



The Brilliant Club

Trustees' Report and
Financial Statements
for the Year Ended
31 July 2025

Registered Limited Company: 07986971
Registered Charity: 1147771 (England and Wales), SC048774 (Scotland)
Registered Office: Fivefields, 8-10 Grosvenor Gardens, London, SW1W 0DH



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Welcome from our Chair of Trustees

I am pleased to share the latest Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for The Brilliant Club.

Almost a quarter of children in the UK are currently eligible for Free School Meals, the most commonly used indicator of disadvantage. At the same time, students eligible for Free School Meals are becoming less likely to progress to competitive universities, with better off students now approximately three times more likely to progress to a competitive university. This is the widest the gap has been since 2019/20 (EPI 2025). Our work to ensure equal opportunities and access to higher education therefore continues to be greatly needed.

In 2024/25, The Brilliant Club supported 19,533 students to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to access and thrive at competitive universities. We have in addition engaged over 800 parents, developing their university knowledge and supporting them to act as higher education champions through Parent Power. We wouldn't have been able to do this if it weren't for the incredible partnerships we have with 795 schools, over 60 universities, and all our funders and supporters who make our work possible. Special thanks go to the many individuals who generously supported our fundraising appeal on BBC Radio 4 in September 2024. Last but not least, I'd like to acknowledge the 435 PhD researchers who brought university study to life for students in schools across the UK, instilling in them the confidence and skills to pursue higher education.

We are in a time of transition for the charity as we come to the end of our Join the Club strategy. This has prompted us to look back over our progress over the past four years, as well as taking a structured approach to developing our next strategy, which will launch in summer 2026. Join the Club has been delivered during a time of particular economic challenges, both for charities but also for the education sector as a whole. Four years ago, we set out an ambitious strategy for growing our student reach and establishing new areas of work in parental engagement and student success, and are proud to have made strong progress, despite the challenges we have faced along the way. Some highlights this year include the following:

Our economic evaluation of The Scholars Programme found that investment of £300 in a single student participating in the programme could unlock £160,000 in lifetime earnings. This demonstrates the long-term impact and improved life chances that education at a competitive university brings.

Parent Power has continued to grow, with 13 chapters active in the year. A particular highlight has been hearing about parents in Bradford establishing 'The Learning Legends Club', a community-led tuition group, and securing £9,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund for enrichment activities and learning resources.

We were also particularly proud to have been selected by the Office for Students' Equality in Higher Education Innovation Fund to work in partnership with other organisations to identify how best to support children on a child protection plan on their educational journeys. I'd like to end with the words of one of the students that the team interviewed as part of this project:

"It was like a dream to go to university, but just as much of a dream to be a Disney Princess. It wasn't going to actually happen, because people like me, we don't get to go to university, we don't get to do that kind of stuff". – Young person with experience of being on a child protection plan

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to our impact this year – especially our PhD Tutors, teachers, our generous supporters, and university partners. If you would like to know more about our work and how you can make sure every young person can consider university as a realistic choice for them regardless of their background, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

