissemination of educational and training programmes and developing areas for growth and employment.

Our aims fully reflect the purposes for which the charity was set up:

- To improve the social mobility of disadvantaged young people in the UK.
- To equip young people with key 21st Century skills, regardless of their background.
- To raise the aspirations of Debate Mate students through our peer mentoring model to inspire them to pursue tertiary education and meaningful employment.
- To provide valuable opportunities for Debate Mate students to engage with businesses from a range of key industries.
- To enable teachers to transform their teaching practice through our CPD courses, run through our Education UK programme, allowing them to use our methodology in their classrooms and to set up debating clubs in their schools.
- To work towards building a self-sustaining model by developing a robust funding methodology.

Ensuring our Work Delivers our Aims

Every year we review our programme of activities undertaken in the previous financial accounting period and assess what we achieved in terms of deliverables and their outcomes in relation to our aims and objectives. This review ensures that we are delivering the intended benefits to the disadvantaged young people we set out to help, and that we remain focused on our purposes. We also review our aims and objectives and the direction that these provide in defining future activity. The Trustees continue to refer to the Charity Commission's guidance to ensure Debate Mate's aims, objectives and future activities meet the public benefit requirement.

How our Activities are for the Public Benefit

Debate Mate's programme of activity responds to a clear set of needs:

- Social mobility in the UK is very low and there is a significant attainment gap between pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and their wealthier peers.
- Far too many British schoolchildren lack key skills, which can restrict opportunity and contribute to unemployment.
- There is a gap in provision of key skills teaching for pupils in disadvantaged areas, for example, through innovative debating programmes.

Debate Mate's charitable activities focus on delivering training to young people from areas of high child poverty for the public benefit. The charity's after-school debate club programme has been shown to improve Speaking and Listening attainment, develop key skills and raise aspirations. However, the benefit is much wider. We are working towards ensuring that each club is sustainable within each

school and that the skills imparted to pupils we have worked with are able to be passed on to other students in their school. This in turn develops a culture of debating, and a growing pride in each school we work with - benefits which have had a positive impact on local communities. In our view, no detriment or harm arises from our work.

Debate Mate's Beneficiaries

Debate Mate's charitable programmes are delivered exclusively in schools with a Free School Meals for the last 6 years (FSM-6) profile of primary >25.9% and secondary >27.1%. Teachers are instructed to ensure their club is composed of students of all abilities and has at least a third of students who are in receipt of FSM-6 or Pupil Premium. In our programme year 2023-24, approximately 4,200 young people participated with an estimated 1,680 (40%) of students in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM-6). True to our value of inclusivity, 11% of students in the sample were reported to receive Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support and 43% of pupils did not have English as their first language. National averages for these categories are SEN Support: 13.5% primary and 12.4% secondary, and pupils whose first language is not English: 22.0% primary and 18.1% secondary.

Issues to be Tackled (Need for Key Skills in the UK)

The Social Context

The UK has the lowest rate of social mobility amongst OECD countries (OECD, 2022). This manifests early, with the socio-economic backgrounds of children influencing their ability to develop and learn at school; a child growing up in poverty in the UK is more likely to achieve lower academic qualifications, have lower aspirations, and have a lower skill set than their better-off peers. This inequality has been further exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic, which disproportionately affected disadvantaged students and communities. Students that are educated in state schools and are eligible for free school meals were disproportionately affected by the pandemic (Elliot-Major et al, 2021), suffering learning losses at a much greater rate than their more affluent peers. Most notable is the impact that the pandemic has had on student's confidence in their ability to communicate due to the significant loss of learning experienced during the pandemic.

Disadvantage significantly impedes attainment and the academic, professional, and socioeconomic prospects of young people. According to government data on widening participation in higher education, only 28.1% of 15-year-olds receiving free school meals entered higher education by age 19, compared to 46.8% not receiving free school meals (July 2022). By the end of secondary school, disadvantaged students are, on average, 19.2 months behind their peers in educational attainment. This gap has widened from 18.8 months in 2022 to 19.2 months in 2023, marking the largest disparity since 2011 (The Education Policy Institute). It is widely acknowledged that this gap will only widen further due to the ongoing impacts of the cost of living crisis, which will disproportionately affect disadvantaged students and poorer households. These disparities will be felt for many generations to come.

In the current cost of living crisis, prior barriers to education have been further exacerbated for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. In its 2022 report, The Sutton Trust highlighted that in state schools, 38% of teachers said a third or more of their class were living in families facing considerable financial pressures which they felt are impacting on the children's ability to succeed in school, compared to 5% in private schools. Furthermore, teachers were seeing that an increase in students with behaviour issues was also more common in more deprived schools (72% vs 62%). At Debate Mate, we help bridge this gap by successfully teaching both hard and soft skills, as evidenced below. We also include a budget for snacks for mentors to buy the students every week. Now more than ever, this can help with both attainment and the lack of provision, with 38% of teachers having reported an increase in children coming into school hungry, which has been suggested to link to issues such as concentration in class.

The Skills Gap

It is apparent that in the UK the circumstances of birth have a huge influence on a young person's chances of success, with students in the UK born into poorer backgrounds leaving school with lower qualifications, aspirations and skill sets. The lack of social mobility in the UK keeps many families out of long-term employment, and disadvantaged young people lack the opportunities to develop key skills which are crucial to advancement in tertiary education and their careers. The OECD reports: 'children from low-income families not only spend less time in education in countries where income inequalities are high, they also have lower skills for any given level of education. The quality gap in education is hence even larger than the income gap' (2018).

The Sutton Trust (2019) emphasises the importance of the key 'life skills': 'Adult life requires a range of skills in order for people to flourish, both in the workplace and in their daily lives, from the confidence and motivation to seek challenges and complete tasks, to the interpersonal skills that aid teamwork and other social interactions. [....] However, more needs to be done to give all young people a chance, in a job market where such skills are as important as qualifications[...]'. Social and emotional skills are the bedrock of both students' well-being and academic achievement, and their importance will only grow in years to come. Resilience and optimism allows people to cope with social immobility and job insecurity; a willingness to cooperate, trust and tolerate others is essential for those living in diverse societies; and intellectual curiosity and creativity primes us for jobs that demand innovative thinking, which becomes crucial in a job market increasingly dominated by automation.

This is especially pertinent at a time when 20% of schools are cutting spending on extracurricular activities, in spite of the fact that 'learning beyond the classroom' is 'crucial' for 'skill development' (State of the Nation 2022). As of now, schools fail to hone these essential skills. This is especially true in disadvantaged areas, where social and emotional skills are lower across the board. The OECD specifically notes that "policy makers and education practitioners are seeking ways to compliment the focus on academic learning… with attention to social and emotional skills development" and that "schools would do well in providing opportunities for students to practise and learn about their creative potential in a variety of formats, such as individual and group activities, and competitive and cooperative format" (OECD 2021). Debate Mate, with its explicit focus on each of these skills and track record of improving them amongst our beneficiaries, is perfectly positioned to provide this full tool box for students.

The specific skills that Debate Mate teaches will be at the forefront of the future economy, as recently underscored by the World Economic Forum's 2023 Report into the Future of Jobs. The impact of both Covid-19 and the advance of AI is transforming the workplace. The WEF expects that every worker is expected to adapt 44% of the core skills that they are applying in the workplace in the next four years alone. Fortunately for our students, 7 of the top 10 desirable core skills according to employers are key tenets of our curriculum: analytical thinking (1), creative thinking (2), resilience, flexibility and agility (3), motivation and self-awareness (4), curiosity and lifelong learning (5), empathy and active listening (8) and leadership and social influence (9) (WEF Future of Jobs Report 2023, 38). In a landscape, therefore, where the British education system is supplying those in areas of educational disadvantage with less and less of what employers want, Debate Mate is plugging an essential gap by providing students with an essential toolkit for the workplace of tomorrow.

Our Solution

Under its Founder and CEO, Margaret McCabe, Debate Mate identified areas of high child poverty in London, and the key resources and support needed to improve social mobility amongst young people. A cost-effective, efficient and fun way of delivering these skills to disadvantaged young people was developed, which would help overcome the barriers to learning so frequently experienced amongst this demographic.

Students taking part in the Debate Mate programme develop key essential skills, which are fundamental to success in academic and professional environments. These include critical and creative thinking, communication (speaking and listening) skills and teamwork, as well as building confidence and self-esteem, resilience, leadership and self-management. These are skills that teachers acknowledge as being central to students' attainment and progression but are often challenging to teach in a classroom environment.

Importantly, the Debate Mate programme provides disadvantaged young people with the guidance and support of aspirational mentors from some of the best universities across the UK. Mentors provide an insight into higher education, further training and career paths, and act as inspirational and relatable role models for the students we work with. The mentors inspire their students to raise their aspirations and fulfil their potential. The OECD highlights the potential of mentoring schemes as part of extracurricular activities, arguing that they can help disadvantaged young people engage academically and develop skills that 'are not acquired at home' (2018). Debate Mate's unique model is highly effective for raising aspirations and developing these key skills, thereby improving social mobility.

A study by the OECD on "Preparing for the Digital School of Tomorrow" underscores the necessity of fostering critical thinking skills to enable students to navigate an information-abundant environment. Additionally, the Department for Education's framework for character education in schools emphasises the role of resilience, recognizing its significance in "cultivating students' ability to face adversity". The emphasis on these skills aligns with a broader recognition that success in the future requires a multifaceted and agile skill set. The Debate Mate approach is rooted in pedagogical theory, placing students at the centre of our approach and equipping them with the interpersonal, adaptive, and analytical skills essential for success in a technology-driven world.

Furthermore, debating is a key skill listed in the English National Curriculum at Key Stage 3, and teaching these skills is vital to helping students develop their speaking and listening early on and to aid them in their reasoning, their spoken language development, and their GCSE Spoken Language accreditation. Debating is a way to stretch the most able students, while providing opportunities to succeed for students who need more support, especially those who find written work more challenging. Debating allows students to articulate ideas first, thus improving the quality of their written outcomes, enabling students of all abilities to achieve rapid progress. It encourages students to generate new ideas, problem-solve, think quickly under pressure and respond to challenges.

Overview of Debate Mate's Activities

Debate Mate's 2023-24 charitable objectives are provided below. These are achieved through the fulfilment of our programme delivery targets and meeting our impact measurement goals:

- Through the delivery of our programmes, develop our participants' key 21st Century skills, which include critical and creative thinking, communication (speaking and listening skills), and teamwork, as well as leadership, self-management, confidence and self-esteem, and resilience. This is demonstrated in our soft and hard skills evaluations:
    - To achieve a minimum average of 80% in our soft skills evaluation at the end of each programme year and maintain a skill level increase of 1.4 in our Speaking and Listening Hard Skills Evaluation.
- To deliver Debate Mate's mentor-led after-school clubs to a minimum of 200 schools in areas of high child poverty in 2023-24, and in addition:
    - To recruit and train at least 250 inspirational mentors per year to deliver after-school clubs and maintain an average of at least 19 students per club per week.
- By employing our peer-mentoring model, raise the aspirations of the young people we work with and empower them to pursue higher education or further training and make a successful transition to the modern workforce. The success of this is measured in our soft skills evaluation and our qualitative impact measurement, such as our case studies.
- To build relationships with corporate supporters through partnerships, volunteering schemes and sponsorship, to expose students to inspiring careers and a diverse range of professionals, and to provide opportunities for meaningful interactions.

- To continue to expand bespoke new initiatives to target specific demographics and to meet identified needs, such as Debate Mate's DebateBox and Accelerate programmes for those students most at risk, and the Debate Mate Plus and the Graduate School to support older students through their progression to further education, apprenticeships or university.
- Continue to generate income through our Education UK programmes and partnerships, with a view to raise a third of our income this way.
- To restart our international summer programme in Nepal, delivered by our most experienced mentors from the UK.
- To explore additional opportunities to expand the delivery of our international summer programmes returning to pre-pandemic delivery to 2-3 countries each year.
- To continue delivery of the Virtual Core Programme thereby offering our skills training to eligible schools that are not in areas where we deliver the in-person programme.
- To offer schools a Virtual Blended Programme, where they have weekly sessions online and can attend the launch and competitions in-person.

In 2023-24, we worked in 200 primary/secondary schools – teaching, on average, more than 4,200 students every week. Each year we ensure we have the funding pledged and secured in order to run our programmes. In 2023-24 we operated in: London, Greater Manchester, the West Midlands, Liverpool, Grimsby and Cardiff plus schools across the UK on our Virtual Programme. We also launched our programme in Grimsby for the second time and worked with 8 primary and secondary schools, delivering an in-person launch event and competitions, and virtual weekly clubs. The programme launched in January and ran for 10 weeks, with the successful primary and secondary schools joining the Debate Mate Cup Finals in London and Oxford in May / June.

Core Programme

The Core Programme, Debate Mate's main initiative, is delivered to disadvantaged young people aged 9-18 attending state primary and secondary schools in the UK, typically located in inner city areas at schools with an above average percentage of children eligible for Free School Meals. The programme begins with regional launch events in November. Following these, participating students take part in one-hour, mentor-led teaching sessions for 14 weeks, as well as three weeks of national competitions. Taught in small groups by trained university student mentors, they follow a curriculum - honed over the past 15 years - designed to develop essential skills:

a) Developing confidence and style through body language, voice and spoken language.
b) Understanding how to research and analyse a subject from different viewpoints to empathise and consider context.
c) Formulating arguments coherently and logically from different standpoints, and to weigh up arguments and prioritise.
d) Listening to others and responding respectfully in a timely and appropriate way, adding weight to their own case.

Students taking part in the programme participate in Debate Mate's Urban Debate League (UDL): a nationwide debating league. Students prepare for the two rounds in their regular after-school clubs and then attend competitions at host schools in their local area. The top scoring schools nationally are invited to a final competition, which takes place in prestigious venues such as the House of Lords and the offices of our corporate supporters.

The Core Programme concludes with the Debate Mate Cup (DMC): a national competition in which all schools compete. It consists of full-day regional rounds held at local universities in March and April. The regional winners then take part in a Grand Final, held in June at inspiring venues such as the Houses of Parliament and the University of Oxford.

The Virtual Core Programme continued to run (now in its third year). We made the decision to increase the number of teaching weeks and include an additional competition to keep students' engaged. Therefore, it ran for 12 weeks and was delivered to 4 schools. The programme included an energetic virtual Launch event with an introduction and overview of the programme for students and a show debate plus 2 virtual competitions. Furthermore, in 2023-24 the Grimsby Programme continued to run with virtual weekly sessions and an in-person launch and competitions.

Additional Programme

Debate Mate offers a range of additional programmes that run alongside the Core Programme in schools in the UK.

Advanced Programme

The **Graduate School** is a programme delivered to students aged 15-18 who have successfully completed the Core Programme, providing them with further debate training to compete in national schools' competitions and to develop into social leaders and future professionals. Delivered over 15 weeks, participants attend either a weekly session in-person (in London) or online that include debating workshops with experienced university debaters, and skills sessions with professionals from various sectors. This programme empowers students to raise their aspirations in terms of their debating potential, higher education and career goals, and to reach out to their local communities to share their skills.

In our 2023-24 programme year, 85 unique students from London, Manchester, West Midlands and Cardiff attended from 24 schools with a weekly average of 23 students either in-person or online. The average number of students in receipt of Free School Meals in the past 6 years was 43.4% for the schools attending Graduate School – this is significantly higher than the national average of 27.1% for secondary schools in England. Due to student demand, we extended the programme into June, alongside extra workshops taking place in July. We are pleased that this year, we have achieved our aim of increasing our weekly attendance to Graduate School and will work to sustain this.

The **Debate Mate Plus (DM+) Programme** bridges the gap between the Core Programme and post-18 study or work, ensuring that Debate Mate students continuously benefit from our support during their secondary education. Delivered over 16 weeks to students in years 11-13, the sessions are designed to offer students - with any level of Debate Mate experience - debate training, UCAS guidance and employability skills development. Importantly, we partner with organisations that support us with facilitating meaningful interactions with professionals, such as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

11 schools across London took part in the Debate Mate Plus Programme in 2023-24.

Intervention Programme

Debate Mate's Accelerate Programme targets students who have more serious academic and behavioural challenges. Schools involved are asked to select groups of students who are at risk of exclusion or are generally disengaged with education. The programme aims to motivate students to embrace learning, develop students' engagement in the classroom, improve behaviour, equip participants with key skills and raise aspirations. In our 2023-24 programme year, we were pleased to have 19 primary and secondary schools participate in the Accelerate Programme. Accelerate clubs were run in London, Manchester, Liverpool and the West Midlands. In the 2023-24 programme year, over 200 students took part in the Accelerate programme.

The DebateBox Programme, an additional behavioural intervention scheme, focuses on the shared skills needed to excel in both boxing and debating: strategy, discipline, and competitive thinking. Sessions include one hour of debating followed by one hour of boxing. DebateBox was delivered to 7 schools in our 2023-24 programme year through 2 programmes: one beginning in October and the other in May.

International Programme

Debate Mate's was delighted to return, in-person, to Nepal and to work for the first time in Sri Lanka in summer 2024. This was the first time we have run our international programmes in-person, since the pandemic.

Nepal

We continued to work in partnership with the Samata Shiksha Niketan Bamboo Schools in Nepal and a team of Debate Mate staff and mentors delivered our programme.

Over the course of our visit, we delivered debate training to 500 students across three key locations: Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, and Pokhara. Throughout the programme, we ran intensive debate workshops tailored to students in Years 8-10. Despite varying levels of English proficiency, particularly between different regions, students demonstrated incredible enthusiasm and progress. The programme culminated in a national competition in Kathmandu, where teams from all three locations competed in lively debates on topics such as education incentives and the role of tourism in Nepal's development. The final, held in front of all of the students at the Kathmandu Samata School, saw Mount Everest School from Pokhara emerge victorious after a compelling debate.

Sri Lanka

In 2024, Debate Mate launched its first-ever programme in Sri Lanka, working in partnership with Learn for Life Lanka, a local educational organisation. This pilot initiative took place in Colombo, delivering intensive debate training to 250 students from 15 schools, as well as CPD (continuing professional development) for 65 teachers. By incorporating debate into their pedagogy, teachers gained valuable tools to enhance student engagement and critical-thinking in the classroom. The student training sessions, held at Khairiya Girls' College, focused on fundamental debating techniques, confidence-building, and structured argumentation. With students from diverse linguistic backgrounds, we adapted our teaching approach, making use of translation support and visual learning techniques. The programme concluded with a competition, where 20 teams debated motions on social media bans, tourism, and environmental activism. The event not only celebrated student achievements but also empowered them to engage in meaningful discussions about local and global issues.

Sustainability

An integral part of the Debate Mate model is sustainability. That is, we encourage students to continue debating even after our final competitions. In order to do so, students in each club elect one president and three officers to oversee the running of the debating club once the weekly sessions with mentors have concluded. We do this to provide students with leadership roles in the school community and to foster a culture of debating that extends beyond the 17-week programme. Students become leaders of debating in their schools, teaching younger students and setting up their own clubs. We also endeavour to provide our programmes to schools and students year-on-year so that students can continue to build on their skills attainment and schools can work on integrating debating into the curriculum supported by Debate Mate's continued on-site presence.

Volunteers

Debate Mate benefits from an outstanding contribution from mentors, who are our volunteers. In our 2023-24 programme year, Debate Mate trained and allocated 349 mentors from universities in the regions where we operate, who were responsible for preparing for, reporting on, and delivering weekly sessions, as well as acting as judges at our competitions. Mentors commit to at least one teaching session per week, completing at least 17 hours of service over the course of the programme. We expect a high standard of professionalism and commitment from mentors, who therefore receive a stipend to recognise this.

The quality and impact of the Debate Mate programme is contingent on the calibre of our mentors, who act as role models for the students. We therefore significantly invest in recruiting, training, and supporting them throughout the programme to develop inspiring and committed leaders. We offer additional opportunities for mentors to develop and apply their skills, such as through our International Programmes and Education UK work. Several mentors have worked with us for a number of years and plan to translate their Debate Mate experience into a career in teaching.

Strategic Report

Achievements and Performance

Impact Measurement and Performance

Following a consultation with the New Economic Foundation in 2010, and further consultation with New Philanthropy Capital, Debate Mate designed an evaluation metric with four central goals in mind:

Goal 1: To accelerate attainment in Speaking and Listening.
Goal 2: To strengthen emotional capacity through building confidence, self-esteem and resilience.
Goal 3: To develop key implacability skills such as leadership, teamwork, critical thinking and self-management.
Goal 4: To heighten aspirations towards both tertiary education and meaningful employment.

Speaking and Listening Metric (Goal 1)

Debate Mate uses a bespoke Speaking and Listening metric designed in consultation with teachers to measure students' Speaking and Listening skills development. The skills assessed in the metric are derived from the National Curriculum at Key Stages Two and Three (Department for Education, 2014) as well as the assessment criteria for the GCSE Spoken Language accreditation devised by Ofqual (The Assessments and Qualifications Alliance, 2012). These guidelines were mapped onto the debating skills that Debate Mate teaches to form a unique, holistic metric that tracks student progress continuously from Key Stage Two up to GCSE and beyond. Debate Mate's metric tracks progress through seven skill categories:

1. Collaboration
2. Listen and Respond Appropriately
3. Articulate and Justify an Argument
4. Use of Evidence
5. Structure of Speeches
6. Style
7. Quality of Spoken Language

Each Skill Category is given a level from 0 to 8, describing a wide range of abilities that might be observed in students from Years 5 to 10. Trained Programme Directors use the metric to assess new students during their first and last debate of the year, usually falling in weeks 5 and 15 of the after-school sessions. These assessments are moderated by teachers from the schools.

In a normal year, we gather data for our hard skills evaluation initially in Week 5, and finally in Week 15. Following the lockdown of schools and resulting logistical difficulties, our usual hard skills data collection processes were disrupted. Consequently, we were unable to collect statistically significant hard skills data for the 2020-2022 programme years. The results from our bespoke Speaking and Listening metric between 2015 and 2019 and from 2022 to 2024 show that students progressed from an average Level of 2.7 in their first debate, to an average of 4.2 in their last debate thus making 1.5 levels of progress. A Level 3 student will only occasionally engage in group discussions, make relevant but unstructured arguments, and read from their notes. Comparatively, a Level 4 student will engage in group discussions, offer relevant rebuttal, create an argument that is structured clearly and delivered with confidence, use notes for reference only, and use basic persuasive devices and vocabulary.

This is a remarkable achievement, and is supported by the fact that 90% of our teachers report that Debate Mate has accelerated student progress in speaking and listening. Debating has a significant

impact on speaking and listening skills, as students learn not only to articulate their ideas in a structured way, but also to respond to other participants' points through active listening and engagement. The progress of students demonstrates our programme's ability to improve speaking and listening skills. Good speaking and listening skills form the basis of all learning in literacy and are fundamental to successful advancement to tertiary education and the modern workplace.

To complement our impact reporting on aspirations in the 2023-24 programme year, we used a set of retrospective questions that reveal changes in students' attitudes about their future. Amongst secondary school students, many of whom will soon be making decisions about what they will do upon leaving school, 90% of respondents said the skills they gained from debating will help them to succeed in further studies or training (e.g. college, university, apprenticeship). When asked to explain how debating and meeting a university mentor has affected their attitudes towards the future, students responded:

"I am learning to be more confident and as a result my everyday life is getting better." Year 7 student, George Dixon Academy, West Midlands

"I joined Debate Mate over a year ago, at the start I was under confident. My speech was like 30 seconds long and stuttered a lot. Now debating has changed me drastically, I could not thank you guys enough." Year 9 student, Holly Lodge High School, West Midlands

"What I have learned from Debate Mate can help me achieve my goal in being a lawyer or a business owner." Year 7 student, Mulberry Academy Shoreditch, London

"I believe I have been more confident which has helped me share my ideas and I can use more persuasive language. I think debate has been really beneficial for my future. " Year 9 student, Ellesmere Park High School, Manchester

"When I go to University I will be able to use the structures and persuasive techniques I learnt from Debate Mate in essays that use comparisons." Year 7 student, Lister Community School, London

Debate Mate conducted a questionnaire with the Lead Teachers at the schools we work with on the 2023-24 programme. Some comments included:

"Overall I think Debate Mate has had an incredibly positive impact and the pupils have gained a great deal from the programme." Teacher, Blue Coat Primary, West Midlands.

"Debate Mate is fantastic in building confidence and improving speaking." Teacher, London Secondary School.

"I teach a few students outside of Debate Mate, and there's an obvious improvement in their confidence when speaking in class." Teacher, London Secondary School.

"Debate Mate is oversubscribed, we don't have the space to fit the demand, great club for our PP students, most of the students on the programme become student leaders." Teacher, Sydenham School, London.

"Children who struggled with anxiety have gained self confidence." Teacher, St Mary's Catholic Primary Academy, Grimsby.

"The children have LOVED it. It has given them a real sense of pride in their ability to communicate and they have really enjoyed it." Teacher, Rhyl Community Primary School, London.

Soft Skills Metric (Goal 2,3 and 4)

The disadvantage gap index, used by the government to track the gap between the most disadvantaged students and their better-off peers, stands at 3.21 for primary school students, and 3.76 for secondary school students - the highest in over a decade (Fair Education Alliance Manifesto, 2023). Available data show that students growing up in poverty are less likely to demonstrate high levels of perseverance, self-belief, and motivation to learn - which in turn affect educational outcomes (Fair Education Alliance, 2015). In line with the Fair Education Alliance's (2023) Impact Goal Two – to 'rebalance our systems to value skills and wellbeing alongside attainment' – our programmes cultivate crucial 'non-cognitive skills' to address the widening skills gap in schools and that are crucial to students' academic success, personal well-being, and employment later in life.

Following a consultation with the New Economic Foundation in 2010, Debate Mate designed a metric to collect data on each of our measurement objectives: self-esteem and confidence, resilience, leadership, teamwork, self-management, critical thinking, and aspirations. This soft skills metric was designed in collaboration with New Philanthropy Capital.

We collect data on soft skills attainment by distributing questionnaires at our Debate Mate Cup events, this year we had 1,695 respondents. We aim for the average attainment outcome for our Core Programme to be at least 80% across all categories each year, and in 2023-24 we achieved 83% overall (82% in our national secondary evaluation, 84% in our national primary evaluation).

In total 200 schools took part in our programme in 2023-24. The results for 2023-24 from the questionnaire responses from secondary schools are as follows, reporting on students who either Strongly Agree or Agree with each statement:

	Primary Results	Secondary Results
Enjoyment/Higher Education/Career		
I enjoyed taking part in the Debate Mate sessions	100%	100%
I liked my mentor(s)	99%	94%
My mentor has been a good role model	92%	85%
The skills they have gained from debating will help me to succeed in my further studies or training (e.g. college, university, apprenticeship).	81%	90%
Confidence and Self-esteem		
I am more confident when speaking up in class	95%	95%
I am more confident giving my opinion on issues in the world around me	95%	96%
I feel like I am better at debating	99%	97%
I get less nervous when I speak in public	89%	Secondary students responded to a different question
I am more confident when meeting new people (for example, students from other schools)	93%	Secondary students responded to a different question

I am more confident when placed in a challenging or unfamiliar environment	Primary students responded to a different question	91%
Resilience and Determination		
I can concentrate better when listening to others speak	80%	Secondary students responded to a different question
I can concentrate better during debates and public speaking events	Primary students responded to a different question	79%
When my ideas are challenged, I am better at coming up with new ones	81%	78%
I can focus on a topic or task for a longer period of time	75%	Secondary students responded to a different question
I am more hard-working	79%	76%
Leadership		
I am more considerate of others' opinions and feelings	80%	77%
I have a better understanding of what makes a good leader	88%	84%
I am more likely to help others when working in a group	86%	86%
I have more experience leading a team	Primary students responded to a different question	77%
Teamwork		
I am better able to work in a group with someone who has different opinions to me	79%	79%
I am more likely to do my fair share of work when working in a group	84%	84%
I am more likely to put my ideas forward when working in a group	88%	88%
I am more respectful of others thoughts and opinions	84%	Secondary students responded to a different question
I am better able to take other people's thoughts into consideration	Primary students responded to a different question	85%
Critical Thinking		
I have more experience researching different topics	81%	79%
I am better able to come up with my own opinions and arguments	90%	90%
I am better able to respond and respectfully disagree with the ideas of others	87%	85%
Self-Management		
I use feedback to reflect on my learning and improve my skills	87%	85%
I am better at working independently	77%	74%

Teacher Questionnaire

We also distributed our teacher survey in the 2023-24 programme year, which included some questions regarding soft skills attainment to help us better understand our impact. A summary of the results is highlighted below:

Enjoyment and Skills Development	
My students enjoyed attending the Debate Mate club	97%
My students have gained confidence as a result of the Debate Mate programme	98%
My students have improved in their debating ability	98%
My students have demonstrated better teamwork and leadership skills	89%
Taking part in Debate Mate has accelerated students' progress in Speaking and Listening	90%
Debate Mate had a positive impact on my student's academic performance.	72%
Mentors	
Mentors developed a positive relationship with students	92%
Mentors demonstrated punctuality and professionalism	90%
Mentors served as positive role models for students	93%
The judges gave helpful feedback for the students	91%

The speaking and listening evaluation and our soft skills evaluation comprise our two primary methods of impact measurement. In addition to this, we carry out annual case studies and pre- and post-programme student questionnaires, as well as distributing end-of-year mentor and teacher surveys. Each of these help us to collect valuable feedback, which informs curriculum and programme changes year-on-year as well as enabling us to report on our impact.

Key Achievements 2023-24

- This year, our intervention Programme DebateBox was successfully reintroduced at Chelsea Academy, culminating in a showcase event that allowed the students to demonstrate their newfound skills. The event highlighted their ability to articulate and defend their ideas but also the discipline and mental resilience required of boxing. The programme's holistic approach, blending intellectual and physical development, empowered these young individuals, fostering a sense of achievement and self-belief. The feedback we received from the day was overwhelmingly positive, the students enjoying the event and realising they were capable of more than they thought.
- MEA Central and Burnage Academy for Boys in Manchester had the opportunity to take part in an event hosted by Debate Mate and the Manchester Museum about object repatriation, the concept of belonging and tracing heritage - this was an enlightening and engaging afternoon.

