

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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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

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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 Centrepoin (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

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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

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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 COVID-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,

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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 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

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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.

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- 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

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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

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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 translate their Debate Mate experience into a career in teaching.

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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 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

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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

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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%

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 August 2023

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%

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 August 2023

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.
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Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 August 2023

- 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.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 August 2023

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.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 August 2023

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

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 August 2023

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.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 August 2023

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

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 August 2023

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.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

Year ended 31 August 2023

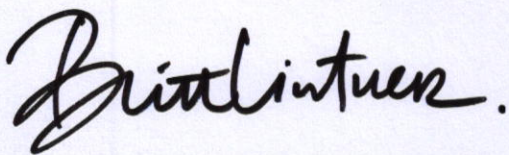
Auditor

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

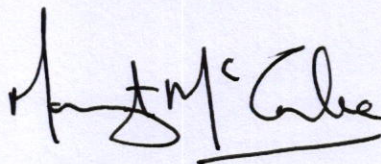
- so far as they are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- they have taken all steps that they ought to have taken as a trustee to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that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

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

(continued)

Year ended 31 August 2023

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.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

(continued)

Year ended 31 August 2023

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.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

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

(continued)

Year ended 31 August 2023

- 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

		Unrestricted funds	2023 Restricted funds	Total funds	2022 Total funds
	Note	£	£	£	£
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		<u>1,122,609</u>	<u>211,113</u>	<u>1,333,722</u>	<u>1,318,861</u>
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		<u>1,153,954</u>	<u>206,437</u>	<u>1,360,391</u>	<u>1,263,109</u>
Net (expenditure)/income		<u>(31,345)</u>	<u>4,676</u>	<u>(26,669)</u>	<u>55,752</u>
Transfers between funds		4,676	(4,676)	—	—
Net movement in funds		<u>(26,669)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>(26,669)</u>	<u>55,752</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		1,173	—	1,173	(54,579)
Total funds carried forward		<u>(25,496)</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>(25,496)</u>	<u>1,173</u>

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

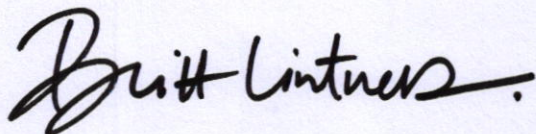
Company Limited by Guarantee

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		<u>38,226</u>		<u>23,382</u>
		223,907		169,040
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	<u>219,464</u>		<u>128,936</u>
Net current assets			<u>4,443</u>	<u>40,104</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>4,504</u>	<u>41,173</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	18		<u>30,000</u>	<u>40,000</u>
Net liabilities			<u>(25,496)</u>	<u>1,173</u>
Funds of the charity				
Unrestricted funds			<u>(25,496)</u>	<u>1,173</u>
Total charity funds	21		<u>(25,496)</u>	<u>1,173</u>

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
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
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
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)
<i>Changes in:</i>		
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	<u>24,844</u>	<u>(46,557)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayment of borrowings	(10,000)	(10,000)
Net cash used in financing activities	<u>(10,000)</u>	<u>(10,000)</u>
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	<u>38,226</u>	<u>23,382</u>

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:

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 August 2023

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 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.

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.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 August 2023

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
	<u>754,147</u>	<u>211,113</u>	<u>965,260</u>
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Donations			
Donations	600,945	12,242	613,187

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 August 2023

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
	<u>736,377</u>	<u>210,198</u>	<u>946,575</u>

6. Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Training	<u>368,462</u>	<u>368,462</u>	<u>372,286</u>	<u>372,286</u>

7. Costs of raising donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2022 £
Fundraising and development	<u>24,577</u>	<u>24,577</u>	<u>37,133</u>	<u>37,133</u>

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
	<u>1,129,377</u>	<u>206,437</u>	<u>1,335,814</u>

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

Debate Mate Schools Limited
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 August 2023

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
	<u>1,035,959</u>	<u>299,855</u>	<u>1,335,814</u>	<u>1,225,976</u>

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
	<u>299,855</u>	<u>299,855</u>	<u>291,400</u>

11. Net (expenditure)/income

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

	2023 £	2022 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	<u>1,008</u>	<u>1,550</u>

12. Auditors remuneration

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

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 August 2023

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
	<u>712,079</u>	<u>616,902</u>

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
	<u>17</u>	<u>15</u>

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	—
	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

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.

Debate Mate Schools Limited
Company Limited by Guarantee
Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*
Year ended 31 August 2023

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

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 August 2023

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 20 23
General funds	1,173	1,122,609	(1,153,954)	4,676	(25,496)

	At 1 September 2021	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 August 20 22
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 20 23
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	—

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements *(continued)*

Year ended 31 August 2023

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)	-
	-	<u>211,113</u>	<u>(206,437)</u>	<u>(4,676)</u>	-

	At 1 September 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 August 20 22 £
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	-	-	-	-	-
	-	<u>210,198</u>	<u>(228,680)</u>	<u>18,482</u>	-

Restricted funds represent income received from donors 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.

Debate Mate Schools Limited

Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Year ended 31 August 2023

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.