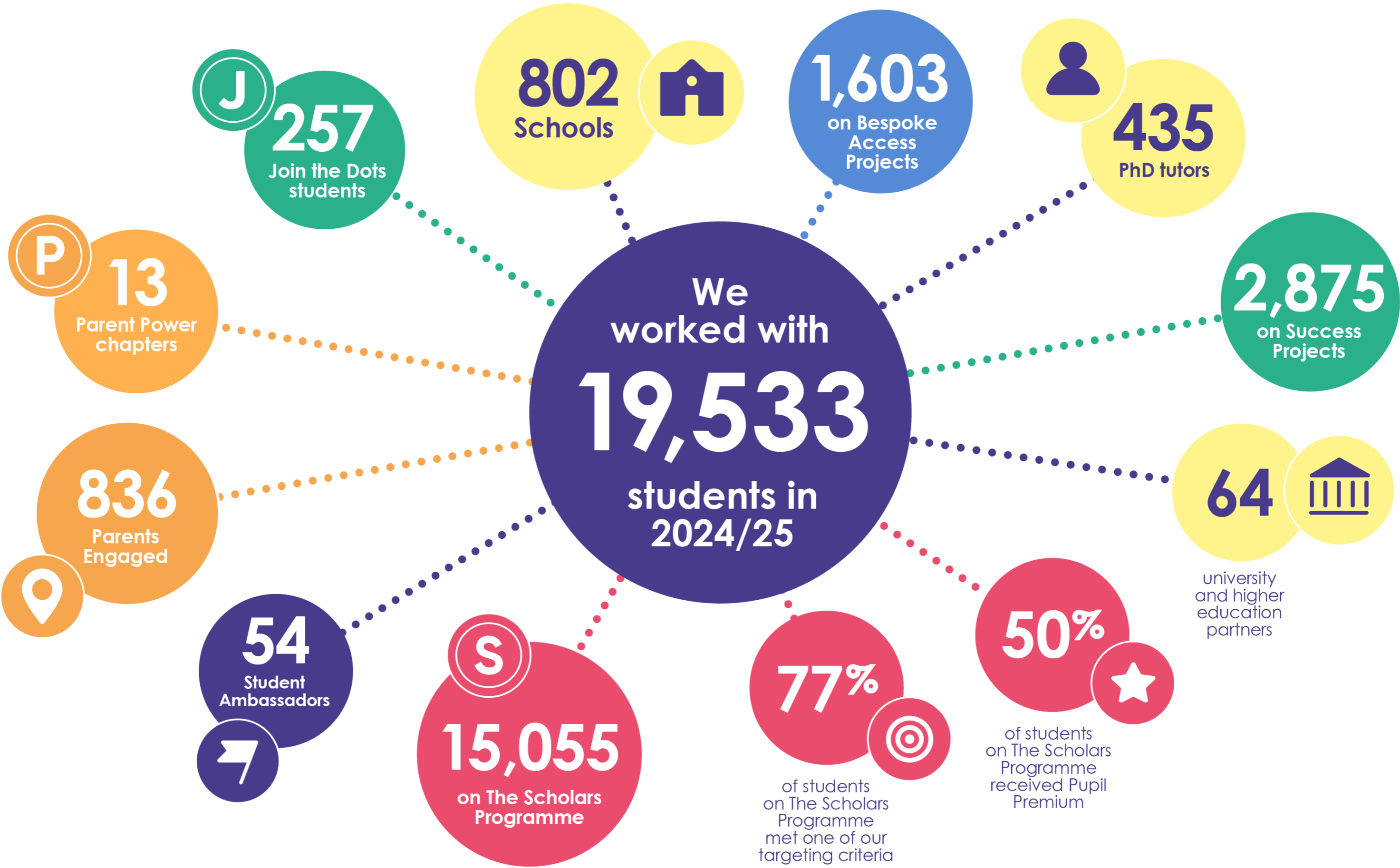
Josephine Valentine .