- The Cardiff Debate Mate Cup was once again held at the Principality Stadium, an incredible venue for the event, and funded by the Principality Building Society. Due to the winning team of the Cardiff DMC unfortunately being unable to attend the national finals, the Principality Building Society generously decided to award them £1000, to be spent however the school chose.
- Our Partnership with Sony Music UK this year was hugely successful. The Sony Music Group Global Social Justice Fund not only sponsored 8 Accelerate Clubs in schools in London and Manchester, but they also sponsored our Debate Mate Cup competitions! Volunteers from Sony Music UK also attended these events and gave wonderful feedback, expressing how impressed they were with our students and commenting on the exciting atmosphere of the competition.
- Following the successful programme we piloted in Grimsby last year, we were thankfully able to raise the funds to continue our work within the region. We continued the use of a hybrid model: online sessions with in-person events. This went really well, as we received an amazing response from students and teachers alike at the launch and regional DMC, as well as positive feedback for mentor performance.
- We were able to run our award winning programme Boardroom to Classroom again this year, this time with the investment management firm PIMCO, Janus Henderson, an asset management company and Frontier Economics, a consultancy firm. Through this programme, our students got the rare opportunity to learn from professionals in a holistic and collaborative environment that treats young people with maturity, and allows them space to ask genuine questions.
- Sony Music UK hosted a special afternoon for the top 3 Accelerate schools from their pitching competition. Schools from London, Manchester and Liverpool enjoyed a bespoke Boardroom to Classroom session with volunteers from Sony Music UK.
- 35 DM+ students visited Christ Church College, Oxford for a tour of the college, a talk by their Access Team on how to make a good university application and a Q&A with current undergraduates.
- Debate Mate seized a unique opportunity by hosting a special evening of debate and a panel discussion with Alastair Campbell and Gary Neville, a follow-up to the launch of Campbell's book, 'But What Can I Do?'
- This year, we ran an exclusive competition for students on our Accelerate Programme. This involved teams pitching a solution to a problem that they saw in their school to their Head Teacher and a Debate Mate staff member. The winning team was from Maghull High School and secured a new £700k investment in astroturf for their school!
- In late 2023, Debate Mate had a visit from then incoming Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer at Sydney Russell School, as he launched his ambition to teach oracy to all students in the UK. During the visit, he stated that a Labour government would "put confident speaking at the heart of" teaching in schools.
- Sydney Russell School also hosted the largest Urban Debate League round in the history of Debate Mate!
- This year, our Grand Finals competitions for the Urban Debate League and Debate Mate Cup were hosted at Salesforce Tower, Bank of America offices, Christ Church College, Oxford, Imperial College London and the University of Manchester.
- The Primary UDL final was held at Manchester University for the first time ever with Elmhurst Primary being crowned winners, while the Secondary UDL Final was held at Bank of America's offices in London and the winning team was from Central Foundation Boys' School. The Novice UDL Final was held at Imperial College London and won by the team from St Matthew's Academy.
- The Primary Debate Mate Cup Final was held at Christ Church College, Oxford this year in May, and was won by St Wilfrid's Primary School from Manchester. The Secondary Debate Mate Cup Final was hosted at the Salesforce Tower in June, situated on the Ohana floor in the second tallest building in the City of London. The winning team was from Harris Girls' East Dulwich Secondary School.

- Two of our Graduate School students reached the final of the Oxford Schools' Debating Competition, placing in the top 4 overall! This is an amazing achievement, as it is the largest British Parliamentary school-level debate competition in the world. Furthermore, those same two students won first place at the Imperial Schools' Debate Competition, other Graduate School students also managed to rank highly and even win in the novice league as well. Other Graduate School Successes include:

  - At Imperial Schools, our Graduate School students dominated the speaker rankings: Joint 1st, 3rd, joint 4th, joint 6th and joint 9th.
  - Two Graduate School students got to the final of the Mars or Bust Tournament, presenting virtually in front of Mars Society Convention in the US.
  - One Grad School student made it to Team England.

Factors and Challenges Affecting Performance

- We are pleased to have reached 200 schools in the 2023-24 year showing we are delivering our programme to a similar number of schools as pre-pandemic. The gradual return to delivering the programme to this number of schools has ensured that we have not over-stretched our finances.
- We are pleased to have increased our mentor recruitment to ensure that we have the best and most reliable individuals delivering our sessions, with a shared mission and desire to improve the lives of the most disadvantaged students.

Financial Review

Performance

We have made a deficit of £34,308 due to lower than budgeted income.

The charity has taken steps to reduce key management personnel costs by August 2026 as part of its ongoing efforts to ensure financial sustainability and operational efficiency.

The charity forecasts net surplus and positive cash flow for the next year. This does not however take into account future uncertainty and forecasted world wide recession which may affect some of the charity doners.

Fundraising Performance

We received a large proportion of our funding from trusts, foundations, corporate supporters and statutory bodies, comprising 27.5% of our income. In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of Debate Mate, we recognise the need to diversify our income streams beyond these sources. Participating schools make a financial contribution towards the running costs of the programme, comprising 35.4% of our income, and Debate Mate fundraises the remaining amount. Schools tend to use Pupil Premium funding to make this donation. Furthermore, we deliver student and teacher training in schools outside of our Core Programme, which has provided a significant amount of reliable income for the organisation, with 45% of our total income coming from this source.

Grants and Donations

Debate Mate is extremely grateful to all the organisations and people who provided financial support for our programme in 2023-24, including the following (£10,000 and over):

- Alliance Bernstein
- Bank of America
- Big Give Christmas Campaign
- BBC Children in Need
- Cardiff Council
- Deloitte Social Value/ Synergy
- Deloitte Social Value/ Government Digital Services
- Department for Education
- John Lyons Charity
- Network Space
- Neuberger Berman
- The Symondson Foundation
- Sony Music UK's Social Justice Fund
- Terra Firma Charitable Trust
- Wellington Management UK Foundation

Reserves Policy

The charity carries out diverse range of activities. The trustees have examined the requirement for general reserves and consider that, given the nature of the charity's work, reserves should be maintained at not less than three months operating costs. The trustees are of the opinion that this provides sufficient flexibility to cover temporary shortfalls in income flow and to provide adequate working capital to cover costs. The trustees plan to build up the charity's reserves to the above level over the next two years.

Risk Management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the specific operational areas of the charity and its finances. The Trustees believe that by monitoring reserve levels, ensuring controls exist over key financial systems, and by examining the operational and business risks faced by the charity, they have established systems to mitigate those risks.

Plans for Future Periods

Strategic Review

At the end of each programme year, Debate Mate conducts an annual Strategic Review, in which all members of staff evaluate their respective programmes, assess positive developments, and put forward recommendations for the next programme year. These recommendations are then discussed by the entire team and strategies are adopted to ensure that the programme continues to improve. Key recommendations agreed at the 2023-24 Strategic Review are approved by the trustees and are implemented in our 2024-25 programme year.

Future Sustainability and Strategy

This year, we successfully ran our programme in Grimsby for the second consecutive year, combining both in-person and virtual delivery. By hosting weekly sessions virtually, we've been able to connect students with exceptional mentors. In addition, students had the opportunity to attend an in-person launch event, participate in competitions, and travel to London for the Grand Finals. This innovative model has proven to be highly effective, and if funding allows, we are considering expanding it to other regions. As a result, we are now able to offer three formats of the programme: in-person, virtual, and hybrid.

Debate Mate remains dedicated to continually evolving and enhancing our programmes year after year. Alongside thorough monitoring and evaluation, we actively collaborate with our students and lead teachers to gather feedback that helps shape our planning for the current and upcoming academic years.

Looking ahead, we will continue to link students—particularly those in the Graduate Programme and Debate Mate Plus—with businesses that support our charity. As apprenticeship programmes grow and the demand for a more diverse workforce increases, Debate Mate is in a prime position to bridge the gap between school leavers and leading businesses, creating valuable employment opportunities for the young people in our programmes. We have already forged strong relationships with businesses supporting Debate Mate Plus and Graduate School, and we are committed to expanding these partnerships further.

Through our programmes, we help thousands of young people develop the confidence to speak, take on leadership roles, work collaboratively, think critically, and build resilience. We consistently see Debate Mate students thrive at university and enter the workforce as self-assured, successful individuals, with some returning as mentors and Programme Directors. Looking to the future, we are excited to help even more students achieve their goals by equipping them with vital skills through debating and peer-to-peer mentorship.

We remain focused on working towards our stated aims and objectives each year, with continuous review by our trustees to ensure alignment with the charity's legal goals.

Equal Opportunities, Access and Cultural Diversity

Debate Mate is an equal opportunities employer and encourages contributions from all sectors of the community. The company is committed to student-led and peer-to-peer learning. In the areas where Debate Mate operates, there are 200 different languages: our target groups are, by their very nature, culturally diverse. Our debate club programme works in concert with schools to support the curriculum through debating.

Safeguarding Policy

We will review our Safeguarding Policy in September 2024 as per the current policy review date. We are committed to the Safeguarding of students within our care and we regularly review and improve our procedures. Four members of staff have completed Safeguarding Training and the Director of Operations is the appointed Safeguarding Lead at Debate Mate.

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the 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 in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The auditor is deemed to have been re-appointed in accordance with section 487 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees' annual report and the strategic report were approved on 19/05/2025 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Britt Lintner
Trustee

M McCabe
Charity Secretary

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Debate Mate Schools Limited

Year ended 31 August 2024

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Debate Mate Schools Limited (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 August 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), statement of financial position, 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 and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 August 2024 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;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

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 auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC'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.

Material uncertainty related to going concern

We draw attention to note 3 in the financial statements, which indicates that the future uncertainty and forecasted recession of the UK economy along with the other matters as set forth in note 3 of the financial statements cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter. In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the director's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our discussions with the charity's management, we identified that the following laws and regulations are significant to the entity:

- Those laws and regulations considered to have a direct effect on the financial statements include UK financial reporting standards and Charity Law.
- Those laws and regulations for which non-compliance may be fundamental to the operating aspects of the charity and therefore may have a material effect on the financial statements include compliance with the charitable objectives, public benefit, fundraising regulations, safeguarding and health and safety legislation.

These matters were identified at the planning stage and the team monitored for non-compliance throughout the audit.

Audit procedures undertaken in response to the potential risks relating to irregularities (which include fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations) comprised of: inquiries of management and the Trustees as to whether the entity complies with such laws and regulations; enquiries with the same concerning any actual or potential litigation or claims; inspection of relevant legal correspondence where applicable; review of Trustee meeting minutes; testing the appropriateness of journal entries; and the performance of analytical review to identify unexpected movements in account balances which may be indicative of fraud.

No instances of material non-compliance were identified. However, the likelihood of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is limited by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the entity's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed. Irregularities that result from fraud might be inherently more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error. As explained above, there is an unavoidable risk that material misstatements may not be detected, even though the audit has been planned and performed in accordance with ISAs (UK).

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charity to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity'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 charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Cas House Limited

20.05.2025

Ibrahim T Ibrahim (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of
CAS House Limited
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor

151 Askew Road
London
W12 9AU

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities
(including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 August 2024

	Note	2024 Unrestricted funds £	2024 Restricted funds £	2024 **Total funds** £	2023 Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	**5**	572,482	358,617	**931,099**	965,260
Charitable activities	**6**	235,256	–	**235,256**	368,462
Total income		807,738	358,617	**1,166,355**	1,333,722
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of raising donations and legacies	**7**	19,916	–	**19,916**	24,577
Expenditure on charitable activities	**8,9**	824,234	356,513	**1,180,747**	1,335,814
Total expenditure		844,150	356,513	**1,200,663**	1,360,391
Net expenditure		(36,412)	2,104	**(34,308)**	(26,669)
Transfers between funds		2,104	(2,104)	–	–
Net movement in funds		(34,308)	–	**(34,308)**	(26,669)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		(25,496)	–	**(25,496)**	1,173
Total funds carried forward		(59,804)	–	**(59,804)**	(25,496)

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 33 to 42 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

Year ended 31 August 2024

	Note	2024 £	£	2023 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible fixed assets	15		523	61
Current assets				
Debtors	16	156,794		185,681
Cash at bank and in hand		18,803		38,226
		175,597		223,907
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	225,924		229,464
Net current assets			(50,327)	(5,557
Total assets less current liabilities			(49,804)	(5,496)
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		10,000	20,000
Net liabilities			(59,804)	(25,496)
Funds of the charity				
Unrestricted funds			(59,804)	(25,496)
Total charity funds	21		(59,804)	(25,496)

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 19/05/2025 and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Britt Lintner
Trustee

The notes on pages 33 to 42 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Cash Flows

Year ended 31 August 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net expenditure	**(34,309)**	(26,669)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**435**	1,008
Interest payable and similar charges	**9,534**	3,856
Accrued expenses	**12,544**	5,231
Changes in:		
Trade and other debtors	**17,854**	(46,489)
Trade and other creditors	**(5,051)**	91,763
Cash generated from operations	**1,007**	28,700
Interest paid	**(9,534)**	(3,856)
Net cash (used in)/from operating activities	**(8,527)**	24,844
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible assets	**(897)**	–
Net cash used in investing activities	**(897)**	–
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayment from borrowings	**(10,000)**	(10,000)
Net cash used in financing activities	**(10,000)**	(10,000)
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	**(19,424)**	14,844
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	**38,226**	23,382
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	**18,802**	38,226

The notes on pages 33 to 42 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 August 2024

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is Tripod, Lambeth Town Hall, 1 Brixton Hill, London, SW2 1RW.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

The charity incurred deficits and has negative net assets at the year ended 31 August 2024. The charity forecast net surplus and positive cash flow for the next year to end with a positive net assets position. This does not however take into account future uncertainty and forecasted recession in the UK and global economy that may affect some of the charity donors. The directors, having considered the above and made due enquiries, continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements which assumes that the charity will continue in operation for the foreseeable future.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Judgements and estimates cover depreciation rates, accrued and deferred income.

Foreign currency

Foreign currency transactions are initially recorded in the functional currency, by applying the spot exchange rate as at the date of the transaction. Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated at the exchange rate ruling at the reporting date, with any gains or losses being taken to the profit and loss account.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

3. **Accounting policies** *(continued)*

Incoming resources

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity, it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.

- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.

- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.

- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses. Any tangible assets carried at revalued amounts are recorded at the fair value at the date of revaluation less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Fixtures and fittings	-	20% reducing balance
Equipment	-	25% reducing balance

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Impairment of fixed assets

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

For the purposes of impairment testing, when it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, an estimate is made of the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

4. Limited by guarantee

The company has no authorised or issued share capital and is limited by guarantee of each member contributing up to £10 each on liquidation.

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**
Donations			
Donations	496,905	169,316	**666,221**
Grants			
Foundations and trusts	72,569	189,301	**261,870**
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	3,008	–	**3,008**
	572,482	358,617	**931,099**

5. Donations and legacies *(continued)*

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations			
Donations	627,511	20,734	648,245
Grants			
Foundations and trusts	125,223	190,379	315,602
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	1,413	–	1,413
	754,147	211,113	965,260

6. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Training	235,256	**235,256**	368,462	368,462

7. Costs of raising donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Fundraising and development	19,917	**19,917**	24,577	24,577

8. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**
Programmes	534,335	321,869	**856,203**
Support costs	289,899	34,644	**324,544**
	824,234	356,513	**1,180,747**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Programmes	891,656	144,305	1,035,959
Support costs	237,721	62,132	299,855
	1,129,377	206,437	1,335,814

9. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Programmes	Support costs	**Total funds 2024**	Total fund 2023
	£	£	**£**	£
Programmes	856,203	272,229	**1,128,432**	1,304,180
Governance costs	–	52,315	**52,315**	31,634
	856,203	324,544	**1,180,747**	1,335,814

10. Analysis of support costs

	Analysis of support costs activity 1	**Total 2024**	Total 2023
	£	**£**	£
Staff costs	170,884	**170,884**	166,646
Premises	20,213	**20,213**	22,339
Other support costs	81,132	**81,132**	79,236
Governance costs - Audit and accountancy fees	6,500	**6,500**	6,000
Governance costs - Legal and professional fees	36,441	**36441**	21,779
Governance cost - Finance	9,534	**9,534**	3,855
	324,544	**324,544**	299,855

11. Net expenditure

Net expenditure is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2024	2023
	£	£
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**435**	1,008

12. Auditors remuneration

	2024	2023
	£	£
Fees payable for the audit of the financial statements	**5,000**	4,800
Fees payable to the charity's auditor and its associates for other services:		
Other non-audit services	**1,500**	1,200

13. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**547,014**	601,925
Social security costs	**28,341**	32,787
Employer contributions to pension plans	**13,155**	19,981
Other employee benefits	**63,469**	57,386
	651,979	712,079

The average head count of employees during the year was 15 (2023: 17). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Number of programme staff	**14**	16
Number of management staff	**1**	1
	15	17

The number of employees whose remuneration for the year fell within the following bands, were:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
£210,000 to £219,999	**1**	1

Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total compensation paid to key management personnel for services provided to the charity was £212,710 (2023: £205,121).

14. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration, benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity or expenses were received by the trustees.

15. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Equipment £	**Total £**
Cost			
At 1 September 2023	1,860	6,372	**8,232**
Additions	–	897	**897**
At 31 August 2024	1,860	7,269	**9,129**
Depreciation			
At 1 September 2023	1,860	6,311	**8,171**
Charge for the year	–	435	**435**
At 31 August 2024	1,860	6,746	**8,606**
Carrying amount			
At 31 August 2024	–	523	**523**
At 31 August 2023	–	61	61

16. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Prepayments and accrued income	**12,382**	23,986
Trade debtors	**144,412**	161,695
	156,794	185,681

17. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Bank loans and overdrafts	**10,000**	10,000
Trade creditors	**20,965**	28,156
Accruals and deferred income	**130,152**	56,800
Social security and other taxes	**64,699**	125,508
Other creditors	**108**	9,000
	225,924	229,464

18. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Bank loans and overdrafts	**10,000**	20,000

Government backed Bounce Back Loan last monthly repayment is in June 2026.

19. Deferred income

	2024	2023
	£	£
At 1 September 2023	**50,800**	38,000
Amount released to income	**(50,800)**	(38,000)
Amount deferred in year	**122,642**	50,800
At 31 August 2024	**122,642**	50,800

20. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £13,155 (2023: £19,981).

21. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 September 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	**At 31 August 2024**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
General funds	(25,496)	807,738	(844,151)	2,105	**(59,804)**

	At 1 September 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 August 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	1,173	1,122,609	(1,153,954)	4,676	(25,496)

Restricted funds

	At 1 September 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	**At 31 August 2024**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
BBC Children In Need	–	10,000	(10,000)	–	–
The Careers & Enterprise Company	–	–	–	–	–
Four Acre Trust	–	25,000	(25,000)	–	–
John Lyon's Charity	–	30,000	(30,000)	–	–
Wellington Management UK Foundation	–	35,000	(35,000)	–	–
Bank of America Foundation	–	70,001	(70,001)	–	–

21. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

Christ Church College	–	5,700	(5,700)	–	–
The Janus Henderson Foundation	–	10,800	(10,800)	–	–
Cardiff Council	–	26,508	(26,508)	–	–
Portal Trust	–	–	–	–	–
Deloitte LLP	–	25,000	(25,000)	–	–
Sony Music Group	–	112,108	(110,004)	(2,104)	–
Hammersmith & Fulham's Discretionary Fund - LMP Action	–	8,500	(8,500)	–	–
	–	358,617	(356,513)	(2,104)	–

	At 1 September 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 August 2023 £
BBC Children In Need	–	10,500	(10,018)	(482)	–
The Careers & Enterprise Company	–	5,034	(5,034)	–	–
Four Acre Trust	–	10,000	(10,000)	–	–
John Lyon's Charity	–	30,000	(30,043)	43	–
Wellington Management UK Foundation	–	35,000	(35,506)	506	–
Bank of America Foundation	–	71,879	(68,508)	(3,371)	–
Christ Church College	–	5,700	(5,709)	9	–
The Janus Henderson Foundation	–	10,800	(11,309)	509	–
Cardiff Council	–	1,200	(1,200)	–	–
Portal Trust	–	31,000	(29,110)	(1,890)	–
Deloitte LLP	–	–	–	–	–
Sony Music Group	–	–	–	–	–
Hammersmith & Fulham's Discretionary Fund - LMP Action	–	–	–	–	–
	–	211,113	(206,437)	(4,676)	–

Restricted funds represent income received from doners with attached restriction on the application of funds to specific project or purpose, all for debating programmes. On completion of projects, balances of restricted funds are transferred to unrestricted funds where permitted.

22. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2024 £**
Tangible fixed assets	523	–	**523**
Current assets	52,954	122,642	**175,596**
Creditors less than 1 year	(103,281)	(122,642)	**(225,923)**
Creditors greater than 1 year	(10,000)	–	**(10,000)**
Net liabilities	(59,804)	–	**(59,804)**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	61	–	61
Current assets	173,107	50,800	223,907
Creditors less than 1 year	(178,664)	(50,800)	(229,464)
Creditors greater than 1 year	(20,000)	–	(20,000)
Net liabilities	(25,496)	–	(25,496)

23. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 Sep 2023 £	Cash flows £	**At 31 Aug 2024 £**
Cash at bank and in hand	38,226	(19,423)	**18,803**
Debt due within one year	(10,000)	-	**(10,000)**
Debt due after one year	(20,000)	10,000	**(10,000)**
	8,226	(9,423)	**(1,197)**

24. Related parties

During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

	Transaction value		**Balance owed by/(owed to)**	
	2024 £	2023 £	**2024 £**	2023 £
Margaret McCabe	–	–	(108)	(9,000)
Debate Mate Limited - Sales	100	14,492	–	14,241
Debate Mate Limited - Purchases	–	134,890	–	–
Debate Mate Online Limited - Sales	150	–	–	–

Debate Mate Limited and Debate Mate Online Limited are under the control of Margret McCabe who is key management of Debate Mate Schools Limited.

DEBATE MATE SCHOOLS LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 1121222

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06279466
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1121222

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

31 August 2023

CAS HOUSE LIMITED
Chartered accountants & statutory auditor
151 Askew Road
London
W12 9AU

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 August 2023

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Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 August 2023

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2023.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Debate Mate Schools Limited
Charity registration number	1121222
Company registration number	06279466
Principal office and registered office	Tripod, Lambeth Town Hall 1 Brixton Hill London SW2 1RW
The trustees	Fiona Edwards-Stuart Jude Thompson Britt Lintner (Chair) Tayo Alimi Adebayo Odusola Marcus Trotter Keanne Williams
Company secretary	M McCabe
Auditor	CAS House Limited Chartered accountants & statutory auditor 151 Askew Road London W12 9AU

Structure, governance and management

Board of Trustees

Trustees have been selected on the basis of extensive experience and knowledge of the charitable, finance and education sectors, with specialist skills in business, law, elite debating and fundraising.

The Board meets quarterly, with more regular contact between the Chair and CEO. The CEO reports to the Trustees. Trustees serve tenure of three years with the Chair's discretion to extend. Trustees are not in receipt of any benefits.

Prospective Trustees are provided with the following prior to potential appointment: A copy of:

- The Certificate of Incorporation.
- The Memorandum of Association.
- The Articles of Association.
- Change of Name Certificates.
- Financial Statements for the last three years.
- An induction document setting down the Duties of Trustees of Debate Mate Schools Limited.
- A Declaration confirming, inter alia, receipt and understanding of the above documents.
- A Declaration of Eligibility to act as a Trustee.
- A request for personal information to enable the registration of a new Director at Companies House.
- A Toolkit of Good Governance comprising Six Benchmarks of Effective Governance for Charity Boards.

Organisational Structure and management

The company is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Chief Executive Officer, Margaret McCabe. Margaret has over twenty years' experience as a commercial barrister, combined with two decades in the voluntary sector, including work with Centrepoint (a homelessness charity for under 25s), the NSPCC Justice for Children programme, and as an advisor to Human Rights Watch. Margaret is a recipient of the UnLtd Award, recognising her contribution as a social entrepreneur with the launch of Urbanunltd Limited (name changed to Debate Mate Limited in July 2010, and to Debate Mate Schools Limited in July 2017) and the Debate Mate programme.

Strategic and significant financial decisions are made by the Board of Trustees to ensure that the charity's activities are in-keeping with its objectives. Decisions regarding operations, education and programme delivery are delegated by the CEO to the Executive Director and the Educational Development Director.

The CEO is supported by the management and core team of:

- 1 Executive Director
- 1 Director of Operations
- 1 Director of Programmes
- 1 Deputy Director of Educational Development
- 1 Director of Education UK
- 2 Senior Programme Directors
- 6 Programme Directors
- 1 Assistant Programme Director

Objectives and activities

Aims

Our charity's purposes, as set out in the objectives contained in the company's memorandum of association, are:

- The promotion, for the benefit of the public, of urban and cultural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation.
- The advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly amongst young people, and providing people with work experience; in particular by exploiting the opportunities provided by the internet in providing skills and training, and with particular emphasis on confidence building by focusing on communication and interpersonal skills, providing networking opportunities for the dissemination of educational and training programmes and developing areas for growth and employment.

Our aims fully reflect the purposes for which the charity was set up:

- To improve the social mobility of disadvantaged young people in the UK.
- To equip young people with key 21st Century skills, regardless of their background.
- To raise the aspirations of Debate Mate students through our peer mentoring model to inspire them to pursue tertiary education and meaningful employment.
- To provide valuable opportunities for Debate Mate students to engage with businesses from a range of key industries.
- To enable teachers to transform their teaching practice through our CPD courses, run through our Education UK programme, allowing them to use our methodology in their classrooms and to set up debating clubs in their schools.
- To work towards building a self-sustaining model by developing a robust funding methodology.

Ensuring our Work Delivers our Aims

Every year we review our programme of activities undertaken in the previous financial accounting period and assess what we achieved in terms of deliverables and their outcomes in relation to our aims and objectives. This review ensures that we are delivering the intended benefits to the disadvantaged young people we set out to help, and that we remain focused on our purposes. We also review our aims and objectives and the direction that these provide in defining future activity. The Trustees continue to refer to the Charity Commission's guidance to ensure Debate Mate's aims, objectives and future activities meet the public benefit requirement.

How our Activities are for the Public Benefit

Debate Mate's programme of activity responds to a clear set of needs:

- Social mobility in the UK is very low and there is a significant attainment gap between pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and their wealthier peers.
- Far too many British schoolchildren lack key skills, which can restrict opportunity and contribute to unemployment.
- There is a gap in provision of key skills teaching for pupils in disadvantaged areas, for example, through innovative debating programmes.

Debate Mate's charitable activities focus on delivering training to young people from areas of high child poverty for the public benefit. The charity's after-school debate club programme has been shown to improve Speaking and Listening attainment, develop key skills and raise aspirations. However, the benefit is much wider. We are working towards ensuring that each club is sustainable within each

school and that the skills imparted to pupils we have worked with are able to be passed on to other students in their school. This in turn develops a culture of debating, and a growing pride in each school we work with - benefits which have had a positive impact on local communities. In our view, no detriment or harm arises from our work.

Debate Mate's Beneficiaries

Debate Mate's charitable programmes are delivered exclusively in schools with a Free School Meals for the last 6 years (FSM-6) profile of primary >25.5% and secondary >26.9%. Teachers are instructed to ensure their club is composed of students of all abilities and has at least a third of students who are in receipt of FSM-6 or Pupil Premium. In our programme year 2022-23, approximately 4,700 young people participated with an estimated 2,021 (43%) of students in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM-6). True to our value of inclusivity, 13% of students in the sample were reported to have Special Educational Needs (SEN) and 38% spoke English as an Additional Language (EAL). National averages for these categories are SEN: 13% primary and 12% secondary, and EAL: 21% primary and 17% secondary.

Issues to be Tackled (Need for Key Skills in the UK)

The Social Context

The UK has the lowest rate of social mobility amongst OECD countries (OECD, 2022). This manifests early, with the socio-economic backgrounds of children influencing their ability to develop and learn at school; a child growing up in poverty in the UK is more likely to achieve lower academic qualifications, have lower aspirations, and have a lower skill set than their better-off peers. This inequality has been further exacerbated by the COVD-19 pandemic.

Disadvantage significantly impedes attainment and the academic, professional, and socioeconomic prospects of young people. According to government data on widening participation in higher education, only 28.1% of 15-year-olds receiving free school meals entered higher education by age 19, compared to 46.8% not receiving free school meals (July 2022). The Education Policy Institute, in its 2023 Annual Report, stated that 'By the time they leave secondary school, disadvantaged pupils are now over 18.8 months behind their peers. It is widely acknowledged that this gap will only widen further due to the ongoing impacts of the cost of living crisis, which will disproportionately affect disadvantaged students and poorer households. These disparities will be felt for many generations to come.

In The Sutton Trust's 2019 Mobility Manifesto, Sir Peter Lampl writes that 'social mobility, the potential for those to achieve success regardless of their background, remains worryingly low across Britain...Our next government should put social mobility at the heart of their agenda', thus highlighting the importance of this issue for society as a whole. The Mobility Manifesto emphasises the need of programmes to develop key skills: 'Essential life skills (such as motivation, confidence, communication, self-control and coping with stress) are crucial to the life chances of young people'.

In the current cost of living crisis, prior barriers to education have been further exacerbated for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. In its 2022 report, The Sutton Trust highlighted that in state schools, 38% of teachers said a third or more of their class were living in families facing considerable financial pressures which they felt are impacting on the children's ability to succeed in school, compared to 5% in private schools. Furthermore, teachers were seeing that an increase in students with behaviour issues was also more common in more deprived schools (72% vs 62%). At Debate Mate, we help bridge this gap by successfully teaching both hard and soft skills, as evidenced below. We also include a budget for snacks for mentors to buy the students every week. Now more than ever,

this can help with both attainment and the lack of provision, with 38% of teachers having reported an increase in children coming into school hungry, which has been suggested to link to issues such as concentration in in class.

The OECD highlights the formative role of extracurricular programmes in improving student behaviour, academic attainment and long-term progression: 'social and emotional learning school-based programmes have also been shown to improve both behavioural and academic outcomes' (2018). However, it is increasingly difficult for students to access such opportunities due to school budget cuts, which is particularly vital considering that the majority of learning beyond the classroom (83%) is only possible when there is no associated cost to take part (Sutton Trust, 2022).

The Skills Gap

The lack of social mobility in the UK keeps many families out of long-term employment, and disadvantaged young people lack the opportunities to develop key skills which are crucial to advancement in tertiary education and their careers. The OECD reports: 'children from low-income families not only spend less time in education in countries where income inequalities are high, they also have lower skills for any given level of education. The quality gap in education is hence even larger than the income gap' (2018).

The Sutton Trust (2019) emphasises the importance of the key 'life skills': 'Adult life requires a range of skills in order for people to flourish, both in the workplace and in their daily lives, from the confidence and motivation to seek challenges and complete tasks, to the interpersonal skills that aid teamwork and other social interactions. However, more needs to be done to give all young people a chance, in a job market where such skills are as important as qualifications'. Social and emotional skills are the bedrock of both students' well-being and academic achievement, and their importance will only grow in years to come. Resilience and optimism allows people to cope with social immobility and job insecurity; a willingness to cooperate, trust and tolerate others is essential for those living in diverse societies; and intellectual curiosity and creativity primes us for jobs that demand innovative thinking, which becomes crucial in a job market increasingly dominated by automation.

This is especially pertinent at a time when 20% of schools are cutting spending on extracurricular activities, in spite of the fact that 'learning beyond the classroom' is 'crucial' for 'skill development' (State of the Nation 2022). As of now, schools fail to hone these essential skills. This is especially true in disadvantaged areas, where social and emotional skills are lower across the board. The OECD specifically notes that "policy makers and education practitioners are seeking ways to compliment the focus on academic learning... with attention to social and emotional skills development" and that "schools would do well in providing opportunities for students to practise and learn about their creative potential in a variety of formats, such as individual and group activities, and competitive and cooperative format" (OECD 2021). Debate Mate, with its explicit focus on each of these skills and track record of improving them amongst our beneficiaries, is perfectly positioned to provide this full tool box for students.

It is apparent that in the UK the circumstances of birth have a huge influence on a young person's chances of success, with students in the UK born into poorer backgrounds leaving school with lower qualifications, aspirations and skill sets.

Our Solution

Under its founder and present CEO, Margaret McCabe, Debate Mate identified areas of high child poverty in London and the key resources and support needed to improve social mobility amongst young people. A cost-effective, efficient and fun way of delivering these skills to disadvantaged young

people was developed, which would help overcome the barriers to learning so frequently experienced amongst this demographic.

Students taking part in the Debate Mate programme develop key 21st Century skills, which are fundamental to success in academic and professional environments. These include critical and creative thinking, communication (speaking and listening) skills and teamwork, as well as building confidence and self-esteem, resilience, leadership, and self-management. These are skills that teachers acknowledge as being central to students' attainment and progression, but are often challenging to teach in a classroom environment.

Importantly, the Debate Mate programme provides disadvantaged young people with the guidance and support of the best and brightest mentors from universities across the UK. Mentors provide an insight into higher education, further training and career paths, and act as inspirational and relatable role models for the students we work with. The mentors inspire their students to raise their aspirations and fulfil their potential. The OECD highlights the potential of mentoring schemes as part of of extracurricular activities, arguing that they can help disadvantaged young people engage academically and develop skills that 'are not acquired at home' (2018). Debate Mate's unique model is highly effective for raising aspirations and developing these key skills, thereby improving social mobility.

In June 2019, the CBI published a People and Skills report entitled: Getting young people 'work ready' - our vision for how education should prepare young people for the modern world. The report references the work of Debate Mate Schools on pages 20-21. It is notable that Debate Mate delivers precisely what employers are seeking in terms of their identified three pillars for work readiness: character, knowledge and skills. The schools that are working with Debate Mate are already on a path to implement recommendations of this report.

Furthermore, debating is a key skill listed in the new English National Curriculum at Key Stage 3 and teaching these skills is vital to helping students develop their speaking and listening early on and to aid them in their GCSE Spoken Language accreditation. Debating is a way to stretch the most able students, while providing opportunities to succeed for students who need more support, especially those who find written work more challenging. Debating allows students to articulate ideas first, thus improving the quality of their written outcomes, enabling students of all abilities to achieve rapid progress. It encourages students to generate new ideas, problem-solve, think quickly under pressure and respond to challenges.

Overview of Debate Mate's Activities

Debate Mate's 2022-23 charitable objectives are provided below. These are achieved through the fulfilment of our programme delivery targets and meeting our impact measurement goals:

- Through the delivery of our programmes, develop our participants' key 21st Century skills, which include critical and creative thinking, communication (speaking and listening skills), and teamwork, as well as leadership, self-management, confidence and self-esteem, and resilience. This is demonstrated in our soft and hard skills evaluations:
    - To achieve a minimum average of 80% in our soft skills evaluation at the end of each programme year, and maintain a skill level increase of 1.4 in our Speaking and Listening Evaluation.
- To deliver Debate Mate's mentor-led after-school clubs to a minimum of 180 schools in areas of high child poverty in 2022-23, and in addition:
    - To recruit and train at least 250 inspirational mentors per year to deliver after-school clubs and maintain an average of at least 18 students per club per week.
- By employing our peer-mentoring model, raise the aspirations of the young people we work with and empower them to pursue higher education or further training and make a successful transition to the modern workforce. The success of this is measured in our soft skills evaluation and our qualitative impact measurement, such as our case studies.

- To build relationships with corporate supporters through partnerships, volunteering schemes and sponsorship, to expose students to inspiring careers and a diverse range of professionals, and to provide opportunities for meaningful interactions.
- To continue to expand bespoke new initiatives to target specific demographics and to meet identified needs, such as Debate Mate's DebateBox and Accelerate programmes for those students most at risk, and the Debate Mate Plus and the Graduate School to support older students through their progression to further education, apprenticeships or university.
- Continue to generate income through our Education UK programmes and partnerships, with a view to raise a third of our income this way.
- To restart our international summer programme in Nepal, delivered by our most experienced mentors from the UK.
- To continue delivery of the Virtual Core Programme thereby offering our skills training to eligible schools that are not in areas where we deliver the in-person programme.

In 2022-23, we worked in 235 primary/secondary schools - teaching, on average, more than 4,700 students every week. We considered it expedient, due to Covid-19, to reduce the size of the programme for 2020/21 to ensure we had sufficient funding for the year. Since then we have slowly grown the programme, steadily increasing the number of schools we work with while ensuring we have secured the funding required. Therefore in the 2022-23 programme year we worked in 235 schools in London, Greater Manchester, the West Midlands, Liverpool, Grimsby and Cardiff plus schools across the UK on our Virtual Programme. We also launched our programme in Grimsby for the first time and worked with 10 primary and secondary schools, delivering an in-person launch event and competitions, and virtual weekly clubs. The programme launched in January and ran for 10 weeks, with the successful primary and secondary schools joining the Debate Mate Cup Finals in London and Oxford in May / June.

Core Programme

The Core Programme, Debate Mate's main initiative, is delivered to disadvantaged young people aged 9-18 attending state primary and secondary schools in the UK, typically located in inner city areas at schools with an above average percentage of children eligible for Free School Meals. The programme begins with regional launch events in November. Following these, participating students take part in one-hour, mentor-led teaching sessions for 14 weeks, as well as three weeks of national competitions. Taught in small groups by trained university student mentors, they follow a curriculum - honed over the past 15 years - designed to develop key 21st Century skills:

a) Developing confidence and style through body language, voice and spoken language.
b) Understanding how to research and analyse a subject from different viewpoints to empathise and consider context.
c) Formulating arguments coherently and logically from different standpoints, and to weigh up arguments and prioritise.
d) Listening to others and responding respectfully in a timely and appropriate way, adding weight to their own case.

Students taking part in the programme participate in Debate Mate's Urban Debate League (UDL): a nationwide debating league. Students prepare for the two rounds in their regular after-school clubs and then attend competitions at host schools in their local area. The top scoring schools nationally are invited to a final competition, which takes place in prestigious venues such as the House of Lords and the offices of our corporate supporters.

The Core Programme concludes with the Debate Mate Cup: a national competition in which all schools compete. It consists of full-day regional rounds held at local universities in March and April. The regional winners then take part in a Grand Final, held in June at inspiring venues such as the

Houses of Parliament and the University of Oxford.

The Virtual Core Programme continued to run after a successful pilot year; it ran for 10 weeks and was delivered to 9 schools. The programme included an energetic virtual Launch event with an introduction and overview of the programme for students and a show debate. The programme concluded with a Virtual Debate Mate Cup competition. Furthermore, in 2022-23 we launched a pilot programme in Grimsby working with 10 schools, offering in-person events and online weekly clubs.

Additional Programme

Debate Mate offers a range of additional programmes that run alongside the Core Programme in schools in the UK.

Advanced Programme

The Graduate School is a programme delivered to students aged 15-18 who have successfully completed the Core Programme, providing them with further debate training to compete in national schools' competitions and to develop into social leaders and future professionals. Delivered over 15 weeks, participants attend either a weekly session in-person (in London) or online that includes debating workshops with experienced university debaters, and skills sessions with professionals from various sectors. This programme empowers students to raise their aspirations in terms of their debating potential, higher education and career goals, and to reach out to their local communities to share their skills.

In our 2022-23 programme year, 53 unique students from London, Manchester, West Midlands and Cardiff attended from 30 schools with a weekly average of 22 students either in-person or online. The average number of students in receipt of Free School Meals in the past 6 years was 43.4% for the schools attending Graduate School - this is significantly higher than the national average of 26.9% for secondary schools in England. Due to student demand, we extended the programme into June, alongside extra workshops taking place in July. We aim to continue to increase our weekly average in the 2023-24 programme and build on the improvements made this year. The Debate Mate Plus (DM+) Programme bridges the gap between the Core Programme and post-18 study or work, ensuring that Debate Mate students continuously benefit from our support during their secondary education. Delivered over 16 weeks to students in years 11-13, the sessions are designed to offer students - with any level of Debate Mate experience - debate training, UCAS guidance and employability skills development. Importantly, we partner with organisations that support us with facilitating meaningful interactions with professionals, such as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

18 schools across London took part in the Debate Mate Plus Programme in 2022-23.

Intervention Programme

Debate Mate's Accelerate Programme targets students who have more serious academic and behavioural challenges. Schools involved are asked to select groups of students who are at risk of exclusion or are generally disengaged with education. The programme aims to motivate students to embrace learning, develop students' engagement in the classroom, improve behaviour, equip participants with key skills and raise aspirations. In our 2022-23 programme year, we were pleased to have 21 primary and secondary schools participate in the Accelerate Programme. This programme was significantly affected by the pandemic and restrictions on going into schools; it is therefore pleasing to see the programme returning to pre-pandemic numbers. Accelerate clubs were run in London, Manchester, Liverpool, the West Midlands and Cardiff. In the 2022-23 programme year, over 200 students took part in the Accelerate programme.

The DebateBox Programme, an additional behavioural intervention scheme, focuses on the shared

skills needed to excel in both boxing and debating: strategy, discipline, and competitive thinking. Sessions include one hour of debating followed by one hour of boxing. DebateBox was delivered to 2 schools in our 2022-23 programme year.

International Programme

Debate Mate's charitable activities also operate internationally, with annual summer programmes in Nepal and Rwanda. Due to the ongoing effects of COVID-19 and restrictions to travel, we were unable to deliver the programme in 2022-23.

Nepal

Historically, we have worked in partnership with the Samata Shiksha Niketan Bamboo Schools in Nepal, a team of Debate Mate staff and mentors deliver our programme every summer.

Unfortunately, we were unable to run this in the 2022-23 programme year however we hope to return to an in-person programme in 2023-24.

Rwanda

Debate Mate has been working in Rwanda every summer since 2012. In Summer 2019, we worked with a total of 380 students in Kigali and Nyaza. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19, we have been unable to run the programmes abroad. However, we are hoping to relaunch in the 2023-24 programme year and are currently exploring funding for this.

Sustainability

An integral part of the Debate Mate model is sustainability. That is, we encourage students to continue debating even after our final competitions. In order to do so, students in each club elect one president and three officers to oversee the running of the debating club once the weekly sessions with mentors have concluded. We do this to provide students with leadership roles in the school community and to foster a culture of debating that extends beyond the 17-week programme. Students become leaders of debating in their schools, teaching younger students and setting up their own clubs. We also endeavour to provide our programmes to schools and students year-on-year so that students can continue to build on their skills attainment and schools can work on integrating debating into the curriculum supported by Debate Mate's continued on-site presence.

Volunteers

Debate Mate benefits from an outstanding contribution from mentors, who are our volunteers. In our 2022-23 programme year, Debate Mate trained and allocated 423 mentors from universities in the regions where we operate, who were responsible for preparing for, reporting on, and delivering weekly sessions, as well as acting as judges at our competitions. Mentors commit to at least one teaching session per week, completing at least 17 hours of service over the course of the programme. We expect a high standard of professionalism and commitment from mentors, who therefore receive a stipend to recognise this.

The quality and impact of the Debate Mate programme is contingent on the calibre of our mentors, who act as role models for the students. We therefore significantly invest in recruiting, training, and supporting them throughout the programme to develop inspiring and committed leaders. We offer additional opportunities for mentors to develop and apply their skills, such as through our International Programmes and Education UK work. Several mentors have worked with us for a number of years and plan to to translate their Debate Mate experience into a career in teaching.

Strategic report

Achievements and performance

Impact Measurement and Performance

Following a consultation with the New Economic Foundation in 2010, Debate Mate designed an evaluation metric with four central goals in mind:

Goal 1: To accelerate attainment in Speaking and Listening.
Goal 2: To strengthen emotional capacity through building confidence, self-esteem and resilience.
Goal 3: To develop key implacability skills such as leadership, teamwork, critical thinking and self-management.
Goal 4: To heighten aspirations towards both tertiary education and meaningful employment.

Speaking and Listening Metric (Goal 1)

Debate Mate uses a bespoke Speaking and Listening metric designed in consultation with teachers to measure students' Speaking and Listening skills development. The skills assessed in the metric are derived from the National Curriculum at Key Stages Two and Three (Department for Education, 2014) as well as the assessment criteria for the GCSE Spoken Language accreditation devised by Ofqual (The Assessments and Qualifications Alliance, 2012). These guidelines were mapped onto the debating skills that Debate Mate teaches to form a unique, holistic metric that tracks student progress continuously from Key Stage Two up to GCSE and beyond. Debate Mate's metric tracks progress through seven skill categories:

1. Collaboration
2. Listen and Respond Appropriately
3. Articulate and Justify an Argument
4. Use of Evidence
5. Structure of Speeches
6. Style
7. Quality of Spoken Language

Each Skill Category is given a level from 0 to 8, describing a wide range of abilities that might be observed in students from Years 4 to 10. Trained Programme Directors use the metric to assess new students during their first and last debate of the year, usually falling in weeks 5 and 15 of the after-school sessions. These assessments are moderated by teachers from the schools.

Following the pandemic and the resulting logistical difficulties, our usual hard skills data collection processes were disrupted. Consequently, we were unable to collect statistically significant hard skills data for the 2020-2022 programme years. We were pleased that we could collect these again in 2022-23, and the results from our bespoke Speaking and Listening metric between 2015 and 2019 and in 2022-23 show that students progressed from an average Level of 2.7 in their first debate, to an average of 4.1 in their last debate (1.4 levels of progress). To contextualise this, a Level 3 student will only occasionally engage in group discussions, make relevant but unstructured arguments, and read from their notes. Comparatively, a Level 4 student will engage in group discussions, offer relevant rebuttal, create an argument that is structured clearly and delivered with confidence, use notes for reference only, and use basic persuasive devices and vocabulary. This is a remarkable achievement, and is is supported by the fact that 92% of our teachers report that Debate Mate has accelerated student progress in speaking and listening. Debating has a significant impact on speaking and listening skills, as students learn not only to articulate their ideas in a structured way, but also to respond to other participants' points through active listening and engagement. The progress of

Students demonstrates our programme's ability to improve speaking and listening skills. Good speaking and listening skills form the basis of all learning in literacy and are fundamental to successful advancement to tertiary education and the modern workplace.

To complement our impact reporting on aspirations in the 2022-23 programme year, we used a set of retrospective questions that reveal changes in students' attitudes about their future. Amongst secondary school students, many of whom will soon be making decisions about what they will do upon leaving school, 86% of respondents said the skills they gained from debating will help them to succeed in further studies or training (e.g. college, university, apprenticeship). When asked to explain how debating and meeting a university mentor has affected their attitudes towards the future, students responded:

'My mentor has taught me how to debate with respect and has boosted my self-esteem massively... When I grow up I will try to be a mentor.' Year 8, Kingsford Community School.

'My mentor used to go to Eltham Hill too and it was great to see what she had achieved.' Year 7, Eltham Hill School.

'My mentor taught me everything, she made me what I am today.' Year 6, John Scurr Primary.

'My mentor has taught me to never be afraid to speak up, and to always be respectful towards people you meet.' Year 7, Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Secondary School.

'The skills I have gained from debating have helped me persuade others and help them understand my point of view - I am sure that this will help me in my career of choice.' Year 7, Dagenham Park Secondary School.

'Debate Mate will help me be comfortable with people and speak in front of people with confidence. It gives me a chance to come out of my comfort zone. I am grateful.' Year 7, Oasis Academy Oldham.

'Debate Mate will help me be more confident in a workplace and to come up with creative opinions and ideas.' Year 10, King's Leadership Academy.

Debate Mate conducted a questionnaire with the lead teachers at the schools we work with on the 2022-23 programme. Some comments included:

"All the students really enjoyed it and got so much out of it. I think it created memories that will stick with them for the rest of their lives. I certainly felt very proud to see the elation of the students when they won... Debate Mate has been really empowering for the students, giving them a voice and giving them confidence in public speaking. " - Teacher at Havelock Academy.

"It is inspiring for the children to be invited in and be treated like valued guests in some really impressive venues and locations." - Teacher at Rotherhithe Primary School.

"Debate Mate has been an excellent experience, the students have gained skills they might not otherwise gain until much older (if at all)" - Teacher at St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy.

"Thanks for running a fantastic course over the last few months. The children have loved it all and are wanting to set up their own debate club to help younger children. The mentors were fantastic and great with the children" - Teacher at Pilgrim Academy.

Soft Skills Metric (Goal 2,3 and 4)

The disadvantage gap index, used by the government to track the gap between the most disadvantaged students and their better-off peers, stands at 3.21 for primary school students, and

3.76 for secondary school students - the highest in over a decade (Fair Education Alliance Manifesto, 2023). Available data show that students growing up in poverty are less likely to demonstrate high levels of perseverance, self-belief, and motivation to learn - which in turn affect educational outcomes (Fair Education Alliance, 2015). In line with the Fair Education Alliance's (2023) Impact Goal Two - to 'rebalance our systems to value skills and wellbeing alongside attainment' - our programmes cultivate crucial 'non-cognitive skills' to address the widening skills gap in schools and that are crucial to students' academic success, personal well-being, and employment later in life.

The Education Policy Institute's 2019 Annual Report highlights that 'By the time they leave secondary school, disadvantaged pupils are now over 18.1 months behind non-disadvantaged pupils. This gap has increased slightly from last year, by 0.2 months.' The profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on disadvantaged students has only widened this divide. There has been a significant, 11.4 percent, decline in social mobility, which has strengthened the long lasting relationship between long term outcomes and people's social or income backgrounds (Major and Eyles, 2021). Students that are educated in state schools and are eligible for free school meals were disproportionately affected by the pandemic (Elliot-Major et al, 2021), suffering learning losses at a much greater rate than their more affluent peers. Most notable is the impact that the pandemic has had on students' confidence in their ability to communicate due to the significant loss of learning experienced during the pandemic.

Following a consultation with the New Economic Foundation in 2010, Debate Mate designed a metric to collect data on each of our measurement objectives: self-esteem and confidence, resilience, leadership, teamwork, self-management, critical thinking, and aspirations. This soft skills metric was designed in collaboration with New Philanthropy Capital.

We collect data on soft skills attainment by distributing questionnaires at our Debate Mate Cup events and we aim for the average attainment outcome for our Core Programme to be at least 80% across all categories each year. In 2022-23 we achieved 86% overall (83% in our national secondary evaluation, 86% in our national primary evaluation, and 87% in our teacher evaluation). We also distributed our teacher survey, which included some questions regarding soft skills attainment to help us better understand our impact.

In total, 235 schools took part in our programme in 2022-23. The results for 2022-23 from the questionnaire responses from secondary schools are as follows, reporting on students who either Strongly Agree or Agree with each statement:

	Primary Results	Secondary Results
Enjoyment/Higher Education/Career		
I enjoyed taking part in the Debate Mate sessions	98%	98%
I liked my mentor(s)	98%	96%
My mentor has been a positive role model	93%	88%
The skills I have gained from debating will help me to succeed in my further studies or training (e.g. college, university, apprenticeship).	86%	89%
Confidence and Self-esteem		
I am more confident when speaking up in class	84%	77%

I am more confident giving my opinion on issues in the world around me	82%	78%
I am better at debating	96%	89%
Resilience and Determination		
I can concentrate better when listening to others speak	80%	80%
I find it easier to stay positive after losing (e.g. a debate or game)	76%	70%
When my ideas are challenged, I am better at coming up with new ones	82%	78%
I can focus on a topic or task for a longer period of time	76%	Secondary students responded to a different question
I am more hard-working	80%	74%
Leadership		
I am more likely to take on extra responsibilities at school and in my community	77%	67%
I am more considerate of others opinions and feelings	85%	77%
I have a better understanding of what makes a good leader	92%	85%
I am more likely to help others when working in a group	86%	80%
I have more experience leading a team	Primary students responded to a different question	76%
Teamwork		
I am better able to work in a group with someone who has different opinions to me	82%	77%
I am more likely to do my fair share of work when working in a group	87%	84%
I am more likely to put my ideas forward when working in a group	90%	85%
I am more respectful of others thoughts and opinions	89%	85%
Critical Thinking		
I have more experience researching different topics	80%	80%
I am better able to come up with my own opinions and arguments	91%	88%
I am better able to respond and respectfully disagree with the ideas of others	90%	86%
Self-Management		
I use feedback to reflect on my learning and improve my skills	86%	87%
I am better at working independently	73%	76%

Teacher Questionnaire

We also distributed our teacher survey in the 2021-22 programme year, which included some questions regarding soft skills attainment to help us better understand our impact. A summary of the results are highlighted below:

Enjoyment and Skills Development	
My students enjoyed attending the Debate Mate club	99%
My students have gained confidence as a result of the Debate Mate programme	100%
My students have improved in their debating ability	100%
My students have demonstrated better teamwork and leadership skills	100%
Taking part in Debate Mate has accelerated students' progress in Speaking and Listening	92%
Debate Mate had a positive impact on my student's academic performance.	81%
Mentors	
Mentors developed a positive relationship with students	87%
Mentors demonstrated a confident understanding of debating concepts	92%
Mentors served as positive role models for students	88%
The judges gave helpful feedback for the students	89%

The speaking and listening evaluation and our soft skills evaluation comprise our two primary methods of impact measurement. In addition to this, we carry out annual case studies and pre- and post-programme student questionnaires, as well as distributing end-of-year mentor and teacher surveys. Each of these help us to collect valuable feedback, which informs curriculum and programme changes year-on-year as well as enabling us to report on our impact.

2021-22 Key Achievements

- Congratulations to Regent's Park Primary School and Stratford School Academy who, respectively, won the Primary Debate Mate Cup Grand Final and the Secondary Debate Mate Cup Grand Final in June/July 2023.
- Well done to Ravenor Primary School, who won the Primary Urban Debate League Competition, and Sarah Bonnell School who won the Secondary Urban Debate League Competition.
- The average attendance for weekly clubs across the country returned to 20 students per school, the pre-pandemic average attendance.
- This year we piloted a successful, hybrid, 10-week programme in Grimsby. We worked with the NSPCC to target schools in Grimsby that were deemed to be most educationally disadvantaged.
- This year we piloted a successful, hybrid, 10-week programme in Grimsby. We worked with the NSPCC to target schools in Grimsby that were deemed to be most educationally disadvantaged.

- Our Core Programme of debating clubs in Wales ran for a second year, this time for 17 weeks after completing the 10-week pilot programme the previous year. This was also successful, with students on the programme ranking in the top schools in the country and subsequently competing in the Grand Finals of the Debate Mate Cup

- The Virtual Core Programme continued to successfully engage schools beyond our physical reach. This enabled nine schools from different cities and regions of England to take part in weekly debate training, and a national debating competition, where they otherwise would not have had the opportunity to do so.

- Debate Mate students took part in the Bank of America Intern Challenge. The programme saw over 200 Bank of America interns take part and collaborate with over 100 students on our Core programme across the UK. Students developed and pitched innovative ideas focusing on their local community with the help of the interns. This facilitated meaningful conversations around careers, higher education, and other aspirations for both interns and our students.

- Students took part in our Boardroom to Classroom workshop with employees from a range of companies including Bank of America and Apple this year.

- The Secondary Debate Mate Cup Grand Final was held on the iconic 37th floor of the Salesforce Tower in the heart of the City of London.

- Primary school students across the country competed in a Debate Mate Cup Grand Finals day at Christ Church College, Oxford and the Urban Debate League Grand Final was held at the Houses of Parliament where students debated in the 1922 Committee Room. They also had a tour, giving them the chance to see spaces like the Commons Chamber - where they could be debating one day!

- Debate Mate's Debate Box programme won the Community Engagement Award from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

- Debate Mate was awarded the Southwark Stands Together Award for our work in schools in the London Borough of Southwark.

- This year, our Graduate School students excelled in competitions across the UK, achieving the following:
  - Student A won the Best Novice Speaker at the Imperial Schools competition;
  - Student A and Student B broke to the Gold Finals Qualifiers at the Imperial Schools Competition;
  - Student D and Student C broke to the Oxford Finals Day of the Oxford Schools competition;
  - Student C and Student B placed 1st in two out of three rounds at the UCL Schools competition;
  - Student F and Student G broke to the Novice Semi-Finals at the Durham Schools Competition;
  - Student C and Student B broke to the Open Quarter-Finals at the Durham Schools Competition;
  - Student D and Student A placed 1st in two out of four rounds at the Durham Schools Competition;
  - Student E placed in the top ten students in the country in the Re:Solved Public Speaking Competition.

Factors and Challenges Affecting Performance

- In 2022-23 we experienced disruption to the delivery of our programmes due to transport and teacher strikes. Having gained experience from our online delivery model, we were able to continue to be flexible and offer catch up competitions and sessions virtually.
- We are pleased to have reached 235 in the 2022-23 year showing we are delivering our programme to a similar number of schools as pre-pandemic. The gradual return to delivering the programme to this number of schools has ensured that we have not over-stretched our finances.
- We have reviewed how we recruit our mentors to ensure that we have the best and most reliable individuals delivering our sessions, with a shared mission and desire to improve the lives of the most disadvantaged students.

Financial review

Performance

We have made a deficit of £26,669 due to higher staffing costs than budgeted.

The charity forecast net surplus and positive cash flow for the next financial year.

Fundraising Performance

We received a large proportion of our funding from trusts, foundations, corporate supporters and statutory bodies, comprising 22.5% of our income. In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of Debate Mate, we recognise the need to diversify our income streams beyond these sources. Participating schools make a financial contribution towards the running costs of the programme, comprising 33.0% of our income, and Debate Mate fundraises the remaining amount. Schools tend to use Pupil Premium funding to make this donation. Furthermore, we deliver student and teacher training in schools outside of our Core Programme, which has provided a significant amount of reliable income for the organisation, with 26.5% of our total income coming from this source.

Grants and Donations

Debate Mate is extremely grateful to all the organisations and people who provided financial support for our programme in 2022-23, including the following (£10,000 and over):

- Alliance Bernstein
- Bank of America
- BBC Children in Need
- Cardiff Council
- Department for Education
- Janus Henderson
- John Lyons Charity
- Network Space
- Neuberger Berman
- Now Pensions
- Transform Education
- Wellington Management UK Foundation
- The Symondson Foundation
- Prism Charitable Trust
- Guy Hands Family Trust
- Rima Horton

Reserves Policy

The charity carries out diverse range of activities. The trustees have examined the requirement for general reserves and consider that, given the nature of the charity's work, reserves should be maintained at not less than three months operating costs. The trustees are of the opinion that this provides sufficient flexibility to cover temporary shortfalls in income flow and to provide adequate working capital to cover costs. The trustees plan to build up the charity's reserves to the above level

Risk Management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the specific operational areas of the charity and its finances. The Trustees believe that by monitoring reserve levels, ensuring controls exist over key financial systems, and by examining the operational and business risks faced by the charity, they have established systems to mitigate those risks.

Plans For Future Periods

Strategic Review

At the end of each programme year, Debate Mate conducts an annual Strategic Review, in which all members of staff evaluate their respective programmes, assess positive developments, and put forward recommendations for the next programme year. These recommendations are then discussed by the entire team and strategies are adopted to ensure that the programme continues to improve. Key recommendations agreed at the 2021-22 Strategic Review are approved by the trustees and are implemented in our 2022-23 programme year.

Future Sustainability and Strategy

We plan to further enhance our virtual model, which was developed from our previous Blended Programme in response to the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the need to move our programmes online. We will continue to combine this with our peer delivery model to expand our geographical remit. Thus far, this has proven effective in allowing us to deliver our programmes to areas where we lack the resources to operate and, importantly, to reach some of the most deprived and remote schools in the UK. Using the combination of the online programme and our mentor-led delivery helps to ensure our financial sustainability and expansion in the coming years.

Debate Mate is constantly looking to build upon our successes. By carefully monitoring our progress and evaluating our impact, we hope to reach even more students and provide even better support to schools already on the programme. In the 2022-23 programme year, we plan to further refine our alumni network and connect former students with Debate Mate.

We also plan to further develop our programmes that link up students that have taken part in Debate Mate, and more specifically in the Graduate Programme and Debate Mate Plus, with businesses that support the charity and that we work with through Debate Mate Limited. The alumni network will also inspire current students and will act as relatable role models. With the rise of apprenticeship programmes and the drive for a more diverse workforce, Debate Mate is uniquely positioned to bridge the gap between school leavers and businesses - thus providing young people taking part in the Debate Mate programme with opportunities for employment in some of the top businesses in the UK. We have already developed strong relationships with businesses that support our Debate Mate Plus and Graduate School programmes and plan to continue to expand them to develop this aspect of our work.

Through each of our programmes, we help thousands of young people speak more fluently, take on leadership roles, work in teams, think critically and develop self-confidence and resilience. We continue to see Debate Mate students go through university and enter the workforce as successful, self-assured young adults, some of whom work with us as mentors and Programme Directors. As we look to the future, we plan on helping many more students achieve their ambitions by providing them with valuable 21st Century skills through debating and peer-to-peer mentorship.

We plan to continue to work towards achieving each of our stated aims and objectives year-on-year. This is constantly reviewed by the trustees to ensure they align to the charity's legal objectives.

Equal Opportunities, Access and Cultural Diversity

Debate Mate is an equal opportunities employer and encourages contributions from all sectors of the

community. The company is committed to student-led and peer-to-peer learning. In the areas where Debate Mate operates, there are 200 different languages: our target groups are by their very nature culturally diverse. Our debate club programme works in concert with schools to support the curriculum through debating.

Safeguarding Policy

We have reviewed and updated our Safeguarding Policy. We are committed to the Safeguarding of students within our care and to regularly review and improve our procedures. Four members of staff have completed Safeguarding Training and the Educational Development Director is the appointed Safeguarding Lead at Debate Mate.

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the 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 in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The auditor is deemed to have been re-appointed in accordance with section 487 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees' annual report and the strategic report were approved on 28th May 2024 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Britt Lintner
Trustee

M McCabe
Charity Secretary

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Debate Mate Schools Limited

Year ended 31 August 2023

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Debate Mate Schools Limited (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 August 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), statement of financial position, 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 and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 August 2023 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;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

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 auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC'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

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our discussions with the charity's management, we identified that the following laws and regulations are significant to the entity:

- Those laws and regulations considered to have a direct effect on the financial statements include UK financial reporting standards and Charity Law.

- Those laws and regulations for which non-compliance may be fundamental to the operating aspects of the charity and therefore may have a material effect on the financial statements include compliance with the charitable objectives, public benefit, fundraising regulations, safeguarding and health and safety legislation.

These matters were identified at the planning stage and the team monitored for non-compliance throughout the audit.

Audit procedures undertaken in response to the potential risks relating to irregularities (which include fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations) comprised of: inquiries of management and the Trustees as to whether the entity complies with such laws and regulations; enquiries with the same concerning any actual or potential litigation or claims; inspection of relevant legal correspondence where applicable; review of Trustee meeting minutes; testing the appropriateness of journal entries; and the performance of analytical review to identify unexpected movements in account balances which may be indicative of fraud.

No instances of material non-compliance were identified. However, the likelihood of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is limited by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the entity's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed. Irregularities that result from fraud might be inherently more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error. As explained above, there is an unavoidable risk that material misstatements may not be detected, even though the audit has been planned and performed in accordance with ISAs (UK).

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charity to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity'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 charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

CAS House Limited

30.05.2024

Ibrahim T Ibrahim (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of
CAS House Limited
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor

151 Askew Road
London
W12 9AU

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 August 2023

	Note	2023 Unrestricted funds £	2023 Restricted funds £	2023 Total funds £	2022 Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	754,147	211,113	**965,260**	946,575
Charitable activities	6	368,462	–	**368,462**	372,286
Total income		1,122,609	211,113	**1,333,722**	1,318,861
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of raising donations and legacies	7	24,577	–	**24,577**	37,133
Expenditure on charitable activities	8,9	1,129,377	206,437	**1,335,814**	1,225,976
Total expenditure		1,153,954	206,437	**1,360,391**	1,263,109
Net (expenditure)/income		(31,345)	4,676	**(26,669)**	55,752
Transfers between funds		4,676	(4,676)	–	–
Net movement in funds		(26,669)	–	**(26,669)**	55,752
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		1,173	–	**1,173**	(54,579)
Total funds carried forward		(25,496)	–	**(25,496)**	1,173

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 31 to 40 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

31 August 2023

	Note	2023 £	£	2022 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible fixed assets	15		61	1,069
Current assets				
Debtors	16	185,681		145,658
Cash at bank and in hand		38,226		23,382
		223,907		169,040
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	219,464		128,936
Net current assets			4,443	40,104
Total assets less current liabilities			4,504	41,173
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		30,000	40,000
Net liabilities			(25,496)	1,173
Funds of the charity				
Unrestricted funds			(25,496)	1,173
Total charity funds	21		(25,496)	1,173

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 28th May 2024 and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Britt Lintner

Britt Lintner
Trustee

The notes on pages 31 to 40 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Cash Flows

Year ended 31 August 2023

	2023 £	2022 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net (expenditure)/income	**(26,669)**	55,752
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**1,008**	1,550
Interest payable and similar charges	**3,856**	5,314
Accrued expenses/(income)	**5,231**	(37,265)
Changes in:		
Trade and other debtors	**(46,489)**	1,139
Trade and other creditors	**91,763**	(67,733)
Cash generated from operations	**28,700**	(41,243)
Interest paid	**(3,856)**	(5,314)
Net cash from/(used in) operating activities	**24,844**	(46,557)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayment of borrowings	**(10,000)**	(10,000)
Net cash used in financing activities	**(10,000)**	(10,000)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	**14,844**	(56,557)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	**23,382**	79,939
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	**38,226**	23,382

The notes on pages 31 to 40 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 August 2023

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is Tripod, Lambeth Town Hall, 1 Brixton Hill, London, SW2 1RW.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Material judgements are in accrued income.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Incoming resources

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity, it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Incoming resources *(continued)*

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.

- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.

- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.

- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apprortioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Tangible assets

Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Fixtures and fittings	-	20% reducing balance
Equipment	-	25% reducing balance

Impairment of fixed assets

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Impairment of fixed assets *(continued)*

For the purposes of impairment testing, when it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, an estimate is made of the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

4. Limited by guarantee

The company has no authorised or issued share capital and is limited by guarantee of each member contributing up to £10 each on liquidation.

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**
Donations			
Donations	627,511	20,734	**648,245**
Grants			
Foundations and trusts	125,223	190,379	**315,602**
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	1,413	–	**1,413**
	754,147	211,113	**965,260**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Donations			
Donations	600,945	12,242	613,187

5. Donations and legacies *(continued)*

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Grants			
Foundations and trusts	133,853	197,956	331,809
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	1,579	–	1,579
	736,377	210,198	946,575

6. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Training	368,462	**368,462**	372,286	372,286

7. Costs of raising donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Fundraising and development	24,577	**24,577**	37,133	37,133

8. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**
Programmes	891,656	144,305	**1,035,959**
Support costs	237,721	62,132	**299,855**
	1,129,377	206,437	**1,335,814**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Programmes	777,610	156,966	934,576
Support costs	219,686	71,714	291,400
	997,296	228,680	1,225,976

9. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Grant funding of activities	Support costs	**Total funds 2023**	Total fund 2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Programmes	1,035,959	268,221	**1,304,180**	1,195,294
Governance costs	–	31,634	**31,634**	30,682
	1,035,959	299,855	**1,335,814**	1,225,976

10. Analysis of support costs

	Analysis of support costs activity 1	**Total 2023**	Total 2022
	£	**£**	£
Staff costs	166,646	**166,646**	166,403
Premises	22,339	**22,339**	17,794
Other support costs	79,236	**79,236**	76,521
Governance costs - Audit and accountancy fees	6,000	**6,000**	6,000
Governance costs - Legal and professional fees	21,779	**21,779**	19,368
Governance cost - Finance	3,855	**3,855**	5,314
	299,855	**299,855**	291,400

11. Net (expenditure)/income

Net (expenditure)/income is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2023	2022
	£	£
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**1,008**	1,550

12. Auditors remuneration

	2023	2022
	£	£
Fees payable for the audit of the financial statements	**4,800**	4,200
Fees payable to the charity's auditor and its associates for other services:		
Other non-audit services	**1,200**	1,440

13. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**601,925**	524,733
Social security costs	**32,787**	24,291
Employer contributions to pension plans	**19,981**	17,090
Other employee benefits	**57,386**	50,788
	712,079	616,902

The average head count of employees during the year was 17 (2022: 15). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
Number of production staff	**16**	14
Number of management staff	**1**	1
	17	15

The number of employees whose remuneration for the year fell within the following bands, were:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
£190,000 to £199,999	**–**	1
£200,000 to £209,999	**1**	–
	1	1

Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total compensation paid to key management personnel for services provided to the charity was £205,121 (2022:£195,886).

14. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration, benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity or expenses were received by the trustees.

15. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Equipment £	**Total £**
Cost			
At 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2023	1,860	6,372	**8,232**
Depreciation			
At 1 September 2022	1,235	5,928	**7,163**
Charge for the year	625	383	**1,008**
At 31 August 2023	1,860	6,311	**8,171**
Carrying amount			
At 31 August 2023	–	61	**61**
At 31 August 2022	625	444	1,069

16. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Prepayments and accrued income	**23,986**	21,183
Other debtors	**161,695**	124,475
	185,681	145,658

17. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	**28,156**	9,065
Accruals and deferred income	**56,800**	45,235
Social security and other taxes	**125,508**	68,196
Other creditors	**9,000**	6,440
	219,464	128,936

18. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Bank loans and overdrafts	**30,000**	40,000

19. Deferred income

	2023	2022
	£	£
At 1 September 2022	**38,000**	59,600
Amount released to income	**(38,000)**	(59,600)
Amount deferred in year	**50,800**	38,000
At 31 August 2023	**50,800**	38,000

20. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £19,981 (2022: £17,090).

21. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 September 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	**At 31 August 2023**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
General funds	1,173	1,122,609	(1,153,954)	4,676	**(25,496)**

	At 1 September 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 August 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	(54,579)	1,108,663	(1,034,429)	(18,482)	1,173

Restricted funds

	At 1 September 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	**At 31 August 2023**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
BBC Children In Need	–	10,500	(10,018)	(482)	**–**
The Careers & Enterprise Company	–	5,034	(5,034)	–	**–**
Four Acre Trust	–	10,000	(10,000)	–	**–**
John Lyon's Charity	–	30,000	(30,043)	43	**–**
The Swire Charitable Trust	–	–	–	–	**–**
Wellington Management UK Foundation	–	35,000	(35,506)	506	**–**

21. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

Bank of America Foundation	–	71,879	(68,508)	(3,371)	–
Christ Church College	–	5,700	(5,709)	9	–
The Janus Henderson Foundation	–	10,800	(11,309)	509	–
Cardiff Council	–	1,200	(1,200)	–	–
Portal Trust Income	–	31,000	(29,110)	(1,890)	–
	–	211,113	(206,437)	(4,676)	–

	At 1 September 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 August 2022 £
BBC Children In Need	–	10,000	(10,183)	183	–
The Careers & Enterprise Company	–	–	–	–	–
Four Acre Trust	–	–	–	–	–
John Lyon's Charity	–	30,000	(35,506)	5,506	–
The Swire Charitable Trust	–	33,500	(35,506)	2,006	–
Wellington Management UK Foundation	–	35,000	(35,506)	506	–
Bank of America Foundation	–	65,378	(68,508)	3,130	–
Christ Church College	–	5,000	(5,900)	900	–
The Janus Henderson Foundation	–	–	–	–	–
Cardiff Council	–	31,320	(37,571)	6,251	–
Portal Trust Income	–	–	–	–	–
	–	210,198	(228,680)	18,482	–

Restricted funds represent income received from doners with attached restriction on the application of funds to specific project or purpose. On completion of projects, balances of restricted funds are transferred to unrestricted funds where permitted.

22. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2023 £**
Tangible fixed assets	61	–	**61**
Current assets	173,107	50,800	**223,907**
Creditors less than 1 year	(168,664)	(50,800)	**(219,464)**
Creditors greater than 1 year	(30,000)	–	**(30,000)**
Net liabilities	(25,496)	–	**(25,496)**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Tangible fixed assets	1,069	–	1,069
Current assets	131,040	38,000	169,040
Creditors less than 1 year	(90,936)	(38,000)	(128,936)
Creditors greater than 1 year	(40,000)	–	(40,000)
Net liabilities	1,173	–	1,173

23. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 Sep 2022 £	Cash flows £	**At 31 Aug 2023 £**
Cash at bank and in hand	23,382	14,844	**38,226**
Debt due after one year	(40,000)	10,000	**(30,000)**
	(16,618)	24,844	**8,226**

24. Related parties

During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

	Transaction value		**Balance owed by/(owed to)**	
	2023 £	2022 £	**2023** £	2022 £
Margaret McCabe	–	–	(9,000)	1,543
Debate Mate Limited - Sales	–	–	14,241	1,682
Debate Mate Limited - Purchases	134,890	126,958	–	–

Debate Mate Limited and Debate Mate Online Limited are under the control of Margret McCabe who is key management of Debate Mate Schools Limited.

Margret McCabe repaid £1,543 in March 2023.

DEBATE MATE SCHOOLS LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 1121222

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06279466
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1121222

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

31 August 2022

CAS HOUSE LIMITED
Chartered accountants & statutory auditor
151 Askew Road
London
W12 9AU

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 August 2022

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Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 August 2022

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2022.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Debate Mate Schools Limited
Charity registration number	1121222
Company registration number	06279466
Principal office and registered office	Tripod, Lambeth Town Hall 1 Brixton Hill London SW2 1RW
The trustees	Britt Lintner (Chair) Fiona Edwards-Stuart Jude Thompson Tayo Alimi Adebayo Odusola Marcus Trotter Keanne Williams
Company secretary	M McCabe
Auditor	CAS House Limited Chartered accountants & statutory auditor 151 Askew Road London W12 9AU

Structure, governance and management

Board of Trustees

Trustees have been selected on the basis of extensive experience and knowledge of the charitable, finance and education sectors, with specialist skills in business, law, elite debating and fundraising.

The Board meets quarterly, with more regular contact between the Chair and CEO. The CEO reports to the Trustees. Trustees serve tenure of three years with the Chair's discretion to extend. Trustees are not in receipt of any benefits.

Prospective Trustees are provided with the following prior to potential appointment: A copy of:

- The Certificate of Incorporation
- The Memorandum of Association
- The Articles of Association
- Change of Name Certificates
- Financial Statements for the last three years
- An induction document setting down the Duties of Trustees of Debate Mate Schools Limited
- A Declaration confirming, inter alia, receipt and understanding of the above documents
- A Declaration of Eligibility to act as a Trustee
- A request for personal information to enable the registration of a new Director at Companies House
- A Toolkit of Good Governance comprising Six Benchmarks of Effective Governance for Charity Boards.

Organisational Structure and management

The company is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Chief Executive Officer, Margaret McCabe. Margaret has over twenty years' experience as a commercial barrister, combined with two decades in the voluntary sector, including work with Centrepoint (a homelessness charity for under 25s), the NSPCC Justice for Children programme, and as an advisor to Human Rights Watch. Margaret is a recipient of the UnLtd Award, recognising her contribution as a social entrepreneur with the launch of Urbanunltd Limited (name changed to Debate Mate Limited in July 2010, and to Debate Mate Schools Limited in July 2017) and the Debate Mate programme.

Strategic and significant financial decisions are made by the Board of Trustees to ensure that the charity's activities are in-keeping with its objectives. Decisions regarding operations, education and programme delivery are delegated by the CEO to the Executive Director and the Educational Development Director.

The CEO is supported by the management and core team of:

- 1 Executive Director
- 1 Director of Operations
- 1 Director of Programmes
- 1 Director of Education UK
- 2 Executive Programme Directors
- 2 Senior Programme Directors
- 1 Virtual Core Programme Director
- 5 Programme Directors
- 1 Assistant Programme Director

Objectives and activities

Aims

Our charity's purposes, as set out in the objectives contained in the company's memorandum of association, are:

- The promotion, for the benefit of the public, of urban and cultural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation.
- The advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly amongst young people, and providing people with work experience; in particular by exploiting the opportunities provided by the internet in providing skills and training, and with particular emphasis on confidence building by focusing on communication and interpersonal skills, providing networking opportunities for the dissemination of educational and training programmes and developing areas for growth and employment.

Our aims fully reflect the purposes for which the charity was set up:

- To improve the social mobility of disadvantaged young people in the UK.
- To equip young people with key 21st Century skills, regardless of their background.
- To raise the aspirations of Debate Mate students through our peer mentoring model to inspire them to pursue tertiary education and meaningful employment.
- To provide valuable opportunities for Debate Mate students to engage with businesses from a range of key industries.
- To enable teachers to transform their teaching practice through our CPD courses, run through our Education UK programme, allowing them to use our methodology in their classrooms and to set up debating clubs in their schools.
- To work towards building a self-sustaining model by developing a robust funding methodology.

Ensuring our Work Delivers our Aims

Every year we review our programme of activities undertaken in the previous financial accounting period and assess what we achieved in terms of deliverables and their outcomes in relation to our aims and objectives. This review ensures that we are delivering the intended benefits to the disadvantaged young people we set out to help, and that we remain focused on our purposes. We also review our aims and objectives and the direction that these provide in defining future activity. The Trustees continue to refer to the Charity Commission's guidance to ensure Debate Mate's aims, objectives and future activities meet the public benefit requirement.

How our Activities are for the Public Benefit

Debate Mate's programme of activity responds to a clear set of needs:

- Social mobility in the UK is very low and there is a significant attainment gap between pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and their wealthier peers.
- Far too many British schoolchildren lack key skills, which can restrict opportunity and contribute to unemployment.
- There is a gap in provision of key skills teaching for pupils in disadvantaged areas, for example, through innovative debating programmes.

Debate Mate's charitable activities focus on delivering training to young people from areas of high child poverty for the public benefit. The charity's after-school debate club programme has been shown to improve Speaking and Listening attainment, develop key skills and raise aspirations. However, the benefit is much wider. We are working towards ensuring that each club is sustainable within each school and that the skills imparted to pupils we have worked with are able to be passed on to other students in their school. This in turn develops a culture of debating, and a growing pride in each school we work with - benefits which have had a positive impact on local communities. In our view, no detriment or harm arises from our work.

Debate Mate's Beneficiaries

Debate Mate's charitable programmes are delivered exclusively in schools with a Free School Meals for the last 6 years (FSM-6) profile of primary >23% and secondary >27.7%. Teachers are instructed to ensure their club is composed of students of all abilities, and has at least a third of students who are in receipt of FSM-6 or Pupil Premium. In our programme year 2021-22, approximately 4,400 young people participated with an estimated 2,024 (46%) of students in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM-6). True to our value of inclusivity, 13% of students in the sample were reported to have Special Educational Needs (SEN) and 43% spoke English as an Additional Language (EAL). National averages for these categories are SEN: 13% primary and 12% secondary, and EAL: 21% primary and 17% secondary.

Issues to be Tackled (Need for Key Skills in the UK)

The Social Context

The UK has the lowest rate of social mobility amongst OECD countries (OECD, 2018). This manifests early, with the socio-economic backgrounds of children influencing their ability to develop and learn at school; a child growing up in poverty in the UK is more likely to achieve lower academic qualifications, have lower aspirations, and have a lower skill set than their better-off peers. This inequality has been further exacerbated by the COVD-19 pandemic.

Disadvantage significantly impedes attainment and the academic, professional, and socioeconomic prospects of young people. According to government data on widening participation in higher education, only 28.1% of 15-year-olds receiving free school meals entered higher education by age 19, compared to 46.8% not receiving free school meals (July 2022). The Education Policy Institute, in its 2019 Annual Report, stated that 'By the time they leave secondary school, disadvantaged pupils are now over 18.1 months behind non-disadvantaged pupils.' It is widely acknowledged that this gap will only widen further due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis, both of which will disproportionately affect disadvantaged students and poorer households. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and Sutton Trust have reported on the impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged students. In their report, 'Impact of School Closure, 2020' the EEF stated 'The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is estimated to further widen by 36% due to the pandemic'. These disparities will be felt for many generations to come.

In The Sutton Trust's 2019 Mobility Manifesto, Sir Peter Lampl writes that 'social mobility, the potential for those to achieve success regardless of their background, remains worryingly low across Britain. Our next government should put social mobility at the heart of their agenda', thus highlighting the importance of this issue for society as a whole. The Mobility Manifesto emphasises the need of programmes to develop key skills: 'Essential life skills (such as motivation, confidence, communication, self-control and coping with stress) are crucial to the life chances of young people'.

In the current cost of living crisis, prior barriers to education have been further exacerbated for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. In its 2022 report, The Sutton Trust highlighted that in state schools, 38% of teachers said a third or more of their class were living in families facing considerable financial pressures which they felt are impacting on the children's ability to succeed in school, compared to 5% in private schools. Furthermore, teachers were seeing that an increase in students with behaviour issues was also more common in more deprived schools (72% vs 62%). At Debate Mate, we help bridge this gap by successfully teaching both hard and soft skills, as evidenced below. We also include a budget for snacks for mentors to buy the students every week. Now more than ever, this can help with both attainment and the lack of provision, with 38% of teachers having reported an increase in children coming into school hungry, which has been suggested to link to issues such as concentration in in class.
The OECD highlights the formative role of extracurricular programmes in improving student behaviour, academic attainment and long-term progression: 'social and emotional learning school-based programmes have also been shown to improve both behavioural and academic outcomes' (2018).

However, it is increasingly difficult for students to access such opportunities due to school budget cuts, which is particularly vital considering that the majority of learning beyond the classroom (83%) is only possible when there is no associated cost to take part (Sutton Trust, 2022).

The Skills Gap

The lack of social mobility in the UK keeps many families out of long-term employment, and disadvantaged young people lack the opportunities to develop key skills which are crucial to advancement in tertiary education and their careers. The OECD reports: 'children from low-income families not only spend less time in education in countries where income inequalities are high, they also have lower skills for any given level of education. The quality gap in education is hence even larger than the income gap' (2018).

The Sutton Trust (2019) emphasises the importance of the key 'life skills': 'Adult life requires a range of skills in order for people to flourish, both in the workplace and in their daily lives, from the confidence and motivation to seek challenges and complete tasks, to the interpersonal skills that aid teamwork and other social interactions. However, more needs to be done to give all young people a chance, in a jobs market where such skills are as important as qualifications'. This is especially pertinent at a time when 20% of schools are cutting spending on extracurricular activities, in spite of the fact that 'learning beyond the classroom' is 'crucial' for 'skill development' (State of the Nation 2022).

It is apparent that in the UK the circumstances of birth have a huge influence on a young person's chances of success, with students in the UK born into poorer backgrounds leaving school with lower qualifications, aspirations and skill sets.

Our Solution

Under its founder and present CEO, Margaret McCabe, Debate Mate identified areas of high child poverty in London and the key resources and support needed to improve social mobility amongst young people. A cost-effective, efficient and fun way of delivering these skills to disadvantaged young people was developed, which would help overcome the barriers to learning so frequently experienced amongst this demographic.

Students taking part in the Debate Mate programme develop key 21st Century skills, which are fundamental to success in academic and professional environments. These include critical and creative thinking, communication (speaking and listening) skills and teamwork, as well as building confidence and self-esteem, resilience, leadership, and self-management. These are skills that teachers acknowledge as being central to students' attainment and progression, but are often challenging to teach in a classroom environment.

Importantly, the Debate Mate programme provides disadvantaged young people with the guidance and support of the best and brightest mentors from universities across the UK. Mentors provide an insight into higher education, further training and career paths, and act as inspirational and relatable role models for the students we work with. The mentors inspire their students to raise their aspirations and fulfil their potential. The OECD highlights the potential of mentoring schemes as part of of extracurricular activities, arguing that they can help disadvantaged young people engage academically and develop skills that 'are not acquired at home' (2018). Debate Mate's unique model is highly effective for raising aspirations and developing these key skills, thereby improving social mobility.

In June 2019, the CBI published a People and Skills report entitled: Getting young people 'work ready' - our vision for how education should prepare young people for the modern world. The report

references the work of Debate Mate Schools on pages 20-21. It is notable that Debate Mate delivers precisely what employers are seeking in terms of their identified three pillars for work readiness: character, knowledge and skills. The schools that are working with Debate Mate are already on a path to implement recommendations of this report.

Furthermore, debating is a key skill listed in the new English National Curriculum at Key Stage 3 and teaching these skills is vital to helping students develop their speaking and listening early on and to aid them in their GCSE Spoken Language accreditation. Debating is a way to stretch the most able students, while providing opportunities to succeed for students who need more support, especially those who find written work more challenging. Debating allows students to articulate ideas first, thus improving the quality of their written outcomes, enabling students of all abilities to achieve rapid progress. It encourages students to generate new ideas, problem-solve, think quickly under pressure and respond to challenges.

Overview of Debate Mate's Activities

Debate Mate's 2021-22 charitable objectives are provided below. These are achieved through the fulfilment of our programme delivery targets and meeting our impact measurement goals:

- Through the delivery of our programmes, develop our participants' key 21st Century skills, which include critical and creative thinking, communication (speaking and listening skills), and teamwork, as well as leadership, self-management, confidence and self-esteem, and resilience. This is demonstrated in our soft and hard skills evaluations:
  - To achieve a minimum average of 80% in our soft skills evaluation at the end of each programme year, and maintain a skill level increase of 1.4 in our Speaking and Listening Evaluation.
- To deliver Debate Mate's mentor-led after-school clubs to a minimum of 180 schools in areas of high child poverty in 2021-22, and in addition:
  - To increase the delivery of our online programme which involves our mentors teaching the after-school sessions online.
  - To recruit and train at least 250 inspirational mentors per year to deliver after-school clubs and maintain an average of at least 18 students per club per week.
- By employing our peer-mentoring model, raise the aspirations of the young people we work with and empower them to pursue higher education or further training and make a successful transition to the modern workforce. The success of this is measured in our soft skills evaluation and our qualitative impact measurement, such as our case studies
- To build relationships with corporate supporters through partnerships, volunteering schemes and sponsorship, to expose students to inspiring careers and a diverse range of professionals, and to provide opportunities for meaningful interactions
- To continue to expand bespoke new initiatives to target specific demographics and to meet identified needs, such as Debate Mate's DebateBox and Accelerate programmes for those students most at risk, and the Debate Mate Plus and the Graduate School to support older students through their progression to further education, apprenticeships or university
- Continue to generate income through our Education UK programmes and partnerships, with a view to raise a third of our income this way
- To continue to run our international summer programmes in Rwanda and Nepal, delivered by our most experienced mentors from the UK, through adapting our in-person offering to an online programme where needed - due to the ongoing impacts of Covid-19 - and, where possible, returning to an in-person model.
- To ensure the Core Programme can be effectively delivered virtually, when required, due to the impact of school closures and lockdowns as a result of Covid-19.

In 2019/20, we worked in 243 primary/secondary schools - teaching, on average, more than 5,000 students every week. We considered it expedient, due to Covid-19, to reduce the size of the programme for 2020/21 to ensure we had sufficient funding for the year. As a result, in our programme year from September 2020 to June 2021 we worked with 134 schools in Bristol, Liverpool, London, Greater Manchester, the West Midlands and our blended programme ran in Nottingham, Leeds and the West Midlands. We were pleased that in the 2021/22 programme we were able to significantly return to pre-pandemic delivery of our programme and work with 209 schools in London, Manchester, Liverpool, the West Midlands, Wales, Bristol, and on our Virtual Core Programme.

Core Programme

The Core Programme, Debate Mate's main initiative, is delivered to disadvantaged young people aged 9-18 attending state primary and secondary schools in the UK, typically located in inner city areas at schools with an above average percentage of children eligible for Free School Meals. The programme begins with regional launch events in November. Following these, participating students take part in one-hour, mentor-led teaching sessions for 14 weeks, as well as three weeks of national competitions. Taught in small groups by trained university student mentors, they follow a curriculum - honed over the past 15 years - designed to develop key 21st Century skills: a) Developing confidence and style through body language, voice and spoken language b) Understanding how to research and analyse a subject from different viewpoints to empathise and consider context c) Formulating arguments coherently and logically from different standpoints, and to weigh up arguments and prioritise d) Listening to others and responding respectfully in a timely and appropriate way, adding weight to their own case.

Students taking part in the programme participate in Debate Mate's Urban Debate League (UDL): a nationwide debating league. Students prepare for the two rounds in their regular after-school clubs and then attend competitions at host schools in their local area. The top scoring schools nationally are invited to a final competition, which takes place in prestigious venues such as the House of Lords and the offices of our corporate supporters.

The Core Programme concludes with the Debate Mate Cup: a national competition in which all schools compete. It consists of full-day regional rounds held at local universities in March and April. The regional winners then take part in a Grand Final, held in June at inspiring venues such as the Houses of Parliament and the University of Oxford.

The Virtual Core Programme was piloted following the success of the Core Programme's move online during the pandemic. The pilot ran for 10 weeks and was delivered to 10 schools. It included an energetic virtual Launch event, with an introduction and overview of the programme for students, and a show debate. The programme concluded with a Virtual Debate Mate Cup competition.

Additional Programme

Debate Mate offers a range of additional programmes that run alongside the Core Programme in schools in the UK.

Advanced Programme

The Graduate School is a programme delivered to students aged 15-18 who have successfully completed the Core Programme, providing them with further debate training to compete in national schools' competitions and to develop into social leaders and future professionals. Delivered over 15 weeks, participants attend either a weekly session in-person (in London) or online that includes debating workshops with experienced university debaters, and skills sessions with professionals from various sectors. This programme empowers students to raise their aspirations in terms of their

debating potential, higher education and career goals, and to reach out to their local communities to share their skills.

In our 2021-22 programme year, 35 students from 18 Debate Mate Schools attended the Graduate School, and we worked with an average of 15.8 students per week. The average number of students in receipt of Free School Meals in the past 6 years was 43.4% for the schools attending Graduate School - this is significantly higher than the national average of 27.7% for secondary schools in England. Due to student demand, we extended the 17-week programme into June, alongside extra workshops taking place in July. We aim to increase our weekly average in the 2022-23 programme through improved awareness, marketing, and incentives to ensure we reach as many students as we can. The Debate Mate Plus (DM+) Programme bridges the gap between the Core Programme and post-18 study or work, ensuring that Debate Mate students continuously benefit from our support during their secondary education. Delivered over 16 weeks to students in years 11-13, the sessions are designed to offer students - with any level of Debate Mate experience - debate training, UCAS guidance and employability skills development. Importantly, we partner with organisations that support us with facilitating meaningful interactions with professionals, such as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

16 schools across London took part in the Debate Mate Plus Programme in 2021-22.

Intervention Programme

Debate Mate's Accelerate Programme targets students who have more serious academic and behavioural challenges. Schools involved are asked to select groups of students who are at risk of exclusion or are generally disengaged with education. The programme aims to motivate students to embrace learning, develop students' engagement in the classroom, improve behaviour, equip participants with key skills, and raise aspirations. In our 2021-22 programme year, we were pleased to have 21 primary and secondary schools participate on the Accelerate Programme: more than double the number in 2020-21, as this was significantly affected by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the 2021-22 programme year, over 200 students took part in the Accelerate programme.

The DebateBox Programme, an additional behavioural intervention scheme, focuses on the shared skills needed to excel in both boxing and debating: strategy, discipline, and competitive and combative thinking. Sessions include one hour of debating followed by one hour of boxing. DebateBox was delivered to 7 schools in our 2021-22 programme year, including the first primary schools to join the programme.

International Programme

Debate Mate's charitable activities also operate internationally, with annual summer programmes in Nepal and Rwanda. Due to the continued global impact of COVID-19, we invited students to take part in Debate Mate Online clubs free of charge, as we were unable to deliver our summer programmes in-person.

Nepal

Working in partnership with the Samata Shiksha Niketan Bamboo Schools in Nepal, a team of Debate Mate staff and mentors deliver our programme every summer.

In the 2020-21 programme year, a group of students from the Nepal programme participated in Debate Mate Online clubs free of charge, as we were unable to deliver our usual three-week summer programme in Nepal. Students attended 1-hour sessions for the entire 12-week term and took part in competitions at the end of the week.

The students who had taken part in the Nepal programme previously went straight up to Level 2 of the programme, Developing Debating Skills, whilst new students started on Level 1, Introduction to Debating. They were dispersed across 4 groups alongside our regular DMO students. In total, there were 10 students who took part.

Unfortunately, we were unable to run this in the 2021-22 programme year and are currently exploring online options for this in the 2022-23 programme year, with a hope that we will be able to return to an in-person model in 2023-24.

Rwanda

Debate Mate has been working in Rwanda every summer since 2012. In Summer 2019, we worked with a total of 380 students in Kigali and Nyaza. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19, we have been unable to run the programmes abroad. However, we are hoping to relaunch in the 2022-23 programme year and are currently exploring funding for this.

Sustainability

An integral part of the Debate Mate model is sustainability. That is, we encourage students to continue debating even after our final competitions. In order to do so, students in each club elect one president and three officers to oversee the running of the debating club once the weekly sessions with mentors have concluded. We do this to provide students with leadership roles in the school community and to foster a culture of debating that extends beyond the 17-week programme. Students become leaders of debating in their schools, teaching younger students and setting up their own clubs. We also endeavour to provide our programmes to schools and students year-on-year so that students can continue to build on their skills attainment and schools can work on integrating debating into the curriculum supported by Debate Mate's continued on-site presence.

Volunteers

Debate Mate benefits from an outstanding contribution from mentors, who are our volunteers. In our 2021-22 programme year, Debate Mate trained and allocated 402 mentors from universities in the regions where we operate, who were responsible for preparing for, reporting on, and delivering weekly sessions, as well as acting as judges at our competitions. Mentors commit to at least one teaching session per week, completing at least 17 hours of service over the course of the programme. We expect a high standard of professionalism and commitment from mentors, who therefore receive a stipend to recognise this.

The quality and impact of the Debate Mate programme is contingent on the calibre of our mentors, who act as role models for the students. We therefore significantly invest in recruiting, training, and supporting them throughout the programme to develop inspiring and committed leaders. We offer additional opportunities for mentors to develop and apply their skills, such as through our International Programmes and Education UK work. Several mentors have worked with us for a number of years and plan to translate their Debate Mate experience into a career in teaching.

Strategic report

The following sections for achievements and performance and financial review form the strategic report of the charity.

Achievements and performance

Impact Measurement and Performance

Following a consultation with the New Economic Foundation in 2010, Debate Mate designed an evaluation metric with four central goals in mind:

Goal 1: To accelerate attainment in Speaking and Listening.
Goal 2: To strengthen emotional capacity through building confidence, self-esteem and resilience. Goal 3: To develop key implacability skills such as leadership, teamwork, critical thinking and self-management. Goal 4: To heighten aspirations towards both tertiary education and meaningful employment.

Speaking and Listening Metric (Goal 1)

Debate Mate uses a bespoke Speaking and Listening metric designed in consultation with teachers to measure students' Speaking and Listening skills development. The skills assessed in the metric are derived from the National Curriculum at Key Stages Two and Three (Department for Education, 2014) as well as the assessment criteria for the GCSE Spoken Language accreditation devised by Ofqual (The Assessments and Qualifications Alliance, 2012). These guidelines were mapped onto the debating skills that Debate Mate teaches to form a unique, holistic metric that tracks student progress continuously from Key Stage Two up to GCSE and beyond. Debate Mate's metric tracks progress through seven skill categories:

1. Collaboration
2. Listen and Respond Appropriately
3. Articulate and Justify an Argument
4. Use of Evidence
5. Structure of Speeches
6. Style
7. Quality of Spoken Language

Each Skill Category is given a level from 0 to 8, describing a wide range of abilities that might be observed in students from Years 4 to 10. Trained Programme Directors use the metric to assess new students during their first and last debate of the year, usually falling in weeks 5 and 15 of the after-school sessions. These assessments are moderated by teachers from the schools.

Our usual hard skills data collection processes were disrupted due to ongoing restrictions regarding visitors to schools throughout the academic year. Consequently, we were unable to collect statistically significant hard skills data for the 2021-2022 programme year. Nonetheless, our aggregate data collected from 2015-2019 shows that, on average, students (secondary and primary) make 1.4 levels of progress throughout the year, with students who speak English as an additional language making more progress than their peers over the course of the programme. This is a remarkable achievement, and is supported by the fact that 87% of our teachers report that Debate Mate has accelerated student progress in speaking and listening. Debating has a significant impact on speaking and listening skills, as students learn not only to articulate their ideas in a structured way, but also to respond to other participants' points through active listening and engagement.

To contextualise this figure, a student averaging a Level 3 will only occasionally engage in group discussion during preparation time, make points that are relevant but not structured, use mainly anecdotal evidence, digress throughout their speech and read from their notes with occasional hesitations or silences. Comparatively, a student averaging a Level 4 will engage in group discussion,

offer relevant rebuttal to opposing arguments, create an argument that is structured clearly, deliver their speech confidently (using notes for reference only) and use basic persuasive devices and vocabulary for effect.

We aim to maintain 1.4 levels of progress year-on-year. We calculate the average over a period of years as we can only assess a limited number of students, due to staffing restrictions, and it is therefore most representative to do so.

The progress from previous years demonstrates our programme's ability to improve speaking and listening skills. Good speaking and listening skills form the basis of all learning in literacy and are fundamental to successful advancement to tertiary education and the modern workplace.

To complement our impact reporting on aspirations in the 2021-22 programme year, we used a set of retrospective questions that reveal changes in students' attitudes about their future. Amongst secondary school students, many of whom will soon be making decisions about what they will do upon leaving school, 89.26% of respondents said the skills they gained from debating will help them to succeed in further studies or training (e.g. college, university, apprenticeship). When asked to explain how debating and meeting a university mentor has affected their attitudes towards the future, students responded:

"I am more able to form persuasive arguments which are important for the things I do and probably things in the future as well. It is also easier to give opinions on topics I don't have previous feelings on which can be useful too." Year 10 Student, St Peter's High School

"I would like to be a psychologist or therapist. I think the use of language will help me understand my patient better to help them." Year 8 student, Bishop Douglass Catholic School

"I have dreams of lecturing at a university, being a confident speaker is key and that's something I developed during debates" Year 9 student, St Angela's Ursuline School

"Debate Mate has given me the ability to do public speaking. Be more open minded and be consistent in unfamiliar situations." Year 10 Student, Sarah Bonnell School

"Because of Debate Mate I can speak up for what I believe in. I know what I want and how to get it." Year 9 Student, Eltham Hill Girls

"Debate Mate has made me feel more confident to voice my ideas and create further connections with others." Year 10 Student, Healthcare School

Debate Mate conducted a questionnaire with the lead teachers at the schools we work with on the 2021-22 programme. Some comments included:

"Our children have participated for 5 years. Not only do they love it, but also see an acceleration in their speaking and listening skills and improvement in their writing and comprehension skills." Lead Teacher, St Elizabeth's RC Primary

"Over 50% of our Y5 cohort have attended regularly, and this had a massive impact on their test scores and confidence. For a school from Langley, their determination to have their voice heard has had an impact across the whole school." Lead Teacher, St Mary's RC, Middleton

Soft Skills Metric (Goal 2,3 and 4)

Students growing up in poverty are less likely to demonstrate high levels of perseverance, self-belief, and motivation to learn - which in turn affects educational outcomes (Fair Education Alliance, 2015). To combat this, Debate Mate actively seeks to develop these soft skills, which are crucial to students' academic success, personal wellbeing and employment later in life. Following a consultation with the New Economic Foundation in 2010, Debate Mate designed a metric to collect data on each of our measurement objectives: self-esteem and confidence, resilience, leadership, teamwork, self-management, critical thinking and aspirations. This soft skills metric was designed in collaboration with New Philanthropy Capital.

We collect data on soft skills attainment by distributing questionnaires at our Debate Mate Cup events and we aim for the average attainment outcome for our Core Programme to be at least 80% across all categories each year. In 2021-22 we achieved 86% overall (85% in our national secondary evaluation, 84% in our national primary evaluation, and 92% in our teacher evaluation). We also distributed our teacher survey, which included some questions regarding soft skills attainment to help us better understand our impact.

Given that there was still some disruption to school and in-person delivery of our programme through the programme year, we are pleased with our impact results. In total 209 schools took part in our programme in 2021-22.

The results for 2021/22 from the questionnaire responses from secondary schools are as follows, reporting on students who either Strongly Agree or Agree with each statement:

2021/22 Core Programme Soft Skills Evaluation	Strongly Agree/Agree	
	Results for Primary Schools	Results for Secondary Schools
Confidence and Self-esteem		
I am more comfortable speaking up in class	80%	75%
I am more confident giving my opinion on issues in the world around me	85%	81%
I am better at debating	94%	88%
Resilience and Determination		
I can concentrate better when listening to others speak	81%	80%
I find it easier to stay positive after losing (e.g. a debate or game)	77%	Secondary students responded to a different question
When my ideas are challenged I am better at coming up with new ones	81%	80%
I can focus on a topic or task for a longer period of time	79%	Secondary students responded to a different question
I am more hard-working	83%	70%

Leadership		
• I am more likely to take on extra responsibilities at school	81%	Secondary students responded to a different question
• I am more considerate of others opinions and feelings	86%	81%
I have a better understanding of what makes a good leader	90%	85%
I am more likely to help others when working in a group	89%	87%
I have more experience working in a team	Primary students responded to a different question	75%
Teamwork		
• I am better able to work in a group with someone who has different opinions to me	79%	78%
I am more likely to do my fair share of work when working in a group	89%	85%
• I am more likely to put my ideas forward when working in a group	89%	87%
• I am more respectful of others thoughts and opinions	89%	86%
Critical Thinking		
I have more experience researching different topics	84%	83%
I am better able to come up with my own opinions and arguments	91%	91%
I am better able to respond and respectfully disagree with the ideas of others	88%	88%
Self-Management		
I use feedback to reflect on my learning and improve my skills	89%	89%
I am better at working independently	Primary students responded to a different question	74%

Teacher Questionnaire

We also distributed our teacher survey in the 2021-22 programme year, which included some questions regarding soft skills attainment to help us better understand our impact. A summary of the results are highlighted below:

- 99% believe their students enjoyed attending the Debate Mate sessions
- 99% believe their students have gained confidence as a result of the Debate Mate programme
- 98% believe their students have improved in their debating ability
- 92% believe that there has been a positive impact on students' academic performance
- 92% believe that taking part in Debate Mate has accelerated students' progress in Speaking and Listening
- 98% believe that mentors served as positive role models for students
- 96% believe that mentors demonstrated a confident understanding of debating concepts
- 92% believe that mentors developed a positive relationship with students
- 95% believe that at competitions our judges gave helpful feedback for the students

The speaking and listening evaluation and our soft skills evaluation comprise our two primary methods of impact measurement. In addition to this, we carry out annual case studies and pre- and post - programme student questionnaires, as well as distributing end-of-year mentor and teacher surveys. Each of these help us to collect valuable feedback, which informs curriculum and programme changes year-on-year as well as enabling us to report on our impact.

2021-22 Key Achievements

- Congratulations to Lordship Lane Primary School and St Matthew's Academy who, respectively, won the Primary Debate Mate Cup Grand Final and the Secondary Debate Mate Cup Grand Final in June/July 2022.
- Well done to Regents Park Primary School, who won the Primary Urban Debate League Competition, and Grey Coat Hospital School who won the Secondary Urban Debate League Competition.
- The average attendance for weekly clubs across the country returned to 21 students per school, the pre-pandemic average attendance.
- We launched the Virtual Core Programme after the success of moving the Debate Mate Core Programme online due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. This enabled schools from across nine different cities and regions of England to take part in weekly debate training, and a national debating competition, which are otherwise beyond the physical range that we deliver in-person programmes to.
- This year, we expanded our Core Programme to Wales, engaging with 8 schools and over 150 students each week.
- Debate Mate strives to sustain and grow the debating and key skills of students who have participated in our in-school programme. Debate Mate's Graduate School achieves this for a nucleus of dedicated students aged 15-18 who attend either in-person and online. Many of these students continue to excel at the foremost debating competitions.
- In the 2021-22 programme year, five Graduate School students accepted invitations to trial for the England WSDC team. Three students were selected to participate in the second day of trials and one student made the National Development Squad-a feat which has been achieved by at least one Graduate School student for the 7th consecutive year. One student has also joined the World Schools Development Programme, which is in its second year.

- As in previous years, the World Schools programme benefited greatly from the Graduate School's alumni network, and networks within the debating community, with a Q&A with former Team England Captain and Graduate School alumni, Ife Grillo, and former Team England debater, Rachel Tait, as well as informal conversations with Afzal Hussain, former Team England Debater and Graduate School alumni. Furthermore, a bootcamp was run with the assistance of former Team Greece Debater Alberto Polimeri. Moreover, the boot camps provide an opportunity for returning Graduate School students to socialise and solidify a tight knit core group from the start of the year, which forms the foundation of the student community into which we will be integrating new students.
- One noteworthy World Schools development is last year's launch of Development Squads for state school educated students in Years 10 and 11 to participate in World Schools debating training and general knowledge seminars to prepare them to trial for the England Debate Team. At least one Graduate School student was selected to take part in this programme and we shall continue encouraging them to apply next year, given it allows students to practise and learn over summer, when the Graduate School does not generally run.
- We entered students into competitions at a number of universities, including Oxford. We anticipated more in-person competitions, but the rise of the Omicron variant at the period when most competitions take place pushed many online. The students excelled and achieved the following:
  - UCL Schools: 1 team achieved Silver in the finals, 6th breaking teams, 11th and 13th Best Speakers Overall.
  - LSE Schools: this was many students' first ever external competition and students competed after only a few weeks on the programme. 1 student was the 7th Best Novice Speaker.
  - Oxford Schools: 2 teams through to Finals Day, with 1 student attaining 19th Best Novice Speaker.
  - Imperial Schools 2022: 2 teams broke to the Novice Finals, placing as the 17th best team overall.1 team were the Top Non-Breaking Team, missing out very marginally on speaker scores. 1 student was the 12th Best Novice Speaker.
  - Durham Schools: 1 student was the 4th Best Novice Speaker, and another student was the 9th Best Novice Speaker.
  - Oratory Festival: 1 student received an Honours Award.
- The Graduate School programme pioneered a new summer session called 'Add Flair to Your Speeches', where students could come with a pre-prepared speech and receive feedback tailored on their presentation and style specifically, which proved very beneficial for presentations at school / college.
- The Virtual Graduate School programme was expanded to Debate Mate regions beyond London and Manchester, also operating in the West Midlands, Liverpool and Wales.
- In partnership with the UK government, we launched the eXpo Factor competition in the lead up to Expo 2020 in Dubai. The winning students had the chance to discuss ideas about sustainability, mobility and equal opportunity with global leaders at Expo 2020 in Dubai in February 2022.
- After the success of our virtual Boardroom to Classroom programmes in previous programme years, we continued to deliver these in the 2021-22 programme year with various partner organisations including Bank of America, Lloyds Bank, and BCG. These programmes brought professionals and students together in a unique way - allowing both sides to learn from each other through joint skills-sharing sessions.
- Debate Mate took part in the Deloitte Better Futures Month 2022 for the second consecutive year.

The programme saw over 300 Deloitte employees take part and collaborate with 341 pitch teams, 138 schools and 2570 students across the UK on our Core programme. Students developed and pitched innovative ideas focusing on technology for good, climate change, and their local community to a selection of Deloitte volunteers. At the grand finale, our finalists pitched their ideas to a panel of senior Deloitte employees and Debate Mate Alumni, with winners being invited to present their winning ideas to a wider audience at the virtual showcase. Each winning team was awarded £1000 and will receive support from Deloitte's Greenhouse to make their pitch ideas a reality.

Factors and Challenges Affecting Performance

- In the 2021-22 programme year, we continued to work under changing government policies, and subsequently school policies, regarding Covid-19. Given this, the importance of being adaptable and flexible was reinforced throughout the programme year and we adapted our Covid-19 policy to support staff across the board. We ensured that we were able to offer catch-up weeks and virtual sessions when schools had closures due to Covid-19.
- We have learnt that a gradual recovery from an unexpected impact on our programme such as the pandemic has worked well. Instead of immediately returning to our original school figures, we are slowly re-growing the programme, with a target of ten additional schools each year, to ensure we have the funding and reserves to support the programme at every turn after having to reduce the size of the programme during the pandemic.
- While we were unable to conduct our usual hard skills assessment, we were pleased to have an almost tenfold increase on the responses in our soft skills assessment compared to the previous year. Further, we collected more case studies and testimonials from teachers and students to further consolidate the impact of our programmes. We are hoping that we will be able to produce our hard skills data once again in the 2022-23 programme year.

Financial Review

Performance

We are very pleased that our 2021-22 programme year accounts show a surplus for the year of £55,752 and positive funds balance, which is a considerable improvement on our YE 2021 accounts which continued showed a funds balance deficit as a result of the impact of Covid-19.

The charity forecast net surplus and positive cash flow for the next year. This does not however take into account future uncertainty and forecasted recession of the UK economy which may affect some of the charity doners.

Fundraising Performance

We received a large proportion of our funding from trusts, foundations, corporate supporters and statutory bodies, comprising 22.5% of our income. In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of Debate Mate, we recognise the need to diversify our income streams beyond these sources. Participating schools make a financial contribution towards the running costs of the programme, comprising 33.0% of our income, and Debate Mate fundraises the remaining amount. Schools tend to use Pupil Premium funding to make this donation. Furthermore, we deliver student and teacher training in schools outside of our Core Programme, which has provided a significant amount of reliable income for the organisation, with 26.5% of our total income coming from this source.

Grants and Donations

Debate Mate is extremely grateful to all the organisations and people who provided financial support for our programme in 2021-22, including the following (£10,000 and over):

- Alliance Bernstein
- Bank of America
- BBC CiN
- Cardiff Council
- Deloitte
- Department for Education
- Janus Henderson
- John Lyons Charity
- Network Space
- Neuberger Berman
- Now Pensions
- Swire Charitable Trust
- The Lincolnshire Community Foundation
- Transform Education
- Wellington Management UK Foundation

Reserves Policy

The charity carries out diverse range of activities. The trustees have examined the requirement for general reserves and consider that, given the nature of the charity's work, reserves should be maintained at not less than three months operating costs. The trustees are of the opinion that this provides sufficient flexibility to cover temporary shortfalls in income flow and to provide adequate working capital to cover costs.

Risk Management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the specific operational areas of the charity and its finances. The Trustees believe that by monitoring reserve levels, ensuring controls exist over key financial systems, and by examining the operational and business risks faced by the charity, they have established systems to mitigate those risks.

Plans for The Future

Strategic Review

At the end of each programme year, Debate Mate conducts an annual Strategic Review, in which all members of staff evaluate their respective programmes, assess positive developments, and put forward recommendations for the next programme year. These recommendations are then discussed by the entire team and strategies are adopted to ensure that the programme continues to improve. Key recommendations agreed at the 2021-22 Strategic Review are approved by the trustees and are implemented in our 2022-23 programme year.

Future Sustainability and Strategy

We plan to further enhance our virtual model, which was developed from our previous Blended Programme in response to the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the need to move our programmes online. We will continue to combine this with our peer delivery model to expand our geographical remit. Thus far, this has proven effective in allowing us to deliver our programmes to areas where we lack the resources to operate and, importantly, to reach some of the most deprived and remote schools in the UK. Using the combination of the online programme and our mentor-led delivery helps to ensure our financial sustainability and expansion in the coming years.

Debate Mate is constantly looking to build upon our successes. By carefully monitoring our progress and evaluating our impact, we hope to reach even more students and provide even better support to schools already on the programme. In the 2022-23 programme year, we plan to further refine our alumni network and connect former students with Debate Mate.

We also plan to further develop our programmes that link up students that have taken part in Debate Mate, and more specifically in the Graduate Programme and Debate Mate Plus, with businesses that support the charity and that we work with through Debate Mate Limited. The alumni network will also inspire current students and will act as relatable role models. With the rise of apprenticeship programmes and the drive for a more diverse workforce, Debate Mate is uniquely positioned to bridge the gap between school leavers and businesses - thus providing young people taking part in the Debate Mate programme with opportunities for employment in some of the top businesses in the UK. We have already developed strong relationships with businesses that support our Debate Mate Plus and Graduate School programmes and plan to continue to expand them to develop this aspect of our work.

Through each of our programmes, we help thousands of young people speak more fluently, take on leadership roles, work in teams, think critically and develop self-confidence and resilience. We continue to see Debate Mate students go through university and enter the workforce as successful, self-assured young adults, some of whom work with us as mentors and Programme Directors. As we look to the future, we plan on helping many more students achieve their ambitions by providing them with valuable 21st Century skills through debating and peer-to-peer mentorship.

We plan to continue to work towards achieving each of our stated aims and objectives year-on-year. This is constantly reviewed by the trustees to ensure they align to the charity's legal objectives.

Equal Opportunities, Access and Cultural Diversity

Debate Mate is an equal opportunities employer and encourages contributions from all sectors of the community. The company is committed to student-led and peer-to-peer learning. In the areas where Debate Mate operates, there are 200 different languages: our target groups are by their very nature culturally diverse. Our debate club programme works in concert with schools to support the curriculum through debating.

Safeguarding Policy

We have reviewed and updated our Safeguarding Policy. We are committed to the Safeguarding of students within our care and to regularly review and improve our procedures. Four members of staff have completed Safeguarding Training and the Educational Development Director is the appointed Safeguarding Lead at Debate Mate.

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the 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 in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

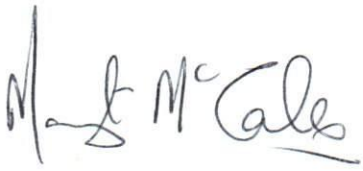
Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The auditor is deemed to have been re-appointed in accordance with section 487 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees' annual report and the strategic report were approved on 3/4/2023 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:





Britt Lintner
Trustee

M McCabe
Charity Secretary

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Debate Mate Schools Limited

Year ended 31 August 2022

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Debate Mate Schools Limited (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 August 2022 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), statement of financial position, 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 and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 August 2022 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;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

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 auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC'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

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report, which includes the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and

- the trustees' report and the strategic report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report, including the strategic report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or

- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or

- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or

- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our discussions with the charity's management, we identified that the following laws and regulations are significant to the entity:

- Those laws and regulations considered to have a direct effect on the financial statements include UK financial reporting standards and Charity Law.

- Those laws and regulations for which non-compliance may be fundamental to the operating aspects of the charity and therefore may have a material effect on the financial statements include compliance with the charitable objectives, public benefit, fundraising regulations, safeguarding and health and safety legislation.

These matters were identified at the planning stage and the team monitored for non-compliance throughout the audit.

Audit procedures undertaken in response to the potential risks relating to irregularities (which include fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations) comprised of: inquiries of management and the Trustees as to whether the entity complies with such laws and regulations; enquiries with the same concerning any actual or potential litigation or claims; inspection of relevant legal correspondence where applicable; review of Trustee meeting minutes; testing the appropriateness of journal entries; and the performance of analytical review to identify unexpected movements in account balances which may be indicative of fraud.

No instances of material non-compliance were identified. However, the likelihood of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is limited by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the entity's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed. Irregularities that result from fraud might be inherently more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error. As explained above, there is an unavoidable risk that material misstatements may not be detected, even though the audit has been planned and performed in accordance with ISAs (UK).

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charity to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity'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 charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

CAS House Limited
5/4/2023

Ibrahim T Ibrahim (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of
CAS House Limited
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor

151 Askew Road
London
W12 9AU

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 August 2022

	Note	2022 Unrestricted funds £	2022 Restricted funds £	2022 Total funds £	2021 Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	736,377	210,198	**946,575**	873,884
Charitable activities	6	372,286	–	**372,286**	121,201
Total income		1,108,663	210,198	**1,318,861**	995,085
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of raising donations and legacies	7	37,133	–	**37,133**	24,252
Expenditure on charitable activities	8,9	997,296	228,680	**1,225,976**	921,444
Total expenditure		1,034,429	228,680	**1,263,109**	945,696
Net income		74,234	(18,482)	**55,752**	49,389
Transfers between funds		(18,482)	18,482	–	–
Net movement in funds		55,752	–	**55,752**	49,389
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		(54,579)	–	**(54,579)**	(103,968)
Total funds carried forward		1,173	–	**1,173**	(54,579)

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 30 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

31 August 2022

	Note	2022 £	£	2021 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible fixed assets	15		1,069	2,619
Current assets				
Debtors	16	145,658		129,297
Cash at bank and in hand		23,382		79,939
		169,040		209,236
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	128,936		216,434
Net current assets			40,104	(7,198)
Total assets less current liabilities			41,173	(4,579)
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		40,000	50,000
Net assets			1,173	(54,579)
Funds of the charity				
Unrestricted funds			1,173	(54,579)
Total charity funds	21		1,173	(54,579)

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 3/4/2023 and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Britt Lintner
Trustee

The notes on pages 30 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Cash Flows

Year ended 31 August 2022

	2022 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income	**55,752**	49,389
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**1,550**	2,348
Interest payable and similar charges	**5,314**	8,952
Accrued income	**(37,265)**	(13,767)
Changes in:		
Trade and other debtors	**1,139**	18,460
Trade and other creditors	**(67,733)**	(66,410)
Cash generated from operations	**(41,243)**	(1,028)
Interest paid	**(5,314)**	(8,952)
Net cash used in operating activities	**(46,557)**	(9,980)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible assets	**–**	(2,583)
Net cash used in investing activities	**–**	(2,583)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayment of borrowings	**(10,000)**	–
Net cash used in financing activities	**(10,000)**	–
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	**(56,557)**	(12,563)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	**79,939**	92,502
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	**23,382**	79,939

The notes on pages 30 to 38 form part of these financial statements.

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is 32-36 Loman Street, London, SE1 0EH.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Incoming resources

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity, it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.

3. **Accounting policies** *(continued)*

Incoming resources *(continued)*

- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.

- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.

- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are approrrtioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Tangible assets

All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost and subsequently stated at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment charges.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Fixtures and fittings	-	20% reducing balance
Equipment	-	25% reducing balance

Impairment of fixed assets

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

For the purposes of impairment testing, when it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, an estimate is made of the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs. The cash-generating unit is the smallest identifiable group of assets that includes the asset and generates cash inflows that largely independent of the cash inflows from other assets or groups of assets.

3. **Accounting policies** *(continued)*

Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or paable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

4. **Limited by guarantee**

The company is limited by guarantee and has no authorised or issued share capital.

5. **Donations and legacies**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**
Donations			
Donations	600,945	12,242	**613,187**
Grants			
Foundations and trusts	133,853	197,956	**331,809**
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	1,579	–	**1,579**
	736,377	210,198	**946,575**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Donations			
Donations	538,678	–	538,678
Grants			
Foundations and trusts	65,631	235,066	300,696

5. Donations and legacies *(continued)*

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	34,510	–	34,510
	638,819	235,066	873,884

6. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Training	372,286	**372,286**	121,201	121,201

7. Costs of raising donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Fundraising and development	37,133	**37,133**	24,252	24,252

8. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**
Programmes	777,610	156,966	**934,576**
Support costs	219,686	71,714	**291,400**
	997,296	228,680	**1,225,976**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Programmes	391,790	165,734	557,524
Support costs	309,505	54,416	363,920
	701,295	220,150	921,444

9. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Grant funding of activities £	Support costs £	**Total funds 2022 £**	Total fund 2021 £
Programmes	934,576	260,718	**1,195,294**	885,861
Governance costs	–	30,682	**30,682**	35,583
	934,576	291,400	**1,225,976**	921,444

10. Analysis of support costs

	Analysis of support costs activity 1	**Total 2022**	Total 2021
	£	**£**	£
Staff costs	166,403	**166,403**	260,972
Premises	17,794	**17,794**	1,582
Governance costs	30,682	**30,682**	35,583
Other support costs	76,521	**76,521**	65,783
	291,400	**291,400**	363,920

11. Net income

Net income is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2022	2021
	£	£
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**1,550**	2,348

12. Auditors remuneration

	2022	2021
	£	£
Fees payable for the audit of the financial statements	**4,200**	4,200
Fees payable to the charity's auditor and its associates for other services:		
Other non-audit services	**1,440**	1,200

13. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**524,733**	548,735
Social security costs	**24,291**	28,303
Employer contributions to pension plans	**17,090**	17,375
Other employee benefits	**50,788**	38,295
	616,902	632,708

The average head count of employees during the year was 15 (2021: 17). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	2022	2021
	No.	No.
Number of production staff	**14**	16
Number of management staff	**1**	1
	15	17

13. Staff costs *(continued)*

The number of employees whose remuneration for the year fell within the following bands, were:

	2022 No.	2021 No.
£190,000 to £199,999	1	–
£270,000 to £279,999	–	1
	1	1

Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total compensation paid to key management personnel for services provided to the charity was £195,886 (2021:£271,026).

14. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration, benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity or expenses were received by the trustees.

15. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022	1,860	6,372	**8,232**
Depreciation			
At 1 September 2021	485	5,128	**5,613**
Charge for the year	750	800	**1,550**
At 31 August 2022	1,235	5,928	**7,163**
Carrying amount			
At 31 August 2022	625	444	**1,069**
At 31 August 2021	1,375	1,244	2,619

16. Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Prepayments and accrued income	**21,183**	5,270
Other debtors	**124,475**	124,027
	145,658	129,297

17. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Trade creditors	9,065	11,114
Accruals and deferred income	45,235	65,000
Social security and other taxes	68,196	140,320
Other creditors	6,440	–
	128,936	216,434

18. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Bank loans and overdrafts	40,000	50,000

The bank loan is a government backed bounce back loan repayable in quarterly instalment ending in August 2026.

19. Deferred income

	2022	2021
	£	£
At 1 September 2021	59,600	73,367
Amount released to income	(59,600)	(73,367)
Amount deferred in year	38,000	59,600
At 31 August 2022	38,000	59,600

20. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £17,090 (2021: £17,375).
At the year end pension fund liability was £ 5,274

21. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 September 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 August 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	(54,579)	1,108,663	(1,034,429)	(18,482)	1,173

	At 1 September 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 August 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	(103,968)	760,020	(725,547)	14,916	(54,579)

21. **Analysis of charitable funds** *(continued)*

Restricted funds

	At 1 September 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 August 2022 £
BBC Children In Need	–	10,000	(10,183)	183	–
John Lyon's Charity	–	30,000	(35,506)	5,506	–
Newby Trust	–	–	–	–	–
The Swire Charitable Trust	–	33,500	(35,506)	2,006	–
Wellington Management UK Foundation	–	35,000	(35,506)	506	–
Bank of America Foundation	–	65,378	(68,508)	3,130	–
Simmons & Simmons Charitable Foundation	–	–	–	–	–
Christ Church College	–	5,000	(5,900)	900	–
Garfield Weston Foundation	–	–	–	–	–
The National Lottery Community Fund	–	–	–	–	–
Cardiff Council	–	31,320	(37,571)	6,251	–
	–	210,198	(228,680)	18,482	–

	At 1 September 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 August 2021 £
BBC Children In Need	–	20,888	(20,888)	–	–
John Lyon's Charity	–	30,000	(30,000)	–	–
Newby Trust	–	15,000	(14,677)	(323)	–
The Swire Charitable Trust	–	33,500	(26,863)	(6,637)	–
Wellington Management UK Foundation	–	20,000	(20,000)	–	–
Bank of America Foundation	–	64,332	(64,076)	(256)	–
Simmons & Simmons Charitable Foundation	–	7,706	(6,179)	(1,527)	–
Christ Church College	–	5,000	(4,770)	(230)	–
Garfield Weston Foundation	–	30,000	(24,057)	(5,943)	–
The National Lottery Community Fund	–	8,640	(8,640)	–	–
Cardiff Council	–	–	–	–	–
	–	235,066	(220,150)	(14,916)	–

22. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2022 £**
Tangible fixed assets	1,069	–	**1,069**
Current assets	131,040	38,000	**169,040**
Creditors less than 1 year	(90,936)	(38,000)	**(128,936)**
Creditors greater than 1 year	(40,000)	–	**(40,000)**
Net assets	1,173	–	**1,173**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £
Tangible fixed assets	2,619	–	2,619
Current assets	175,736	33,500	209,236
Creditors less than 1 year	(182,934)	(33,500)	(216,434)
Creditors greater than 1 year	(50,000)	–	(50,000)
Net assets	(54,579)	–	(54,579)

23. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 Sep 2021 £	Cash flows £	**At 31 Aug 2022 £**
Cash at bank and in hand	79,939	(56,557)	**23,382**
Debt due after one year	(50,000)	10,000	**(40,000)**
	29,939	(46,557)	**(16,618)**

24. Related parties

During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

	Transaction value		**Balance owed by/(owed to)**	
	2022 £	2021 £	**2022 £**	2021 £
Margaret McCabe	–	–	1,543	8,880
Debate Mate Limited - Sales	–	2,476	1,682	24,390
Debate Mate Limited - Purchases	126,958	27,500	–	–
Debate Mate Online Limited - Sales	–	16,810	–	(4,566)
Debate Mate Online Limited - Purchases	–	1,241	–	–

Debate Mate Limited and Debate Mate Online Limited are under the control of Margret McCabe who is key management of Debate Mate Schools Limited.

Margret McCabe repaid £1,543 in March 2023.

DEBATE MATE SCHOOLS LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 1121222

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06279466
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1121222

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

31 August 2021

CAS HOUSE LIMITED
Chartered accountants & statutory auditor
151 Askew Road
London
W12 9AU

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 August 2021

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Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 August 2021

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2021.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Debate Mate Schools Limited
Charity registration number	1121222
Company registration number	06279466
Principal office and registered office	7-14 Great Dover Street London SE1 4YR

The trustees

Britt Lintner (Chair)	
Fiona Edwards-Stuart	
Mark Batten	(Retired 7 October 2020)
Sara Geater	(Retired 8 July 2021)
David Haysey	(Retired 7 October 2020)
Debra Thompson	
Alimi Sherifat	(Appointed 8 December 2020)
Adebayo Odusola	(Appointed 8 December 2020)
Marcus Trotter	
Keanna Williams	(Appointed 8 December 2020)

Company secretary	M McCabe
Auditor	CAS House Limited Chartered accountants & statutory auditor 151 Askew Road London W12 9AU

Structure, governance and management

Board of Trustees

Trustees have been selected on the basis of extensive experience and knowledge of the charitable, finance and education sectors, with specialist skills in business, law, elite debating and fundraising.

The Board meets quarterly, with more regular contact between the Chair and CEO. The CEO reports to the Trustees. Trustees serve tenure of three years with the Chair's discretion to extend. Trustees are not in receipt of any benefits.

Prospective Trustees are provided with the following prior to potential appointment: A copy of:

- The Certificate of Incorporation
- The Memorandum of Association
- The Articles of Association
- Change of Name Certificates
- Financial Statements for the last three years
- An induction document setting down the Duties of Trustees of Debate Mate Schools Limited
- A Declaration confirming, inter alia, receipt and understanding of the above documents
- A Declaration of Eligibility to act as a Trustee
- A request for personal information to enable the registration of a new Director at Companies House
- A Toolkit of Good Governance comprising Six Benchmarks of Effective Governance for Charity Boards.

Organisational Structure and management

The company is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Chief Executive Officer, Margaret McCabe. Margaret has over twenty years' experience as a commercial barrister, combined with two decades in the voluntary sector, including work with Centrepoint (a homelessness charity for under 25s), the NSPCC Justice for Children programme, and as an advisor to Human Rights Watch. Margaret is a recipient of the UnLtd Award, recognising her contribution as a social entrepreneur with the launch of Urbanunltd Limited (name changed to Debate Mate Limited in July 2010, and to Debate Mate Schools Limited in July 2017) and the Debate Mate programme.

Strategic and significant financial decisions are made by the Board of Trustees to ensure that the charity's activities are in-keeping with its objectives. Decisions regarding operations, education and programme delivery are delegated by the CEO to the Executive Director and the Educational Development Director.

The CEO is supported by the management and core team of:

- 1 Executive Director
- 1 Educational Development Director
- 1 Head of Operations and Programmes
- 1 Director of Partnerships, Operations and Projects
- 3 Executive Programme Directors
- 4 Senior Programme Directors
- 4 Programme Directors
- 1 Assistant Programme Director
- 1 Part-time fundraiser

Objectives and activities

Aims

Our charity's purposes, as set out in the objectives contained in the company's memorandum of association, are:

- The promotion, for the benefit of the public, of urban and cultural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation.
- The advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly amongst young people, and providing people with work experience; in particular by exploiting the opportunities provided by the internet in providing skills and training, and with particular emphasis on confidence building by focusing on communication and interpersonal skills, providing networking opportunities for the dissemination of educational and training programmes and developing areas for growth and employment.

Our aims fully reflect the purposes for which the charity was set up:

- To improve the social mobility of disadvantaged young people in the UK.
- To equip young people with key 21st Century skills, regardless of their background.
- To raise the aspirations of Debate Mate students through our peer mentoring model to inspire them to pursue tertiary education and meaningful employment.
- To provide valuable opportunities for Debate Mate students to engage with businesses from a range of key industries.
- To enable teachers to transform their teaching practice through our CPD courses, run through our Education UK programme, allowing them to use our methodology in their classrooms and to set up debating clubs in their schools.
- To work towards building a self-sustaining model by developing a robust funding methodology.

Ensuring our Work Delivers our Aims

Every year we review our programme of activities undertaken in the previous financial accounting period and assess what we achieved in terms of deliverables and their outcomes in relation to our aims and objectives. This review ensures that we are delivering the intended benefits to the disadvantaged young people we set out to help, and that we remain focused on our purposes. We also review our aims and objectives and the direction that these provide in defining future activity. The Trustees continue to refer to the Charity Commission's guidance to ensure Debate Mate's aims, objectives and future activities meet the public benefit requirement.

How our Activities are for the Public Benefit

Debate Mate's programme of activity responds to a clear set of needs:

- Social mobility in the UK is very low and there is a significant attainment gap between pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and their wealthier peers.
- Far too many British schoolchildren lack key skills, which can restrict opportunity and contribute to unemployment.
- There is a gap in provision of key skills teaching for pupils in disadvantaged areas, for example, through innovative debating programmes.

Debate Mate's charitable activities focus on delivering training to young people from areas of high child poverty for the public benefit. The charity's after-school debate club programme has been shown to improve Speaking and Listening attainment, develop key skills and raise aspirations. However, the benefit is much wider. We are working towards ensuring that each club is sustainable within each school and that the skills imparted to pupils we have worked with are able to be passed on to other students in their school. This in turn develops a culture of debating, and a growing pride in each school we work with - benefits which have had a positive impact on local communities. In our view, no detriment or harm arises from our work.

Debate Mate's Beneficiaries

Debate Mate's charitable programmes are delivered exclusively in schools with a free school meals for the last 6 years (FSM-6) profile of primary >23% and secondary >28%. Teachers are instructed to ensure their club is composed of students of all abilities and have at least a third of students who are in receipt of FSM-6 or Pupil Premium. In a sample taken in December 2018, the Debate Mate after-school clubs had an average FSM-6 figure of 41%. True to our value of inclusivity, 13% of students in the sample were reported to have Special Educational Needs (SEN) and 43% spoke English as an Additional Language (EAL). National averages for these categories are SEN: 13% primary and 11% secondary, and EAL: 21% primary and 17% secondary.

Issues to be Tackled (Need for Key Skills in the UK)

The Social Context

The UK has the lowest rate of social mobility amongst OECD countries (OECD, 2018). This manifests early, with the socio-economic backgrounds of children influencing their ability to develop and learn at school; a child growing up in poverty in the UK is more likely to achieve lower academic qualifications, have lower aspirations, and have a lower skill set than their better-off peers. This inequality has been further exacerbated by the COVD-19 pandemic.

Disadvantage significantly impedes attainment and the academic, professional, and socioeconomic prospects of young people. According to the Department for Education, only 25.6% of 15-year-olds receiving free school meals entered higher education by age 19, compared to 43.3% not receiving free school meals (DfE 2018). The Education Policy Institute, in its 2019 Annual Report, stated that 'By the time they leave secondary school, disadvantaged pupils are now over 18.1 months behind non-disadvantaged pupils.' It is widely acknowledged that this gap will only widen further due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which will disproportionately affect disadvantaged students and poorer households. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and Sutton Trust have reported on the impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged students. In their report, 'Impact of School Closure, 2020' the EEF stated 'The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is estimated to further widen by 36% due to the pandemic'. These disparities will be felt for many generations to come.

In The Sutton Trust's 2019 Mobility Manifesto, Sir Peter Lampl writes that 'social mobility, the potential for those to achieve success regardless of their background, remains worryingly low across Britain...Our next government should put social mobility at the heart of their agenda', thus highlighting the importance of this issue for society as a whole. The Mobility Manifesto emphasises the need of programmes to develop key skills: 'Essential life skills (such as motivation, confidence, communication, self-control and coping with stress) are crucial to the life chances of young people'.

The Skills Gap

The lack of social mobility in the UK keeps many families out of long-term employment, and disadvantaged young people lack the opportunities to develop key skills which are crucial to advancement in tertiary education and their careers. The OECD reports: 'children from low-income families not only spend less time in education in countries where income inequalities are high, they also have lower skills for any given level of education. The quality gap in education is hence even larger than the income gap' (2018).

The Sutton Trust emphasises the importance of the key skills Debate Mate develops: 'adult life requires a range of skills in order for people to flourish, both in the workplace and in their daily lives,

from the confidence and motivation to seek challenges and complete tasks, to the interpersonal skills that aid teamwork and other social interactions... however, more needs to be done to give all young people a chance in a jobs market where such skills are as important as qualifications' (2019).

It is apparent that in the UK the circumstances of birth have a huge influence on a young person's chances of success, with students in the UK born into poorer backgrounds leaving school with lower qualifications, aspirations and skill sets.

Our Solution

Under its founder and present CEO, Margaret McCabe, Debate Mate identified areas of high child poverty in London and the key resources and support needed to improve social mobility amongst young people. A cost-effective, efficient and fun way of delivering these skills to disadvantaged young people was developed, which would help overcome the barriers to learning so frequently experienced amongst this demographic.

The OECD highlights the formative role of extracurricular programmes in improving student behaviour, academic attainment and long-term progression: 'social and emotional learning school-based programmes have also been shown to improve both behavioural and academic outcomes' (2018). They also note that there is 'empirical evidence that confirms the positive effects of participating in extracurricular activities on schooling outcomes and careers prospects, especially for youth from disadvantaged backgrounds (Heckman, 2008)'.

The Sutton Trust emphasises the need of programmes like Debate Mate to develop key skills: 'essential life skills (such as motivation, confidence, communication, self-control and coping with stress) are crucial to the life chances of young people' (2019). Students taking part in the Debate Mate programme develop key 21st Century skills, which are fundamental to success in academic and professional environments. These include critical and creative thinking, communication (speaking and listening) skills and teamwork, as well as building confidence and self-esteem, resilience, leadership and self-management. These are skills that teachers acknowledge as being central to students' attainment and progression but are often challenging to teach in a classroom environment.

Importantly, the Debate Mate programme provides disadvantaged young people with the guidance and support of the best and brightest mentors from universities across the UK. Mentors provide an insight into higher education, further training and career paths, and act as inspirational and relatable role models for the students we work with. The mentors inspire their students to raise their aspirations and fulfil their potential. The OECD highlights the potential of mentoring schemes as part of of extracurricular activities, arguing that they can help disadvantaged young people engage academically and develop skills that 'are not acquired at home' (2018). Debate Mate's unique model is highly effective for raising aspirations and developing these key skills, thereby improving social mobility.

In June 2019, the CBI published a People and Skills report entitled: Getting young people 'work ready' - our vision for how education should prepare young people for the modern world. The report references the work of Debate Mate Schools on pages 20-21. It is notable that Debate Mate delivers precisely what employers are seeking in terms of their identified three pillars for work readiness: character, knowledge and skills. The schools that are working with Debate Mate are already on a path to implement recommendations of this report.

Furthermore, debating is a key skill listed in the new English National Curriculum at Key Stage 3 and teaching these skills is vital to helping students develop their speaking and listening early on and to aid them in their GCSE Spoken Language accreditation. Debating is a way to stretch the most able students, while providing opportunities to succeed for students who need more support, especially those who find written work more challenging. Debating allows students to articulate ideas first, thus improving the quality of their written outcomes, enabling students of all abilities to achieve rapid progress. It encourages students to generate new ideas, problem-solve, think quickly under pressure and respond to challenges.

Overview of Debate Mate's Activities

Debate Mate's 2020-21 charitable objectives are provided below. These are achieved through the fulfilment of our programme delivery targets and meeting our impact measurement goals:

- Through the delivery of our programmes, develop our participants' key 21st Century skills, which include critical and creative thinking, communication (speaking and listening skills), and teamwork, as well as leadership, self-management, confidence and self-esteem, and resilience. This is demonstrated in our soft and hard skills evaluations:
    - To achieve a minimum average of 80% in our soft skills evaluation at the end of each programme year and maintain a skill level increase of 1.4 in our Speaking and Listening Evaluation.
- To deliver Debate Mate's mentor-led after-school clubs to a minimum of 130 schools in areas of high child poverty in 2020-21, and in addition:
    - To increase the delivery of our online programme which involves our mentors teaching the after-school sessions online
    - To recruit and train at least 250 inspirational mentors per year to deliver after-school clubs and maintain an average of at least 15 students per club per week.
- By employing our peer-mentoring model, raise the aspirations of the young people we work with and empower them to pursue higher education or further training and make a successful transition to the modern workforce. The success of this is measured in our soft skills evaluation and our qualitative impact measurement, such as our case studies
- To build relationships with corporate supporters through partnerships, volunteering schemes and sponsorship, to expose students to inspiring careers and a diverse range of professionals, and to provide opportunities for meaningful interactions
- To continue to expand bespoke new initiatives to target specific demographics and to meet identified needs, such as Debate Mate's DebateBox and Accelerate programmes for those students most at risk, and the Debate Mate Plus and the Graduate School to support older students through their progression to further education, apprenticeships or university
- Continue to generate income through our Education UK programmes and partnerships, with a view to raise a third of our income this way
- To continue to run our international summer programmes in Rwanda and Nepal, delivered by our most experienced mentors from the UK, through adapting our in-person offering to an online programme in light of the changing circumstances due to Covid-19
- To ensure the Core Programme can be effectively delivered virtually, when required, due to the impact of school closures and lockdowns as a result of Covid-19.

In 2019/20, we worked in 243 primary/secondary schools - teaching, on average, more than 5,000 students every week. We considered it expedient, due to Covid-19, to reduce the size of the programme for 2020/21 to ensure we had sufficient funding for the year. As a result, in our programme year from September 2020 to June 2021 we worked with 134 schools in Bristol, Liverpool, London, Greater Manchester, the West Midlands and our blended programme ran in Nottingham, Leeds and the West Midlands. We successfully developed and introduced a virtual programme to take the place of our face-to-face clubs. We delivered our programmes to just over 2000 students per teaching week, with an average of 15 students taking part per club per week. For our 2021/22 programme we plan to work with 200 schools.

Core Programme

The Core Programme, Debate Mate's main initiative, is delivered to disadvantaged young people aged 8-18 attending state primary and secondary schools in the UK, typically located in inner city areas at schools with an above average percentage of children eligible for Free School Meals. The programme begins with regional launch events in November. Following these, participating students take part in one-hour, mentor-led teaching sessions for 14 weeks, as well as three weeks of national competitions.

Taught in small groups by trained university student mentors, they follow a curriculum - honed over the past 12 years - designed to develop key 21st Century skills:

a) Developing confidence and style through body language, voice and spoken language.
b) Understanding how to research and analyse a subject from different viewpoints to empathise and consider context.
c) Formulating arguments coherently and logically from different standpoints, and to weigh up arguments and prioritise.
d) Listening to others and responding respectfully in a timely and appropriate way, adding weight to their own case.

Students taking part in the programme participate in Debate Mate's Urban Debate League (UDL): a nationwide debating league. Students prepare for the two rounds in their regular after-school clubs and then attend competitions at host schools in their local area. The top scoring schools nationally are invited to a final competition, which takes place in prestigious venues such as the House of Lords and the offices of our corporate supporters.

The Core Programme concludes with the Debate Mate Cup: a national competition in which all schools compete. It consists of full-day regional rounds held at local universities in March and April. The regional winners then take part in a Grand Final, held in June at inspiring venues such as the Houses of Parliament and the University of Oxford.

Additional Programme

Debate Mate offers a range of additional programmes that run alongside the Core Programme in schools in the UK.

Advanced Programme

The Graduate School is a programme delivered to students aged 15-18 who have successfully completed the Core Programme, providing them with further debate training to compete in national schools' competitions and to develop into social leaders and future professionals. Delivered over 15 weeks, participants attend weekly three-hour sessions - online, due to the pandemic - which included debating workshops with world champion university debaters, and skills sessions with professionals from various sectors. This programme empowers students to raise their aspirations in terms of their debating potential, higher education and career goals, and to reach out to their local communities to share their skills.

In our 2020-21 programme year, 68 students from 31 Debate Mate Schools attended the Graduate School. This is an increase of 10% compared to 2019/20 and 36% higher than the minimum target of 50 students. A considerable number of these students came from schools that were on Debate Mate's Core Programme of after-school debating last year but did not re-enrol on the 2020/21 programme because of restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. This allowed students to engage with Debate Mate when even extra-curricular activities were cancelled at this school. We worked with an average of 19.7 students per week in the Graduate School. The Graduate School's Saturday sessions were extended by 10 weeks this year due to student demand, which was made possible by the UK government's decision to scrap exams in favour of school-administered assessments and by the reduced costs of running a virtual Graduate School programme. The Debate Mate Plus (DM+) Programme bridges the gap between the Core Programme and post-18 study or work, ensuring that Debate Mate students continuously benefit from our support during their secondary education. Delivered over 16 weeks to students in years 11-13, the sessions are designed to offer students - with any level of Debate Mate experience - debate training, UCAS guidance and employability skills development. Importantly, we partner with organisations that support us with facilitating meaningful interactions with professionals, such as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

11 schools across London took part in the Debate Mate Plus Programme in 2020-21.

Intervention Programme

Debate Mate's Accelerate Programme targets students who have more serious academic and behavioural challenges. Schools involved are asked to select groups of students who are at risk of exclusion or are generally disengaged with education. The programme aims to motivate students to embrace learning, develop students' engagement in the classroom, improve behaviour, equip participants with key skills and raise aspirations. In our 2020-21 programme year, 10 secondary schools took part in our Accelerate Programme, working with over 100 students. As a result of the pandemic, these numbers are down from our usual numbers of 35+ schools and 300+ students.

The DebateBox Programme, an additional behavioural intervention scheme, focuses on the shared skills needed to excel in both boxing and debating: strategy, discipline, and competitive and combative thinking. Sessions include one hour of debating followed by one hour of boxing. DebateBox was delivered to 4 schools in our 2020-21 programme year.

International Programme

Debate Mate's charitable activities also operate internationally, with annual summer programmes in Nepal and Rwanda. Due to the impact of COVID-19, we invited students to take part in Debate Mate Online clubs free of charge, as we were unable to deliver our summer programmes in-person.

Nepal

Working in partnership with the Samata Shiksha Niketan Bamboo Schools in Nepal, a team of Debate Mate staff and mentors deliver our programme every summer.

In the 2020-21 programme year, a group of students from the Nepal programme participated in Debate Mate Online clubs free of charge, as we were unable to deliver our usual three-week summer programme in Nepal. Students attended 1-hour sessions for the entire 12-week term and took part in competitions at the end of the week.

The students who had taken part in the Nepal programme previously went straight up to Level 2 of the programme, Developing Debating Skills, whilst new students started on Level 1, Introduction to Debating. They were dispersed across 4 groups alongside our regular DMO students. In total, there were 10 students who took part.

Rwanda

Debate Mate has been working in Rwanda every summer since 2012. In Summer 2019, we worked with a total of 380 students in Kigali and Nyaza. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we were unable to run the programme in Summer 2020.

Sustainability

An integral part of the Debate Mate model is sustainability. That is, we encourage students to continue debating even after our final competitions. In order to do so, students in each club elect one president and three officers to oversee the running of the debating club once the weekly sessions with mentors have concluded. We do this to provide students with leadership roles in the school community and to foster a culture of debating that extends beyond the 17-week programme. Students become leaders of debating in their schools, teaching younger students and setting up their own clubs. We also endeavour to provide our programmes to schools and students year-on-year so that students can continue to build on their skills attainment and schools can work on integrating debating into the curriculum supported by Debate Mate's continued on-site presence.

Our Mentors

Debate Mate benefits from an outstanding contribution from mentors, who act as sessional workers. In our 2019-20 programme year, Debate Mate trained and allocated 270 mentors from universities in the regions where we operate, who were responsible for preparing for, reporting on and delivering weekly sessions each term, as well as acting as judges at our competitions. We expect a high standard of professionalism and commitment from mentors. Therefore, mentors receive a stipend to recognise this.

The quality and impact of the Debate Mate programme is contingent on the calibre of our mentors, who serve as role models for the students. We therefore significantly invest in recruiting, training and supporting them throughout the programme to develop inspiring and committed leaders. We offer additional opportunities for mentors to develop and apply their skills, such as through our International Programmes and Education UK work. Many of our mentors apply their Debate Mate experience when they enter into a career in teaching.

Achievements and performance

Impact Measurement and Performance

Following a consultation with the New Economic Foundation in 2010, Debate Mate designed an evaluation metric with four central goals in mind:

Goal 1: To accelerate attainment in Speaking and Listening.
Goal 2: To strengthen emotional capacity through building confidence, self-esteem and resilience. Goal 3: To develop key implacability skills such as leadership, teamwork, critical thinking and self-management. Goal 4: To heighten aspirations towards both tertiary education and meaningful employment.

Speaking and Listening Metric (Goal 1)

Debate Mate uses a bespoke Speaking and Listening metric designed in consultation with teachers to measure students' Speaking and Listening skills development. The skills assessed in the metric are derived from the National Curriculum at Key Stages Two and Three (Department for Education, 2014) as well as the assessment criteria for the GCSE Spoken Language accreditation devised by Ofqual (The Assessments and Qualifications Alliance, 2012). These guidelines were mapped onto the debating skills that Debate Mate teaches to form a unique, holistic metric that tracks student progress continuously from Key Stage Two up to GCSE and beyond. Debate Mate's metric tracks progress through seven skill categories:

1. Collaboration
2. Listen and Respond Appropriately
3. Articulate and Justify an Argument
4. Use of Evidence
5. Structure of Speeches
6. Style
7. Quality of Spoken Language

Each Skill Category is given a level from 0 to 8, describing a wide range of abilities that might be observed in students from Years 4 to 10. Trained Programme Directors use the metric to assess new students during their first and last debate of the year, usually falling in weeks 5 and 15 of the after-school sessions. These assessments are moderated by teachers from the schools.

The results from 2015 to 2019 show that, overall, secondary school students progressed from an average level of 2.71 in their first debate to an average of 4.11 in their last debate, equating to and meeting our objective to maintain 1.4 levels of progress. To conceptualise this figure, a student averaging a Level 3 will only occasionally engage in group discussion during preparation time, make points that are relevant but not structured, use mainly anecdotal evidence, digress throughout their speech and read from their notes with occasional hesitations or silences. Comparatively, a student averaging a Level 4 will engage in group discussion, offer relevant rebuttal to opposing arguments, create an argument that is structured clearly, deliver their speech confidently (using notes for reference only) and use basic persuasive devices and vocabulary for effect.

We aim to maintain 1.4 levels of progress year-on-year. We calculate the average over a period of years as we can only assess a limited number of students, due to staffing restrictions, and it is therefore most representative to do so.

This progress demonstrates our programme's ability to improve speaking and listening skills. Good speaking and listening skills form the basis of all learning in literacy and are fundamental to successful advancement to tertiary education and the modern workplace.

Soft Skills Metric (Goal 2,3 and 4)

Students growing up in poverty are less likely to demonstrate high levels of perseverance, self-belief, and motivation to learn - which in turn affects educational outcomes (Fair Education Alliance, 2015). To combat this, Debate Mate actively seeks to develop these soft skills, which are crucial to students' academic success, personal wellbeing and employment later in life. Following a consultation with the New Economic Foundation in 2010, Debate Mate designed a metric to collect data on each of our measurement objectives: self-esteem and confidence, resilience, leadership, teamwork, self-management, critical thinking and aspirations. This soft skills metric was designed in collaboration with New Philanthropy Capital.

We normally collect data on soft skills attainment by distributing questionnaires at our Debate Mate Cup events. As these competitions could not go ahead in-person in 2021, our evaluation of soft-skills attainment by the students is based on an end-of-programme self-assessment provided by students at our online Debate Mate Cup competitions in March/April. The Covid-19 pandemic adversely affected our ability to collect our usual sample size in 2020/21, however we did receive surveys from 160 students. In a normal year, we would expect that approximately 2,000 students will respond and Strongly Agree/Agree that their average level of attainment was at least close to or in excess of 80% across all skill categories.

The results for 2020/21 from the questionnaire responses from secondary schools are as follows, reporting on students who either Strongly Agree or Agree with each statement:

Confidence and Self Esteem
- 87% say they are better at debating
- 76% say they are more comfortable when speaking up in class
- 82% say they are more confident giving their opinion on current events and political issues

Resilience
- 76% say they can concentrate better during debates and public speaking events
- 82% say they when their ideas are challenged, they are better at coming up with new ones
- 75% say they are more hard-working

Leadership
- 79% say they have more experience working in a team
- 84% say they are better able to identify the qualities that make a good leader (for example, in peers and teachers)
- 81% say they are more likely to help others when working in a group

Teamwork
- 82% say they are better able to work with someone who has different opinions to them
- 90% say, when completing a task or assignment as a group, they are more likely to do their fair share of work
- 90% say they are more likely to put their ideas forward when working in a group
- 90% say they are better able to take other people's thoughts into consideration

Critical and Creative Thinking
- 85% say they have more experience researching different topics
- 91% say they are better able to come up with their own opinions and arguments
- 88% say they are better able to respond to and respectfully disagree with the ideas of others

Self-management
- 85% say they are better at working independently
- 91% say they use feedback to reflect on their learning and improve their skills.

Teacher Questionnaire

We also distributed our teacher survey, which included some questions regarding soft skills attainment to help us better understand our impact:

- 100% believe their students enjoyed attending the Debate Mate sessions
- 100% believe their students have gained confidence as a result of the Debate Mate programme
- 100% believe their students are more comfortable giving their opinion on political issues or current events as a result of the Debate Mate programme
- 100% believe their students are better at working with others as a result of the Debate Mate programme
- 94% believe their students are better able to cope with setbacks and challenges (e.g. losing a debate or a game) as a result of the Debate Mate programme
- 88% believe their students are more comfortable speaking up in class as a result of the Debate Mate programme
- 88% believe their students are better at critically responding to the arguments of others as a result of the Debate Mate programme
- 88% believe their students are more considerate of other people's ideas and feelings as a result of the Debate Mate programme
- 88% believe their students are more likely to take on leadership roles in their school or communities as a result of the Debate Mate programme
- 88% believe their students are more able to work independently as a result of the Debate Mate programme
- 88% have seen the above benefits transfer from the Debate Mate club into the classroom.

The speaking and listening evaluation and our soft skills evaluation comprise our two primary methods of impact measurement. In addition to this, we carry out annual case studies and pre- and post - programme student questionnaires, as well as distributing end-of-year mentor and teacher surveys. Each of these help us to collect valuable feedback, which informs curriculum and programme changes year-on-year as well as enabling us to report on our impact.

2020-21 Key Achievements

- Congratulations to Elmhurst Primary School and Sydenham School who, respectively, won the Primary Debate Mate Cup Grand Final and the Secondary Debate Mate Cup Grand Final in June 2021.
- Both the Primary and Secondary Debate Mate Cup Finals were run in partnership with the RSPCA for the first time.
- Well done to Elmhurst Primary School, who also won the Primary Urban Debate League Competition, and Harris Academy East Dulwich who won the Secondary Urban Debate League Competition!
- Debate Mate launched a series of Online Showcase Debates during the first lockdown in April 2020, which continued to run in the 2020-21 programme year. These monthly debates covered topics from Leadership to Education, Sport to Harry Potter, and many more. Speakers included some of our own Debate Mate students, alongside journalists, public figures, industry professions, and debate world champions.
- We continued to develop the virtual version of the Debate Mate Programme, including our weekly sessions and competitions to reach students that were learning from home as a result of school closures, and to reach schools when there were restrictions on entry to the school due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

- Debate Mate strives to sustain and grow the debating and key skills of students who have participated in our in-school programme. Debate Mate's Graduate School achieves this for a nucleus of dedicated students aged 15-18, currently in London and Manchester. Many of these students continue to excel at the foremost debating competitions.
- In 2020/21, eight Graduate School students accepted invitations to trial for the England WSDC team. Six students-including two students from the Manchester Graduate School-were selected out of 18 in the country to participate in the second day of trials and two students made the National Development Squad-a feat which has been achieved by at least one Graduate School student for the 6th consecutive year. While no Graduate School students were selected to join Team England this year, one former Graduate School student, having left the programme after receiving a scholarship to attend Eton College, was one of five that represented England at the World Schools Debating Championships in 2021. It is also notable that many students did not attend trials in order to focus on their A-Level exams and catch up on months of missed learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- As in previous years, the World Schools programme benefited greatly from the Graduate School's alumni network, with the former Team England Captain, Zarina Bell-Gam, running sessions. Furthermore, the bootcamp provides an opportunity for returning Graduate School students to socialise and solidify a tight knit core group from the start of the year, which forms the foundation of the student community into which we will be integrating new students. One noteworthy World Schools development this year is that they launched six Development Squads for state school educated students in Years 10 and 11 to participate in World Schools debating training and general knowledge seminars to prepare them to trial for the England Debate Team. At least four Graduate School students were selected to take part in this programme and it is likely that more will next year.
- We entered students into competitions at a number of universities, including Oxford and Cambridge. The students excelled and achieved the following:

    - LSE Schools: this was many students' first ever external competition and 7 students competed after only 3 weeks on the programme. 1 student ranked in the top 20 novice speakers.
    - Oxford Schools: 2 teams through to International Finals Day, with 1 team ranking top in their regional round and breaking to the quarter-finals.
    - Imperial Schools 2020: 1 team broke to the Bronze Final, placing as the 9th best team overall.
    - Imperial Schools 2021: 1 student ranked 22nd overall. 2 students ranked in the top 30 novice speakers. 4 students attended their first ever external competition.
    - Durham Schools: 2 teams broke to the novice semi-finals. 2 students ranked in the top 10 novice speakers. 1 team ranked 22nd overall, missing out on the semi-finals on speaker points. The 4th team also missed out on the novice semi-finals on speaker points.
    - Manchester Schools: 1 team ranked 13th overall. 2 teams ranked in the top 10 novice teams.
    - Cambridge Schools: 1 team made it through to the International Finals Day (after placing 1st in their regional round), where they placed 22nd out of 54 teams and both speakers were ranked in the top 25 overall.
    - The Urban Debate League in January and February 2021 was the largest competition we had ever hosted virtually, with students joining from school or from home.
    - We introduced a Graduate School Open Mic, which gave Graduate School students a chance to deliver a speech on a topic of their choice or perform spoken word poetry.

- The Virtual Graduate School programme was expanded to Debate Mate regions beyond London and Manchester.
- In partnership with the UK government, we launched the eXpo Factor competition in the lead up to Expo 2020 in Dubai. The winning students had the chance to discuss ideas about sustainability, mobility and equal opportunity with global leaders at Expo 2020 in Dubai in February 2022.
- After the success of our virtual Boardroom to Classroom programmes in the 2019-2020 programme year, we continued to deliver these in the 2020-21 programme year with various partner organisations including Bank of America, UBS, and BCG. These programmes brought professionals and students together in a unique way - allowing both sides to learn from each other through joint skills-sharing sessions.
- An exciting project with Deloitte, as part of Deloitte Futures Month, saw primary and secondary students on our Core Programme devise and pitch innovative group projects to tackle global issues - such as climate change - with the support of volunteers who work at Deloitte. The winners received a session with the Deloitte Greenhouse Virtual Lab, seed funding, and ongoing mentorship to support them in bringing the idea to life.

Factors and Challenges Affecting Performance

Impact of COVID-19

Our debate club programme was delivered for one hour per week for all of the planned 14 weeks from November 2020 to March 2021. Schools were offered virtual debate clubs where in-person clubs could not take place due to Covid-19. In addition to the completed debate club sessions, we were fortunate to be able to complete Rounds 1 & 2 of our Urban Debate League (UDL) competitions between January and mid-March 2021. The finals took place online in June 2021, with students participating from home and school depending on their circumstances. Where possible, we delivered our 2020/21 debate club programme face-to-face from November 2020 but moved to online delivery from January 2021, following lockdown/school closures, using video conferencing with a specialised virtual curriculum. We have ensured that we have complied with best practice for online safeguarding and have provided staff and mentors with additional training after consulting a safeguarding specialist.

Debate Mate Cup - The lockdown meant that we were unable to hold our Debate Mate Cup in person, however we ran a successful competition online for our schools across the UK. This was in partnership with Comic Relief in the run up to World Malaria Day with students debating issues surrounding global health. The Grand Final was also held online in partnership with RSPCA.

There have been challenges in delivering our programme virtually: some students are hesitant to turn on their camera; schools aren't always able to use Zoom, which we find to be the best platform for delivery as a result of the programme functionality and ability to have break-out rooms; and unreliable Wi-Fi. Mentors were encouraging to students to turn their cameras on, or to use the chat function which resulted in students starting to feel more confident and using their cameras. Some connection issues were inevitable, but each club usually had 2 mentors, or one mentor and one teacher, to ensure that if a mentor had issues, someone else could take over.

Another challenge has been maintaining our usual attendance figures this year; this was understandable with all the changes to the school year. We would usually hold assemblies, incentivise students to 'bring a friend' and provide snacks at our after-school clubs; unfortunately, none of this has been possible this year. We have instead used vouchers as prizes for attendance this year. Some schools also had to have students off-site after the end of the school day due to deep cleaning, others couldn't allow mentors in-person, and some schools delayed the start of the programme hoping they could return to in-person at some point. The main thing we have taken away from this is being flexible with schools and dealing with them on a case-by-case basis.

In recognition of the above changes imposed on our programme, we have had to adapt our programme soft-skills and hard skills evaluation. We sent schools our soft skills questionnaires to complete during the Debate Mate Cup competitions this year and asked teachers to get as many responses as possible. In addition, we sought case studies by interviewing teachers (and students, where possible) from schools on the programme and also asked teachers for their feedback to gather qualitative information. Unfortunately, as aforementioned, we could not conduct the hard skills assessments we had hoped to in January 2021 due to the national lockdown.

Financial review

Performance

The charity generated net surplus result for the year which improved its balance sheet at the year end.

The charity forecast net surplus and positive cash flow for the next year. This does not however take into account future uncertainty and forecasted recession of the UK economy which may affect some of the charity doners.

Fundraising Performance

We received a large proportion of our funding from trusts, foundations, corporate supporters and statutory bodies, comprising 52% of our income. In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of Debate Mate, we recognise the need to diversify our income streams beyond these sources. Participating schools make a financial contribution towards the running costs of the programme, comprising 26% of our income, and Debate Mate fundraises the remaining amount. Schools tend to use Pupil Premium funding to make this donation. Furthermore, we deliver student and teacher training in schools outside of our Core Programme, which has provided a significant amount of reliable income for the organisation, with 12% of our total income coming from this source.

Grants and Donations

Debate Mate is extremely grateful to all the organisations and people who provided financial support for our programme in 2020-21, including the following (£10,000 and over):

- Adoreum- Bank of America
- BBC CiN
- Comic Relief
- Christ Church College, Oxford
- Deloitte
- Department for Education
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Grocers Hall
- Janus Henderson
- John Lyons Charity
- National Lottery Community Fund
- Neuberger Berman
- Newby Trust
- Now Pensions
- Simmons & Simmons
- St. James's Place Wealth Management
- Swire Charitable Trust
- The Big Give
- Transform Education
- Wellington Management UK Foundation

Reserves Policy

The charity carries out diverse range of activities. The trustees have examined the requirement for general reserves and consider that, govern the nature of the charity's work, reserves should be maintained at not less than three months operating costs. The trustees are of the opinion that this provides sufficient flexibility to cover temporary shortfalls in income flow and to provide adequate working capital to cover costs.

Risk Management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the specific operational areas of the charity and its finances. The Trustees believe that by monitoring reserve levels, ensuring controls exist over key financial systems, and by examining the operational and business risks faced by the charity, they have established systems to mitigate those risks.

Plans for future periods

Strategic Review

At the end of each programme year, Debate Mate conducts an annual Strategic Review, in which all members of staff evaluate their respective programmes, assess positive developments, and put forward recommendations for the next programme year. These recommendations are then discussed by the entire team and strategies are adopted to ensure that the programme continues to improve. Key recommendations agreed at the 2020-21 Strategic Review are approved by the trustees and are implemented in our 2021-22 programme year.

Future Sustainability and Strategy

We plan to further enhance our virtual model, which was developed from our previous Blended Programme in response to the circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the need to move our programmes online. We will continue to combine this with our peer delivery model to expand our geographical remit. Thus far, this has proven effective in allowing us to deliver our programmes to areas where we lack the resources to operate and, importantly, to reach some of the most deprived and remote schools in the UK. Using the combination of the online programme and our mentor-led delivery helps to ensure our financial sustainability and expansion in the coming years.

Debate Mate is constantly looking to build upon our successes. By carefully monitoring our progress and evaluating our impact, we hope to reach even more students and provide even better support to schools already on the programme. In the 2021-22 programme year, we plan to further refine our alumni network and connect former students with Debate Mate.

We also plan to further develop our programmes that link up students that have taken part in Debate Mate, and more specifically in the Graduate Programme and Debate Mate Plus, with businesses that support the charity and that we work with through Debate Mate Limited. The alumni network will also inspire current students and will act as relatable role models. With the rise of apprenticeship programmes and the drive for a more diverse workforce, Debate Mate is uniquely positioned to bridge the gap between school leavers and businesses - thus providing young people taking part in the Debate Mate programme with opportunities for employment in some of the top businesses in the UK. We have already developed strong relationships with businesses that support our Debate Mate Plus and Graduate School programmes and plan to continue to expand them to develop this aspect of our work.

Through each of our programmes, we help thousands of young people speak more fluently, take on leadership roles, work in teams, think critically and develop self-confidence and resilience. We continue to see Debate Mate students go through university and enter the workforce as successful, self-assured young adults, some of whom work with us as mentors and Programme Directors. As we look to the future, we plan on helping many more students achieve their ambitions by providing them with valuable 21st Century skills through debating and peer-to-peer mentorship.

We plan to continue to work towards achieving each of our stated aims and objectives year-on-year. This is constantly reviewed by the trustees to ensure they align to the charity's legal objectives.

Equal Opportunities, Access and Cultural Diversity

Debate Mate is an equal opportunities employer and encourages contributions from all sectors of the community. The company is committed to student-led and peer-to-peer learning. In the areas where Debate Mate operates, there are 200 different languages: our target groups are by their very nature culturally diverse. Our debate club programme works in concert with schools to support the curriculum through debating.

Safeguarding Policy

We have reviewed and updated our Safeguarding Policy. We are committed to the Safeguarding of students within our care and to regularly review and improve our procedures. Four members of staff have completed Safeguarding Training and the Educational Development Director is the appointed Safeguarding Lead at Debate Mate.

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the 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 in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The auditor is deemed to have been re-appointed in accordance with section 487 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees' annual report and the strategic report were approved on 25/5/2022 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Britt Lintner
Trustee

M McCabe
Charity Secretary

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Debate Mate Schools Limited

Year ended 31 August 2021

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Debate Mate Schools Limited (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 August 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), statement of financial position, 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 and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 August 2021 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;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

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 auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC'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.

Material uncertainty related to going concern

The future uncertainty and forecasted recession of the UK economy along with the other matters as set forth in note 3 of the financial statements may cast doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter. In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the director's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our discussions with the charity's management, we identified that the following laws and regulations are significant to the entity:

- Those laws and regulations considered to have a direct effect on the financial statements include UK financial reporting standards and Charity Law.

- Those laws and regulations for which non-compliance may be fundamental to the operating aspects of the charity and therefore may have a material effect on the financial statements include compliance with the charitable objectives, public benefit, fundraising regulations, safeguarding and health and safety legislation.

These matters were identified at the planning stage and the team monitored for non-compliance throughout the audit.

Audit procedures undertaken in response to the potential risks relating to irregularities (which include fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations) comprised of: inquiries of management and the Trustees as to whether the entity complies with such laws and regulations; enquiries with the same concerning any actual or potential litigation or claims; inspection of relevant legal correspondence where applicable; review of Trustee meeting minutes; testing the appropriateness of journal entries; and the performance of analytical review to identify unexpected movements in account balances which may be indicative of fraud.

No instances of material non-compliance were identified. However, the likelihood of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is limited by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the entity's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed. Irregularities that result from fraud might be inherently more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error. As explained above, there is an unavoidable risk that material misstatements may not be detected, even though the audit has been planned and performed in accordance with ISAs (UK).

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charity to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity'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 charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

CAS House Limited
25.05.2022

Ibrahim T Ibrahim (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of
CAS House Limited
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor

151 Askew Road
London
W12 9AU

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 August 2021

	Note	2021 Unrestricted funds £	2021 Restricted funds £	2021 Total funds £	2020 Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	**5**	638,819	235,066	**873,884**	902,397
Charitable activities	**6**	121,201	–	**121,201**	149,766
Other trading activities	**7**	–	–	–	5,000
Total income		760,020	235,066	**995,085**	1,057,163
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of raising donations and legacies	**8**	24,252	–	**24,252**	22,709
Expenditure on charitable activities	**9,10**	701,295	220,150	**921,444**	1,207,610
Total expenditure		725,547	220,150	**945,696**	1,230,319
Net income/(expenditure)		34,473	14,916	**49,389**	(173,156)
Transfers between funds		14,916	(14,916)	–	–
Net movement in funds		49,389	–	**49,389**	(173,156)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		(103,968)	–	**(103,968)**	69,188
Total funds carried forward		(54,579)	–	**(54,579)**	(103,968)

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 28 to 37 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

31 August 2021

	Note	2021 £	£	2020 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible fixed assets	16		**2,619**	2,384
Current assets				
Debtors	17	**129,297**		147,757
Cash at bank and in hand		**79,939**		92,502
		209,236		240,259
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	**216,434**		296,611
Net current liabilities			**7,198**	56,352
Total assets less current liabilities			**(4,579)**	(53,968)
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19		**50,000**	50,000
Net liabilities			**(54,579)**	(103,968)
Funds of the charity				
Unrestricted funds			**(54,579)**	(103,968)
Total charity funds	21		**(54,579)**	(103,968)

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 25/5/2022, and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Britt Lintner

Britt Lintner
Trustee

The notes on pages 28 to 37 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Cash Flows

Year ended 31 August 2021

	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net income/(expenditure)	**49,389**	(173,156)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**2,348**	1,873
Interest payable and similar charges	**8,952**	40
Accrued (income)/expenses	**(13,767)**	8,114
Changes in:		
Trade and other debtors	**18,460**	43,493
Trade and other creditors	**(66,410)**	111,382
Cash generated from operations	**(1,028)**	(8,254)
Interest paid	**(8,952)**	(40)
Net cash used in operating activities	**(9,980)**	(8,294)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible assets	**(2,583)**	(2,100)
Net cash used in investing activities	**(2,583)**	(2,100)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Proceeds from borrowings	**–**	50,000
Net cash from financing activities	**–**	50,000
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	**(12,563)**	39,606
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	**92,502**	52,896
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	**79,939**	92,502

The notes on pages 28 to 37 form part of these financial statements.

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is 32-36 Loman Street, London, SE1 0EH.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

The charity incurred deficits in the previous financial year and has negative net assets at the year ended 31 August 2021. The charity forecast net surplus and positive cash flow for the next year to end with a positive net assets position. This does not however take into account future uncertainty and forecasted recession in the UK economy which may affect some of the charity donors. The directors, having considered the above and made due enquiries, continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements which assumes that the charity will continue in operation for the foreseeable future.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Incoming resources

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity, it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

3. **Accounting policies** *(continued)*

Incoming resources *(continued)*

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.

- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.

- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.

- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are approrrtioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Tangible assets

All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Fixtures and fittings	-	20% reducing balance
Equipment	-	25% reducing balance

Impairment of fixed assets

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

3. **Accounting policies** *(continued)*

Impairment of fixed assets *(continued)*

For the purposes of impairment testing, when it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, an estimate is made of the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs. The cash-generating unit is the smallest identifiable group of assets that includes the asset and generates cash inflows that largely independent of the cash inflows from other assets or groups of assets.

Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or payable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

4. **Limited by guarantee**

The company is limited by guaranteeand has no authorised or issued share capital.

5. **Donations and legacies**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**
Donations			
Donations	538,678	–	**538,678**
Grants			
Foundations and trusts	65,631	235,066	**300,696**
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	34,510	–	**34,510**
	638,819	235,066	**873,884**

5. Donations and legacies *(continued)*

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Donations			
Donations	465,051	–	465,051
Grants			
Foundations and trusts	21,354	355,701	377,055
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	60,291	–	60,291
	546,696	355,701	902,397

6. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Training	121,201	**121,201**	149,766	149,766

7. Other trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Fundraising events	–	–	5,000	5,000

8. Costs of raising donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Fundraising and development	24,252	**24,252**	22,709	22,709

9. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**
Programmes	391,790	165,734	**557,524**
Support costs	309,505	54,416	**363,920**
	701,295	220,150	**921,444**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Programmes	560,197	221,813	782,010
Support costs	369,231	56,369	425,600
	929,428	278,182	1,207,610

10. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Programmes £	Support costs £	**Total funds 2021 £**	Total fund 2020 £
Programmes	557,524	328,337	**885,861**	1,181,814
Governance costs	–	35,583	**35,583**	25,796
	557,524	363,920	**921,444**	1,207,610

11. Analysis of support costs

	Analysis of support costs £	**Total 2021 £**	Total 2020 £
Staff costs	260,972	**260,972**	239,765
Premises	1,582	**1,582**	69,926
Governance costs	35,583	**35,583**	25,795
Other support costs	65,783	**65,783**	90,114
	363,920	**363,920**	425,600

12. Net income/(expenditure)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2021 £	2020 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**2,348**	1,873

13. Auditors remuneration

	2021	2020
	£	£
Fees payable for the audit of the financial statements	**4,200**	4,200

14. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**548,735**	682,158
Social security costs	**28,303**	26,419
Employer contributions to pension plans	**17,375**	18,171
Other employee benefits	**38,295**	39,888
	632,708	766,636

The average head count of employees during the year was 17 (2020: 20). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
Number of production staff	**16**	19
Number of management staff	**1**	1
	17	20

The number of employees whose remuneration for the year fell within the following bands, were:

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
£210,000 to £219,999	**–**	1
£270,000 to £279,999	**1**	–
	1	1

Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel include all persons that have authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the charity. The total compensation paid to key management personnel for services provided to the charity was £271,026 (2020:£212,709).

15. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration, benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity or expenses were received by the trustees.

16. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Equipment £	**Total £**
Cost			
At 1 September 2020	360	5,289	**5,649**
Additions	1,500	1,083	**2,583**
At 31 August 2021	1,860	6,372	**8,232**
Depreciation			
At 1 September 2020	255	3,010	**3,265**
Charge for the year	230	2,118	**2,348**
At 31 August 2021	485	5,128	**5,613**
Carrying amount			
At 31 August 2021	1,375	1,244	**2,619**
At 31 August 2020	105	2,279	2,384

17. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Prepayments and accrued income	**5,270**	5,354
Other debtors	**124,027**	142,403
	129,297	147,757

18. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade creditors	**11,114**	23,731
Accruals and deferred income	**65,000**	78,767
Social security and other taxes	**140,320**	194,113
	216,434	296,611

19. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Bank loans and overdrafts	**50,000**	50,000

20. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £17,375 (2020: £18,171).

21. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 September 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	**At 31 August 2021 £**
General funds	(103,968)	760,020	(725,547)	14,916	**(54,579)**

	At 1 September 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 August 2020 £
General funds	69,188	701,462	(952,137)	77,519	(103,968)

Restricted funds

	At 1 September 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	**At 31 August 2021 £**
BBC Children In Need	–	20,888	(20,888)	–	–
Four Acre Trust	–	–	–	–	–
The Dulverton Trust	–	–	–	–	–
John Lyon's Charity	–	30,000	(30,000)	–	–
Newby Trust	–	15,000	(14,677)	(323)	–
The Swire Charitable Trust	–	33,500	(26,863)	(6,637)	–
Wellington Management UK Foundation	–	20,000	(20,000)	–	–
Bank of America Foundation	–	64,332	(64,076)	(256)	–
Simmons & Simmons Charitable Foundation	–	7,706	(6,179)	(1,527)	–
People's Postcode Trust	–	–	–	–	–
Christ Church College	–	5,000	(4,770)	(230)	–
Garfield Weston Foundation	–	30,000	(24,057)	(5,943)	–
The National Lottery Community Fund	–	8,640	(8,640)	–	–
	–	235,066	(220,150)	(14,916)	–

	At 1 September 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 August 2020 £
BBC Children In Need	–	46,222	(46,222)	–	–
Four Acre Trust	–	25,000	(25,000)	–	–
The Dulverton Trust	–	44,709	(33,265)	(11,444)	–
John Lyon's Charity	–	30,000	(52,194)	22,194	–
Newby Trust	–	15,000	(15,000)	–	–

21. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

The Swire Charitable Trust	–	33,500	(33,500)	–	–
Wellington Management UK Foundation	–	30,000	(23,979)	(6,021)	–
Bank of America Foundation	–	106,270	(22,722)	(83,548)	–
Simmons & Simmons Charitable Foundation	–	5,000	(6,300)	1,300	–
People's Postcode Trust	–	20,000	(20,000)	–	–
Christ Church College	–	–	–	–	–
Garfield Weston Foundation	–	–	–	–	–
The National Lottery Community Fund	–	–	–	–	–
	–	355,701	(278,182)	(77,519)	–

22. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2021 £**
Tangible fixed assets	2,619	–	**2,619**
Current assets	175,736	33,500	**209,236**
Creditors less than 1 year	(182,934)	(33,500)	**(216,434)**
Creditors greater than 1 year	(50,000)	–	**(50,000)**
Net liabilities	(54,579)	–	**(54,579)**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2020 £
Tangible fixed assets	2,384	–	2,384
Current assets	189,009	51,250	240,259
Creditors less than 1 year	(245,361)	(51,250)	(296,611)
Creditors greater than 1 year	(50,000)	–	(50,000)
Net liabilities	(103,968)	–	(103,968)

23. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 Sep 2020 £	Cash flows £	**At 31 Aug 2021 £**
Cash at bank and in hand	92,502	(12,563)	**79,939**
Debt due after one year	(50,000)	–	**(50,000)**
	42,502	(12,563)	**29,939**

24. Related parties

During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

	Transaction value		Balance owed by/(owed to)	
	2021	2020	**2021**	2020
	£	£	£	£
Margaret McCabe	–	–	8,880	–
Debate Mate Limited - Sales	2,476	20,045	24,390	65,375
Debate Mate Limited - Purchases	27,500	–	–	–
Debate Mate Online Limited - Sales	16,810	6,334	(4,566)	2,393
Debate Mate Online Limited - Purchases	1,241	–	–	–

Debate Mate Limited and Debate Mate Online Limited are under the control of Margaret McCabe who is key management of Debate Mate Schools Limited.

Margaret McCabe repaid the charity £8,880 in April 2022.

DEBATE MATE SCHOOLS LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 1121222

Accounts

COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 06279466
CHARITY REGISTRATION NUMBER: 1121222

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

31 August 2020

CAS HOUSE LIMITED
Chartered accountants & statutory auditor
151 Askew Road
London
W12 9AU

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year ended 31 August 2020

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Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees' Annual Report (Incorporating the Director's Report)

Year ended 31 August 2020

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2020.

Reference and administrative details

Registered charity name	Debate Mate Schools Limited
Charity registration number	1121222
Company registration number	06279466
Principal office and registered office	7-14 Great Dover Street London SE1 4YR

The trustees
The trustees who served the company during the period were as follows:

Britt Lintner (Chair)
Fiona Edwards-Stuart
Sara Geater
Debra Thompson
Marcus Trotter
David Haysey
Mark Batten

Company secretary	M McCabe
Auditor	CAS House Limited Chartered accountants & statutory auditor 151 Askew Road London W12 9AU

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Board of Trustees

Trustees have been selected on the basis of extensive experience and knowledge of the charitable, finance and education sectors, with specialist skills in business, law, elite debating and fundraising.

The Board meets quarterly, with more regular contact between the Chair and CEO. The CEO reports to the Trustees. Trustees serve tenure of three years with the Chair's discretion to extend. Trustees are not in receipt of any benefits.

Prospective Trustees are provided with the following prior to potential appointment:
A copy of:

- The Certificate of Incorporation
- The Memorandum of Association
- The Articles of Association
- Change of Name Certificates
- Financial Statements for the last three years
- An induction document setting down the Duties of Trustees of Debate Mate Schools Limited
- A Declaration confirming, inter alia, receipt and understanding of the above documents
- A Declaration of Eligibility to act as a Trustee
- A request for personal information to enable the registration of a new Director at Companies House
- A Toolkit of Good Governance comprising Six Benchmarks of Effective Governance for Charity Boards.

Organisational Structure and Management

The company is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Chief Executive Officer, Margaret McCabe. Margaret has over twenty years' experience as a commercial barrister, combined with two decades in the voluntary sector, including work with Centrepoint (a homelessness charity for under 25s), the NSPCC Justice for Children programme, and as an advisor to Human Rights Watch. Margaret is a recipient of the UnLtd Award, recognising her contribution as a social entrepreneur with the launch of Urbanunltd Limited (name changed to Debate Mate Limited in July 2010, and to Debate Mate Schools Limited in July 2017) and the Debate Mate programme.

Strategic and significant financial decisions are made by the Board of Trustees to ensure that the charity's activities are in-keeping with its objectives. Decisions regarding operations, education and programme delivery are delegated by the CEO to the Executive Director and the Educational Development Director.

The CEO is supported by the management and core team of;

- 1 Executive Director
- 1 Educational Development Director
- 1 Head of Operations and Programmes
- 1 Director of Partnerships, Operations and Projects
- 3 Executive Programme Directors
- 4 Senior Programme Directors
- 4 Programme Directors
- 1 Assistant Programme Director
- 1 Part-time fundraiser

Objectives and activities

Aims

Our charity's purposes, as set out in the objectives contained in the company's memorandum of association, are:

- The promotion, for the benefit of the public, of urban and cultural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation.
- The advancement of education, training or retraining, particularly amongst young people, and providing people with work experience; in particular by exploiting the opportunities provided by the internet in providing skills and training, and with particular emphasis on confidence building by focusing on communication and interpersonal skills, providing networking opportunities for the dissemination of educational and training programmes and developing areas for growth and employment.

Our aims fully reflect the purposes for which the charity was set up:

- To improve the social mobility of disadvantaged young people in the UK.
- To equip young people with key 21st Century skills, regardless of their background.
- To raise the aspirations of Debate Mate students through our peer-to-peer mentoring model to inspire them to pursue tertiary education and meaningful employment.
- To provide valuable opportunities for Debate Mate students to engage with businesses from a range of key industries.
- To enable teachers to transform their teaching practice through our CPD courses, run through our Education UK programme, allowing them to use our methodology in their classrooms and to set up debating clubs in their schools.
- To work towards building a self-sustaining model by developing a robust funding methodology.

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

Every year we review our programme of activities undertaken in the previous financial accounting period and assess what we achieved in terms of deliverables and their outcomes in relation to our aims and objectives. This review ensures that we are delivering the intended benefits to the disadvantaged young people we set out to help, and that we remain focused on our purposes. We also review our aims and objectives and the direction that these provide in defining future activity. The Trustees continue to refer to the Charity Commission's guidance to ensure Debate Mate's aims, objectives and future activities meet the public benefit requirement.

How our activities are for the public benefit

Debate Mate's programme of activity responds to a clear set of needs:

- Social mobility in the UK is very low and there is a significant attainment gap between pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and their wealthier peers.
- Far too many British school children lack key skills, which can restrict opportunities and contribute to unemployment.
- There is a gap in the provision of key skills teaching for pupils in disadvantaged areas, for example, through innovative debating programmes.

Debate Mate's charitable activities focus on delivering training to young people from areas of high child poverty for the public benefit. The charity's after-school debate club programme has been shown to improve Speaking and Listening attainment, develop key skills and raise aspirations. However, the benefit is much wider. We are working towards ensuring that each club is sustainable within each school, and that the skills imparted to pupils we have worked with are able to be passed on to other students in their school. This in turn develops a culture of debating, and a growing pride in each of the students we work with - benefits which have had a positive impact on local communities. In our view, no detriment or harm arises from our work.

Debate Mate's Beneficiaries

Debate Mate's charitable programmes are delivered exclusively in schools with a Free School Meals for the last 6 years (FSM-6) profile of primary >23% and secondary >28%. Teachers are instructed to ensure their club is composed of students of all abilities, and have at least a third of students who are in receipt of FSM-6 or Pupil Premium. In a sample taken in December 2019, the Debate Mate after-school clubs had an average FSM-6 figure of 41%. True to our value of inclusivity, 9% of students in the sample were reported to have Special Educational Needs (SEN) and 40% spoke English as an Additional Language (EAL). National averages for these categories are SEN: 13% primary and 11% secondary, and EAL: 21% primary and 17% secondary.

Issues to be Tackled [Need for Key Skills in the UK]

The Social Context

The UK has the lowest rate of social mobility amongst OECD countries (OECD, 2018). This manifests early, with the socio-economic backgrounds of children influencing their ability to develop and learn at school; a child growing up in poverty in the UK is more likely to achieve lower academic qualifications, have lower aspirations, and have a lower skill set than their better-off peers. This inequality has been further exacerbated by the COVD-19 pandemic.

Disadvantage significantly impedes attainment and the academic, professional, and socioeconomic prospects of young people. According to the Department for Education, only 25.6% of 15-year-olds receiving free school meals entered higher education by age 19, compared to 43.3% not receiving free school meals (DfE 2018). The Education Policy Institute, in its 2019 Annual Report, stated that 'By the time they leave secondary school, disadvantaged pupils are now over 18.1 months behind non-disadvantaged pupils.' It is widely acknowledged that this gap will only widen further due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which will disproportionately affect disadvantaged students and poorer households. The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and Sutton Trust have reported on the impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged students. In their report, 'Impact of School Closure, 2020' the EEF stated 'The attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers is estimated to further widen by 36% due to the pandemic'. These disparities will be felt for many generations to come.

In The Sutton Trust's 2019 *Mobility Manifesto*, Sir Peter Lampl writes that 'social mobility, the potential for those to achieve success regardless of their background, remains worryingly low across Britain...Our next government should put social mobility at the heart of their agenda', thus highlighting the importance of this issue for society as a whole. The Mobility Manifesto emphasises the need of programmes to develop key skills: 'Essential life skills (such as motivation, confidence, communication, self-control and coping with stress) are crucial to the life chances of young people'.

The Skills Gap

The lack of social mobility in the UK keeps many families out of long-term employment, and disadvantaged young people lack the opportunities to develop key skills which are crucial to advancement in tertiary education and their careers. The OECD reports: 'children from low-income families not only spend less time in education in countries where income inequalities are high, they also have lower skills for any given level of education. The quality gap in education is hence even larger than the income gap' (2018).

The Sutton Trust emphasises the importance of the key skills Debate Mate develops: 'adult life requires a range of skills in order for people to flourish, both in the workplace and in their daily lives,

from the confidence and motivation to seek challenges and complete tasks, to the interpersonal skills that aid teamwork and other social interactions... however, more needs to be done to give all young people a chance in a jobs market where such skills are as important as qualifications' (2019).

It is apparent that in the UK the circumstances of birth have a huge influence on a young person's chances of success, with students in the UK born into poorer backgrounds leaving school with lower qualifications, aspirations and skill sets.

Our Solution

Under its founder and present CEO, Margaret McCabe, Debate Mate identified areas of high child poverty in London, and the key resources and support needed to improve social mobility amongst young people. A cost-effective, efficient and fun way of delivering these skills to disadvantaged young people was developed, which would help overcome the barriers to learning so frequently experienced amongst this demographic.

The OECD highlights the formative role of extracurricular programmes in improving student behaviour, academic attainment and long-term progression: 'social and emotional learning school-based programmes have also been shown to improve both behavioural and academic outcomes' (2018). They also note that there is 'empirical evidence [that] confirms the positive effects of participating in extracurricular activities on schooling outcomes and careers prospects, especially for youth from disadvantaged backgrounds (Heckman, 2008)'.

The Sutton Trust emphasises the need of programmes like Debate Mate to develop key skills: 'essential life skills (such as motivation, confidence, communication, self-control and coping with stress) are crucial to the life chances of young people' (2019). Students taking part in the Debate Mate programme develop key 21st Century skills, which are fundamental to success in academic and professional environments. These include critical and creative thinking, communication (speaking and listening) skills and teamwork, as well as building confidence and self-esteem, resilience, leadership and self-management. These are skills that teachers acknowledge as being central to students' attainment and progression, but are often challenging to teach in a classroom environment.

Importantly, the Debate Mate programme provides disadvantaged young people with the guidance and support of aspirational mentors from some of the best universities across the UK. Mentors provide an insight into higher education, further training and career paths, and act as inspirational and relatable role models for the students we work with. The mentors inspire their students to raise their aspirations and fulfil their potential. The OECD highlights the potential of mentoring schemes as part of extracurricular activities, arguing that they can help disadvantaged young people engage academically and develop skills that 'are not acquired at home' (2018). Debate Mate's unique model is highly effective for raising aspirations and developing these key skills, thereby improving social mobility.

In June 2019, the CBI published a People and Skills report entitled: *Getting young people 'work ready' – our vision for how education should prepare young people for the modern world.* The report references the work of Debate Mate Schools on pages 20-21. It is notable that Debate Mate delivers precisely what employers are seeking in terms of their identified three pillars for work readiness: character, knowledge, and skills. The schools that are working with Debate Mate are already on a path to implement recommendations of this report.

Furthermore, debating is a key skill listed in the English National Curriculum at Key Stage 3, and teaching these skills is vital to helping students develop their speaking and listening early on and to aid them in their reasoning, their spoken language development, and their GCSE Spoken Language accreditation. Debating is a way to stretch the most able students, while providing opportunities to

succeed for students who need more support, especially those who find written work more challenging. Debating allows students to articulate ideas first, thus improving the quality of their written outcomes, enabling students of all abilities to achieve rapid progress. It encourages students to generate new ideas, problem-solve, think quickly under pressure and respond to challenges.

Overview of Debate Mate's Activities

Debate Mate's 2019-20 charitable objectives are provided below. These are achieved through the fulfilment of our programme delivery targets and meeting our impact measurement goals:

- Through the delivery of our programmes, develop our participants' key 21st Century skills, which include critical and creative thinking, communication (speaking and listening skills), and teamwork, as well as leadership, self-management, confidence and self-esteem, and resilience. This is demonstrated in our soft and hard skills evaluations:
    - To achieve a minimum average of 80% in our soft skills evaluation at the end of each programme year and maintain a skill level increase of 1.4 in our Speaking and Listening Evaluation.
- To deliver Debate Mate's mentor-led after-school clubs to a minimum of 230 schools in areas of high child poverty in 2019-20, and in addition:
    - To increase the delivery of our blended programme which involves teachers using our online resources.
    - To recruit and train at least 500 inspirational mentors per year to deliver after-school clubs, and maintain an average of at least 20 students per club per week.
- By employing our peer-mentoring model, raise the aspirations of the young people we work with and empower them to pursue higher education or further training and make a successful transition to the modern workforce. The success of this is measured in our soft skills evaluation and our qualitative impact measurement, such as our case studies.
- To build relationships with corporate supporters through partnerships, volunteering schemes and sponsorship, to expose students to inspiring careers and a diverse range of professionals, and to provide opportunities for meaningful interactions.
- To continue to expand bespoke new initiatives to target specific demographics and to meet identified needs, such as Debate Mate's DebateBox and Accelerate programmes for those students most at risk, and the Debate Mate Plus and the Graduate School to support older students through their progression to further education, apprenticeships or university.
- Continue to generate income through our Education UK programmes and partnerships, with a view to raise a third of our income this way.
- To continue to run our international summer programmes in Rwanda and Nepal, delivered by our most experienced mentors from the UK.

In our programme year from September 2019 to June 2020, we worked with 243 schools in Bristol, Liverpool, London, Greater Manchester, the West Midlands and our blended programme ran in Nottingham and Leeds. We delivered our programmes to over 5,000 students per teaching week, with an average of 21 students taking part per club per week.

Core Programme

The Core Programme, Debate Mate's main initiative, runs in both secondary and primary schools, with students in years 7-10 and years 5 and 6 taking part respectively. The programme begins with regional launch events in November. Following these, participating students take part in one-hour, mentor-led teaching sessions for 14 weeks, as well as three weeks of national competitions. Taught in small groups by trained university student mentors, they follow a curriculum - honed over the past 12 years - designed to develop key 21st Century skills:

a) Developing confidence and style through body language, voice and spoken language.
b) Understanding how to research and analyse a subject from different viewpoints to empathise and consider context.
c) Formulating and prioritising arguments coherently and logically from different standpoints, and to weigh up arguments and prioritise.
d) Listening to others and responding respectfully in a timely and appropriate way, adding weight to their own case.

Students taking part in the programme participate in Debate Mate's Urban Debate League (UDL): a nationwide debating league. Students prepare for the two rounds in their regular after-school clubs and then attend competitions at host schools in their local area. The top scoring schools nationally are invited to a final competition, which takes place in prestigious venues, such as the House of Lords and the offices of our corporate supporters.

The Core Programme concludes with the Debate Mate Cup: a national competition in which all schools compete. It consists of full-day regional rounds held at local universities in March and April. The regional winners then take part in a Grand Final, held in June at inspiring venues such as the Houses of Parliament and the University of Oxford.

Additional Programmes

Debate Mate offers a range of additional programmes that run alongside the Core Programme in schools in the UK.

Advanced Programmes

The **Graduate School** is a programme delivered to students aged 15-18 who have successfully completed the Core Programme, providing them with further debate training to compete in national schools' competitions and to develop into social leaders and future professionals. Delivered over 15 weeks, participants attend weekly three-hour sessions held at a central venue, which include debating workshops with world champion university debaters, and skills sessions with professionals from various sectors. This programme empowers students to raise their aspirations in terms of their debating potential, higher education and career goals, and to reach out to their local communities to share their skills.

In our 2019-20 programme year we worked with an average of 22 students per week in the Graduate School in London and Manchester.

The **Debate Mate Plus (DM+) Programme** bridges the gap between the Core Programme and post-18 study or work, ensuring that Debate Mate students continuously benefit from our support during their secondary education. Delivered over 16 weeks to students in years 11-13, the sessions are designed to offer students - with any level of Debate Mate experience - debate training, UCAS guidance and employability skills development. Importantly, we partner with organisations that support us with facilitating meaningful interactions with professionals, such as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

13 schools in London took part in the Debate Mate Plus Programme in 2019-20.

Intervention Programmes

Debate Mate's **Accelerate Programme** targets students who have more serious academic and behavioural challenges. Schools involved are asked to select groups of students who are at risk of exclusion or are generally disengaged with education. The programme aims to motivate students to

embrace learning, develop students' engagement in the classroom, improve behaviour, equip participants with key skills and raise aspirations. In our 2019-20 programme year, 36 primary and secondary schools took part in our Accelerate Programme, working with over 300 students.

The **DebateBox Programme**, an additional behavioural intervention scheme, focuses on the shared skills needed to excel in both boxing and debating: strategy, discipline, and competitive and combative thinking. Sessions include one hour of debating followed by one hour of boxing. DebateBox was delivered to 4 schools in our 2019-20 programme year.

International Programmes

Debate Mate's charitable activities also operate internationally, with annual summer programmes in Nepal and Rwanda.

Nepal
Working in partnership with the Samata Shiksha Niketan Bamboo Schools in Nepal, a team of Debate Mate staff and mentors deliver our programme every summer. In Summer 2019, Debate Mate staff and mentors delivered the three-week programme to approximately 600 students in Kathmandu, Pokhara and Bhaktapur. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we were unable to run the programme in Summer 2020.

Rwanda
Debate Mate has been working in Rwanda every summer since 2012. In Summer 2019, we worked with a total of 380 students in Kigali and Nyaza. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we were unable to run the programme in Summer 2020.

Sustainability
An integral part of the Debate Mate model is sustainability. That is, we encourage students to continue debating even after our final competitions. In order to do so, students in each club elect one president a three officers to oversee the running of the debating club once the weekly sessions with mentors have concluded. We do this to provide students with leadership roles in the school community and to foster a culture of debating that extends beyond the 17-week programme. Students become leaders of debatin their schools, teaching younger students and setting up their own clubs. We also endeavour to provide programmes to schools and students year-on-year so that students can continue to build on their skills attainment and schools can work on integrating debating into the curriculum supported by Debate Mate continued on site presence.

Volunteers
Debate Mate benefits from an outstanding contribution from mentors, who are our volunteers. In our 2019-20 programme year, Debate Mate trained and allocated 538 mentors from universities in the regions where we operate, who were responsible for preparing for, reporting on, and delivering weekly sessions, as well as acting as judges at our competitions. Mentors commit to at least one teaching session per week, completing at least 17 hours of service over the course of the programme. We expect a high standard of professionalism and commitment from mentors, who therefore receive a stipend to recognise this.

The quality and impact of the Debate Mate programme is contingent on the calibre of our mentors, who serve as role models for the students. We therefore significantly invest in recruiting, training, and supporting them throughout the programme to develop inspiring and committed leaders. We offer

additional opportunities for mentors to develop and apply their skills, such as through our International Programmes and Education UK work. Several mentors have worked with us for a number of years and plan to translate their Debate Mate experience into a career in teaching.

IMPACT MEASUREMENT AND PERFORMANCE

Following a consultation with the New Economic Foundation in 2010, and further consultation with New Philanthropy Capital, Debate Mate designed an evaluation metric with four central goals in mind:

Goal 1: To accelerate attainment in Speaking and Listening.
Goal 2: To strengthen emotional capacity through building confidence, self-esteem and resilience.
Goal 3: To develop key employability skills such as leadership, teamwork, critical thinking and self-management.
Goal 4: To heighten aspirations towards both tertiary education and meaningful employment.

Speaking and Listening Metric (Goal 1):

Debate Mate uses a bespoke Speaking and Listening metric designed in consultation with teachers to measure students' Speaking and Listening skills development. The skills assessed in the metric are derived from the National Curriculum at Key Stages Two and Three (Department for Education, 2014) as well as the assessment criteria for the GCSE Spoken Language accreditation devised by Ofqual (The Assessments and Qualifications Alliance, 2012). These guidelines were mapped onto the debating skills that Debate Mate teaches to form a unique, holistic metric that tracks student progress continuously from Key Stage Two up to GCSE and beyond. Debate Mate's metric tracks progress through seven skill categories:

1. Collaboration
2. Listen and Respond Appropriately
3. Articulate and Justify an Argument
4. Use of Evidence
5. Structure of Speeches
6. Style
7. Quality of Spoken Language

Each Skill Category is given a level from 0 to 8, describing a wide range of abilities that might be observed in students from Years 4 to 10. Trained Programme Directors use the metric to assess new students during their first and last debate of the year, usually falling in weeks 5 and 15 of the after-school sessions. These assessments are moderated by teachers from the schools.

In the 2019-20 programme year, due to the various lockdowns, it has been incredibly challenging to gather the level of data we usually do. The school closures significantly affected our ability to gather the hard skills evaluation in week 15 of the programme. We have therefore included details of our cumulative data from 2015-2019 below.

The results from 2015 to 2019 show that, overall, secondary school students progressed from an average level of 2.71 in their first debate to an average of 4.11 in their last debate, equating to and meeting our objective to maintain 1.4 levels of progress. To contextualise this figure, a student averaging a Level 3 will only occasionally engage in group discussion during preparation time, make points that are relevant but not structured, use mainly anecdotal evidence, digress throughout their speech and read from their notes with occasional hesitations or silences. Comparatively, a student averaging a Level 4 will engage in group discussion, offer relevant rebuttal to opposing arguments, create an argument that is structured clearly, deliver their speech confidently (using notes for reference only) and use basic persuasive devices and vocabulary for effect.

We aim to maintain 1.4 levels of progress year-on-year. We calculate the average over a period of years as, due to staffing restrictions, we can only assess a limited number of students - and it is therefore most representative to do so.

The progress from previous years demonstrates our programme's ability to improve speaking and

listening skills. Good speaking and listening skills form the basis of all learning in literacy, and are fundamental to successful advancement to tertiary education and the modern workplace.

Soft Skills Metric (Goals 2, 3, and 4):

Students growing up in poverty are less likely to demonstrate high levels of perseverance, self-belief, and motivation to learn - which in turn affects educational outcomes (Fair Education Alliance, 2015). To combat this, Debate Mate actively seeks to develop these soft skills, which are crucial to students' academic success, personal wellbeing and employment later in life. Following a consultation with the New Economic Foundation in 2010, Debate Mate designed a metric to collect data on each of our measurement objectives: self-esteem and confidence, resilience, leadership, teamwork, self-management, critical thinking and aspirations. This soft skills metric was designed in collaboration with New Philanthropy Capital.

We normally collect data on soft skills attainment by distributing questionnaires at our Debate Mate Cup events. As these competitions could not go ahead in April 2020, we released an online form for students and teachers to complete reflecting on soft skills attainment. We were pleased with our response rate, and our sample was proportional to the size of our regional programmes. We aim for the average attainment outcome for our Core Programme to be at least 80% across all categories each year, and in 2019-20 we achieved 81% in our national secondary evaluation and 84% in our national primary evaluation. We also distributed our teacher survey, which included some questions regarding soft skills attainment to help us better understand our impact. The results of our soft skills assessment are highlighted below.

In our 2019-20 programme year, our secondary school self-assessment was filled out by 140 students, and the results are highlighted below:

Confidence and Self-Esteem:
85% agreed that they are more comfortable speaking up in class.
83% agreed that they are more confident giving their opinion on current events and political issues.

Resilience:
80% agreed that when their ideas are challenged, they are better at coming up with new ones.
77% agreed that they can concentrate better during debates and public speaking events.

Leadership:
86% agreed that they are more considerate of other people's opinions and feelings.
83% agreed that they are more likely to help others when working in a group.

Teamwork:
89% agreed that when they are completing a group task, they are more likely to do their fair share of work.
82% agreed that they are more likely to put their ideas forward when working in a group.

Critical and Creative Thinking:
86% agreed that they are better able to respond to and respectfully disagree with the ideas of others.
84% agreed that they are better able to come up with their own opinions and arguments.

Enjoyment/Higher Education/Career:
99% enjoyed the Debate Mate sessions.
94% believe the skills they have gained from debating will help them to succeed in secondary school, university, college, and/or further training.

We also distributed our teacher survey, which included some questions regarding soft skills attainment to help us better understand our impact:

Teacher Questionnaire:
100% believe their students have gained confidence as a result of the Debate Mate programme.
98% believe their students are better at critically responding to the arguments of others as a result of the Debate Mate programme.
96% believe their students are more comfortable giving their opinion on political issues or current events as a result of the Debate Mate programme.
84% believe their students are better at working with others as a result of the Debate Mate programme.
82% believe their students are more considerate of other people's ideas and feelings as a result of the Debate Mate programme.
80% believe their students are more experienced leaders as a result of taking part in the Debate Mate programme.

The speaking and listening evaluation and our soft skills evaluation comprise our two primary methods of impact measurement. In addition to this, we carry out annual case studies and pre and post - programme student questionnaires, as well as distributing end-of-year mentor and teacher surveys. Each of these help us to collect valuable feedback, which informs curriculum and programme changes year-on-year as well as enabling us to report on our impact.

2019-20 Key Achievements:

- A defining feature of the programme in 2019-20 was an emphasis on wellbeing for Debate Mate students, staff and mentors. We implemented a pilot 'happiness curriculum' in a selection of schools and all Debate Mate employees, and a selection of mentors, received Mental Health First Aid training between December 2019 – March 2020.
- Debate Mate launched a series of Online Showcase Debates during the first lockdown in April 2020, which ran every month on topics based around education, sport, and leadership. Speakers included some of our own Debate Mate students, alongside journalists, public figures, industry professions, and debate world champions.
- In April 2020, we were proud to host a debate in memory of the late Stephen Lawrence. Students from Eltham and Liverpool debated issues including knife crime and the criminal justice system. The debate was chaired by Stephen's brother Stuart
- From April 2020 we launched a virtual version of the Debate Mate Programme including our weekly sessions and competitions to reach students that were learning from home as a result of school closures.
- The 2019-20 programme year saw us embark on virtual *Boardroom to Classroom* programmes with various partner organisations including; Bank of America, UBS, Lloyd's Banking Group, bp and Boston Consulting Group. These programmes brought professionals and students together in a unique way – allowing both sides to learn from each other through a joint skills-sharing session.
- Debate Mate strives to sustain and grow the debating and key skills of students who have participated in our in-school programme. Debate Mate's Graduate School achieves this for a nucleus of dedicated students aged 15-18, currently in London and Manchester. Many of these students continue to excel at the foremost debating competitions.

- Once again, Debate Mate ran a series of workshops in the autumn to support those students intending to trial for the England Debate Team. One student was selected for the team's national development squad following their trials - a feat which has been achieved by at least one Graduate School student for the fifth consecutive year. Thanks to the general knowledge-building exercises of our World Schools bootcamp, Debate Mate students were, on average, the most successful students at the quiz given to all trialists for the England National Team. This means that the general knowledge of these students surpasses that of trialists from some of the UK's most elite schools (such as Eton and Westminster), a testament to the academic skills we build through the Graduate School. Importantly, these workshops provided an opportunity for returning Graduate School students to socialise and solidify a tight-knit core group from the start of the year, which formed the foundation of the student community into which we integrated new students.

- We entered students into competitions at a number of universities, including Oxford and Cambridge. Despite competitions such as Durham Schools, UCL Schools, Imperial Schools, and Oxford Finals Day being cancelled due to the COVID-19, the students excelled and achieved the following:
    - LSE Schools: one team ranked 4th best novice team and two students ranked in the top 10 novice speakers.
    - SOAS Schools: one student ranked as the 3rd best novice speaker.
    - KCL Schools: one team ranked as the 5th best team overall. One student ranked in the top 10 speakers. ***Winners of KCL Schools 2020*** following a win in the grand final.
    - Oxford Schools: two teams through to International Finals Day, including 2 novices.
    - Imperial Schools: our novice debaters were Novice Champions.
    - Cambridge Schools: two teams through to the International Finals Day, with both missing out on the semi-finals by 1 point.
- The Secondary Debate Mate Cup Finals event was hosted online for the first time in partnership with Bite Back 2030. Students worked in composite teams for the first time.
- Curwen Primary School (London) won the Primary Urban Debate League. Unfortunately, we were unable to hold a catch-up Primary Debate Mate Cup national final due to COVID-19.

Factors and challenges affecting performance

Impact of COVID-19

Our debate club programme was delivered for one hour per week for 13 of the planned 14 weeks from November 2019 to March 2020 when, unfortunately, the programme was impacted by the COVID-19 lockdown and school closures. In addition to the completed debate club sessions, we were fortunate to be able to complete Rounds 1 & 2 of our Urban Debate League (UDL) competitions between January and mid-March 2020. However, the finals had to be rescheduled to be held online in September 2020.

The lockdown meant that we were unable to hold our Debate Mate Cup competition in April 2020 - however, we organised an online finals event in July which students entered via video submission. The Debate Mate team and our partner organisation, Bite Back, selected the top eight speakers who competed in an online final held on a webinar on the 7th of July. This was the first competition of its kind, with students from different schools competing in composite teams, and was a massive success with over 100 students, teachers and supporters tuning in, and over 100 individual entries in total. This format was highly effective and helped maintain the engagement of the students during the lockdown and school closures, providing an essential opportunity to apply their skills and a culmination of this year's programme.

Since the school closures in March 2020, Debate Mate has worked hard to ensure that our students are not further disadvantaged from the loss of formal schooling and have therefore taken measures to ensure we continue to operate and reach the most vulnerable. To that end, we gave all teachers on our programmes free access to our Online Platform of debate resources - these can be used from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4, and include debate activities as well as subject specific resources - thus allowing teachers to continue running debates and /or to use our debate-led activities in their teaching.

Furthermore, we offered all Core Programme schools our virtual debate clubs, which commenced in April 2020 using video conferencing with a specialised virtual curriculum. We have also ensured that we have complied with best practice for online safeguarding and have provided staff and mentors with additional training after consulting a safeguarding specialist.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Performance

The charity had a challenging year due to the COVID-19 pandemic which impacted the income from donations and legacies and charitable activities, resulting in a reduction of 25% on the prior year. There was an overall deficit at year end of (£173k). The total funds on the balance sheet have subsequently been affected; however, we have put plans in place to reduce the size of the programme in 2020-21 to ensure that we are able to run the programme with the funding that we have confirmed.

Fundraising Performance

We received a large proportion of our funding from trusts, foundations, corporate supporters and statutory bodies, comprising 36% of our income. In order to ensure the long-term sustainability of Debate Mate, we recognise the need to diversify our income streams beyond these sources. Participating schools make a financial contribution towards the running costs of the programme, comprising 44% of our income, and Debate Mate fundraises the remaining amount. Schools tend to use Pupil Premium funding to make this donation. Furthermore, we delivery students and teacher training in schools outside of our Core Programme, which has provided a significant amount of reliable income for the organisation, with 14% of our total income coming from this source.

Grants and Donations:
Debate Mate is extremely grateful to all the organisations and people who provided financial support for our programme in 2019-20, including the following (£10,000 and over):

- Bank of America Foundation
- BBC Children in Need
- Four Acre Trust
- John Lyon's Charity
- People's Postcode Trust
- DfE
- Newby Trust Ltd.
- The Dulverton Trust
- The Swire Charitable Trust
- Bite Back 2030
- NOW: Pensions
- Wellington Management UK Foundation
- bp

Reserves Policy

The charity carries out a diverse range of activities. The trustees have examined the requirement for general reserves and consider that, given the nature of the charity's work, reserves should be maintained at no less than three months' operating costs. The trustees are of the opinion that this provides sufficient flexibility to cover temporary shortfalls in income flow and to provide adequate working capital to cover costs.

Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the specific operational areas of the charity and its finances. The Trustees believe that by monitoring reserve levels, ensuring controls exist over key financial systems, and by examining the operational and business risks faced by the charity, they have established systems to mitigate those risks.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Strategic Review

At the end of each programme year, Debate Mate conducts an annual Strategic Review, in which all members of staff evaluate their respective programmes, assess positive developments, and put forward recommendations for the next programme year. These recommendations are then discussed by the entire team and strategies are adopted to ensure that the programme continues to improve. Key recommendations agreed at the 2019-20 Strategic Review are approved by the trustees and are implemented in our 2020-21 programme year.

Future Sustainability and Strategy

We plan to implement a model where we will use a combination of our Blended Programme, which is supported by the use of our Online Platform, as well as our peer delivery model to expand our geographical remit. This will allow us to deliver our programmes to areas where we lack the resources to operate and, importantly, to reach some of the most deprived and remote schools in the UK. Using the combination of the Blended Programme and our mentor-led delivery helps to ensure our financial sustainability and expansion in the coming years.

Debate Mate is constantly looking to build upon our successes. By carefully monitoring our progress and evaluating our impact, we hope to reach even more students and provide even better support to schools already on the programme. In the 2020-21 programme year, we plan to further refine our alumni network and connect former students with Debate Mate.

We also plan to further develop our programmes that link up students that have taken part in Debate Mate, and more specifically in the Graduate Programme and Debate Mate Plus, with businesses that support the charity and that we work with through Debate Mate Limited. The alumni network will also inspire current students and will act as relatable role models. With the rise of apprenticeship programmes and the drive for a more diverse workforce, Debate Mate is uniquely positioned to bridge the gap between school leavers and businesses - thus providing young people taking part in the Debate Mate programme with opportunities for employment in some of the top businesses in the UK. We have already developed strong relationships with businesses that support our Debate Mate Plus and Graduate School programmes and plan to continue to expand them to develop this aspect of our work.

Through each of our programmes, we help thousands of young people speak more fluently, take on leadership roles, work in teams, think critically and develop self-confidence and resilience. We continue to see Debate Mate students go through university and enter the workforce as successful, self-assured young adults, some of whom work with us as mentors and Programme Directors. As we look to the future, we plan on helping many more students achieve their ambitions by providing them with valuable 21st Century skills through debating and peer-to-peer mentorship.

We plan to continue to work towards achieving each of our stated aims and objectives year-on-year. This is constantly reviewed by the trustees to ensure they align to the charity's legal objectives.

Equal Opportunities, Access and Cultural Diversity

Debate Mate is an equal opportunities employer and encourages contributions from all sectors of the community. The company is committed to student-led and peer-to-peer learning. In the areas where

Debate Mate operates, there are 200 different languages: our target groups are by their very nature culturally diverse. Our debate club programme works in concert with schools to support the curriculum through debating.

Safeguarding Policy

We have reviewed and updated our Safeguarding Policy. We are committed to the Safeguarding of students within our care and to regularly review and improve our procedures. Four members of staff have completed Safeguarding Training and the Educational Development Director is the appointed Safeguarding Lead at Debate Mate.

Trustees' responsibilities statement

The trustees, who are also directors for the purposes of company law, are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the 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 in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Auditor

Each of the persons who is a trustee at the date of approval of this report confirms that:

- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The auditor is deemed to have been re-appointed in accordance with section 487 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees' annual report and the strategic report were approved on 31/5/21 and signed on behalf of the board of trustees by:

Britt Lintner
Trustee

M McCabe
Charity Secretary

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Debate Mate Schools Limited

Year ended 31 August 2020

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Debate Mate Schools Limited (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 August 2020 which comprise the statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account), statement of financial position, 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 and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 August 2020 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;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

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 auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC'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.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity'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 charity's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's 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 charity and the charity's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

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 charity'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.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the trustees' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charity and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charity to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

CAS House Limited
1/6/2021

Ibrahim T Ibrahim (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of
CAS House Limited
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditor

151 Askew Road
London
W12 9AU

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account)

Year ended 31 August 2020

	Note	2020 Unrestricted funds £	2020 Restricted funds £	2020 **Total funds** £	2019 Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	**5**	546,696	355,701	**902,397**	1,169,795
Charitable activities	**6**	149,766	–	**149,766**	206,444
Other trading activities	**7**	5,000	–	**5,000**	24,637
Total income		701,462	355,701	**1,057,163**	1,400,876
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of raising donations and legacies	**8**	22,709	–	**22,709**	45,900
Expenditure on charitable activities	**9,10**	929,428	278,182	**1,207,610**	1,355,656
Total expenditure		952,137	278,182	**1,230,319**	1,401,556
Net expenditure		(250,675)	77,519	**(173,156)**	(680)
Transfers between funds		77,519	(77,519)	–	–
Net movement in funds		(173,156)	–	**(173,156)**	(680)
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		69,188	–	**69,188**	69,868
Total funds carried forward		(103,968)	–	**(103,968)**	69,188

The notes on pages 26 to 34 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Position

31 August 2020

	Note	2020 £	£	2019 £
Fixed assets				
Tangible fixed assets	16		2,384	2,157
Current assets				
Debtors	17	147,757		194,418
Cash at bank and in hand		92,502		52,896
		240,259		247,314
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	18	296,611		180,283
Net current liabilities			(56,352)	67,031
Total assets less current liabilities			(53,968)	69,188
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	19		50,000	–
Net liabilities			(103,968)	69,188
Funds of the charity				
Unrestricted funds			(103,968)	69,188
Total charity funds	21		(103,968)	69,188

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 31/5/21, and are signed on behalf of the board by:

Britt Lintner
Trustee

The notes on pages 26 to 34 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Cash Flows

Year ended 31 August 2020

	2020 £	2019 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net expenditure	**(173,156)**	(680)
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**1,873**	791
Interest payable and similar charges	**40**	1,570
Accrued expenses/(income)	**8,114**	(164,912)
Changes in:		
Trade and other debtors	**43,493**	(13,151)
Trade and other creditors	**111,382**	61,774
Cash generated from operations	**(8,254)**	(114,608)
Interest paid	**(40)**	(1,570)
Net cash used in operating activities	**(8,294)**	(116,178)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible assets	**(2,100)**	(2,238)
Net cash used in investing activities	**(2,100)**	(2,238)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Proceeds from borrowings	**50,000**	–
Net cash from financing activities	**50,000**	–
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	**39,606**	(118,416)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	**52,896**	171,312
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	**92,502**	52,896

The notes on pages 26 to 34 form part of these financial statements.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year ended 31 August 2020

1. General information

The charity is a public benefit entity and a private company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales and a registered charity in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is 32-36 Loman Street, London, SE1 0EH.

2. Statement of compliance

These financial statements have been prepared in compliance with FRS 102, 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland', the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and the Companies Act 2006.

3. Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the entity.

Going concern

There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported. These estimates and judgements are continually reviewed and are based on experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees to further any of the charity's purposes.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Incoming resources

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity, it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.

3. **Accounting policies** *(continued)*

Incoming resources *(continued)*

- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.

- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.

- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

Tangible assets

All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost.

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Fixtures and fittings	-	20% reducing balance
Equipment	-	25% reducing balance

Impairment of fixed assets

A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for possible reversal at each reporting date.

For the purposes of impairment testing, when it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, an estimate is made of the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs. The cash-generating unit is the smallest identifiable group of assets that includes the asset and generates cash inflows that largely independent of the cash inflows from other assets or groups of assets.

3. Accounting policies *(continued)*

Financial instruments

A financial asset or a financial liability is recognised only when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at the amount receivable or paable including any related transaction costs, unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where it is recognised at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Current assets and current liabilities are subsequently measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be paid or received and not discounted.

Defined contribution plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided. Prepaid contributions are recognised as an asset to the extent that the prepayment will lead to a reduction in future payments or a cash refund.

4. Limited by guarantee

The company is limited by guarantee and has no authorised or issued share capital.

5. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2020 £**
Donations			
Donations	465,051	–	**465,051**
Grants			
Foundations and trusts	21,354	355,701	**377,055**
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	60,291	–	**60,291**
	546,696	355,701	**902,397**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2019 £
Donations			
Donations	659,974	–	659,974
Grants			
Foundations and trusts	98,918	371,300	470,218

5. Donations and legacies *(continued)*

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2019 £
Other donations and legacies			
Other income	39,603	–	39,603
	798,495	371,300	1,169,795

6. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2020 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2019 £
Training	149,766	**149,766**	206,444	206,444

7. Other trading activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2020 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2019 £
Fundraising events	5,000	**5,000**	24,637	24,637

8. Costs of raising donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2020 £**	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2019 £
Fundraising and development	22,709	**22,709**	45,900	45,900

9. Expenditure on charitable activities by fund type

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2020 £**
Programmes	560,197	221,813	**782,010**
Support costs	369,231	56,369	**425,600**
	929,428	278,182	**1,207,610**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2019 £
Programmes	624,346	307,781	932,127
Support costs	346,681	76,848	423,529
	971,027	384,629	1,355,656

10. Expenditure on charitable activities by activity type

	Programmes	Support costs	**Total funds 2020**	Total fund 2019
	£	£	**£**	£
Programmes	782,010	399,804	**1,181,814**	1,341,838
Governance costs	–	25,796	**25,796**	13,818
	782,010	425,600	**1,207,610**	1,355,656

11. Analysis of support costs

	Analysis of support costs	**Total 2020**	Total 2019
	£	**£**	£
Staff costs	239,765	**239,765**	208,469
Premises	69,926	**69,926**	98,751
Governance costs	25,795	**25,795**	13,820
Other support costs	90,114	**90,114**	102,489
	425,600	**425,600**	423,529

12. Net expenditure

Net expenditure is stated after charging/(crediting):

	2020	2019
	£	£
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	**1,873**	791

13. Auditors remuneration

	2020	2019
	£	£
Fees payable for the audit of the financial statements	**4,200**	4,200

14. Staff costs

The total staff costs and employee benefits for the reporting period are analysed as follows:

	2020	2019
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**682,158**	610,702
Social security costs	**26,419**	28,138
Employer contributions to pension plans	**18,171**	15,535
Other employee benefits	**39,888**	31,353
	766,636	685,728

14. Staff costs *(continued)*

The average head count of employees during the year was 20 (2019: 20). The average number of full-time equivalent employees during the year is analysed as follows:

	2020 No.	2019 No.
Number of production staff	19	19
Number of management staff	1	1
	20	20

The number of employees whose remuneration for the year fell within the following bands, were:

	2020 No.	2019 No.
£190,000 to £199,999	-	1
£200,000 to £209,999	1	-

15. Trustee remuneration and expenses

No remuneration or other benefits from employment with the charity or a related entity were received by the trustees.

16. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 September 2019	360	3,189	**3,549**
Additions	–	2,100	**2,100**
At 31 August 2020	360	5,289	**5,649**
Depreciation			
At 1 September 2019	75	1,317	**1,392**
Charge for the year	180	1,693	**1,873**
At 31 August 2020	255	3,010	**3,265**
Carrying amount			
At 31 August 2020	105	2,279	**2,384**
At 31 August 2019	285	1,872	2,157

17. Debtors

	2020 £	2019 £
Prepayments and accrued income	5,354	14,734
Other debtors	142,403	179,684
	147,757	194,418

18. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2020	2019
	£	£
Trade creditors	**23,731**	47,966
Accruals and deferred income	**78,767**	73,821
Social security and other taxes	**194,113**	58,496
	296,611	180,283

19. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	2020	2019
	£	£
Bank loans and overdrafts	**50,000**	–

20. Pensions and other post retirement benefits

Defined contribution plans

The amount recognised in income or expenditure as an expense in relation to defined contribution plans was £18,171 (2019: £15,535).

21. Analysis of charitable funds

Unrestricted funds

	At 1 September 2019	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 August 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	69,188	701,462	(952,137)	77,519	**(103,968)**

	At 1 September 2018	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 August 2019
	£	£	£	£	£
General funds	69,868	1,029,576	(1,016,927)	(13,329)	69,188

21. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

Restricted funds

	At 1 September 2019 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 August 2020 £
BBC Children In Need	–	46,222	(46,222)	–	–
The National Lottery Community Fund	–	–	–	–	–
The Careers & Enterprise Company	–	–	–	–	–
Four Acre Trust	–	25,000	(25,000)	–	–
The Dulverton Trust	–	44,709	(33,265)	(11,444)	–
John Lyon's Charity	–	30,000	(52,194)	22,194	–
The Drapers' Charitable Fund	–	–	–	–	–
Newby Trust	–	15,000	(15,000)	–	–
The Swire Charitable Trust	–	33,500	(33,500)	–	–
Wellington Management UK Foundation	–	30,000	(23,979)	(6,021)	–
Bank of America Foundation	–	106,270	(22,722)	(83,548)	–
Simmons & Simmons Charitable Foundation	–	5,000	(6,300)	1,300	–
People's Postcode Trust	–	20,000	(20,000)	–	–
	–	355,701	(278,182)	(77,519)	–

	At 1 September 2018 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 August 2019 £
BBC Children In Need	–	41,775	(42,474)	699	–
The National Lottery Community Fund	–	167,053	(167,053)	–	–
The Careers & Enterprise Company	–	12,672	(12,672)	–	–
Four Acre Trust	–	25,000	(25,000)	–	–
The Dulverton Trust	–	35,000	(42,530)	7,530	–

21. Analysis of charitable funds *(continued)*

John Lyon's Charity	–	30,000	(30,094)	94	–
The Drapers' Charitable Fund	–	10,000	(15,006)	5,006	–
Newby Trust	–	–	–	–	–
The Swire Charitable Trust	–	–	–	–	–
Wellington Management UK Foundation	–	15,000	(15,000)	–	–
Bank of America Foundation	–	29,800	(29,800)	–	–
Simmons & Simmons Charitable Foundation	–	5,000	(5,000)	–	–
People's Postcode Trust	–	–	–	–	–
	–	371,300	(384,629)	13,329	–

22. Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total Funds 2020 £**
Tangible fixed assets	2,384	–	**2,384**
Current assets	189,009	51,250	**240,259**
Creditors less than 1 year	(245,361)	(51,250)	**(296,611)**
Creditors greater than 1 year	(50,000)	–	**(50,000)**
Net liabilities	(103,968)	–	**(103,968)**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2019 £
Tangible fixed assets	2,157	–	2,157
Current assets	195,646	51,668	247,314
Creditors less than 1 year	(128,615)	(51,668)	(180,283)
Creditors greater than 1 year	–	–	–
Net assets	69,188	–	69,188

23. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 Sep 2019 £	Cash flows £	**At 31 Aug 2020 £**
Cash at bank and in hand	52,896	39,606	**92,502**
Debt due after one year	–	(50,000)	**(50,000)**
	52,896	(10,394)	**42,502**

24. Related parties

No transactions with related parties were undertaken such as are required to be disclosed.