Dr Josephine Valentine OBE
Chair of the Board of Trustees
The Brilliant Club

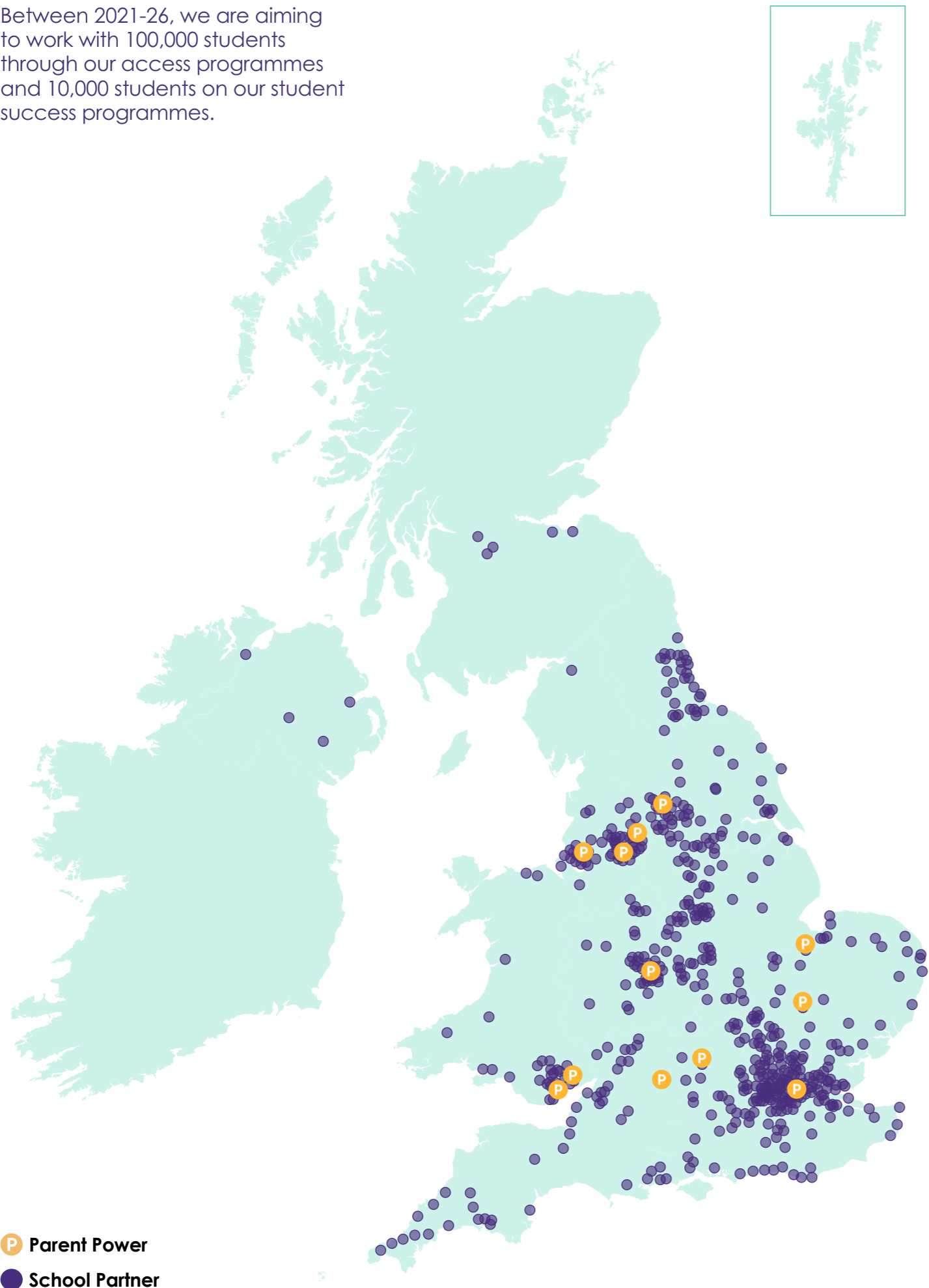




Our year
in numbers



Between 2021-26, we are aiming to work with 100,000 students through our access programmes and 10,000 students on our student success programmes.



“

I began to think more critically, question things more deeply, and believe in my own voice. Working aside a PhD Tutor helped me realise that university isn’t about knowing all the answers, but it is about asking the right questions. More than anything, The Brilliant Club taught me that I belong in these spaces. Intelligence isn’t something you’re born with, it’s something you build, with effort, guidance and belief.

Because of this experience, I now look forward to my future with confidence. I know that I have the ability to aim higher and that I am capable of taking on big challenges. I’m no longer afraid to try.

Key Stage 4 Scholars Programme student, Waltham Forest

”



Activity 1: In pairs, discuss your work from Page 15.

Extension task: Can literature/poetry challenge inequality & prejudice? (Respond on Notes page [P59])

Objectives and Activities

The Mission

We mobilise the PhD community to support students who are less advantaged to access the most competitive universities and succeed when they get there.

The Strategy:

Our 2021-26 strategy, Join the Club, is focused on three goals:



We are aiming to work with 100,000 pupils over the course of the strategy through our access programmes which include our flagship Scholars Programme. We will also support students on their university journey working with 10,000 students as they prepare to start, and ultimately succeed, at university.

The Need

University graduates are more likely to access elite professions and earn more than those who do not access university. By age 31, graduates earn around a third more (32- 37%) than non-graduates across all regions of England, with the most recent government figures stating that 88.6% of university graduates are in sustained employment, further study, or both five years after graduation. Graduating from a more competitive university is estimated to add nearly **£160,000** in lifetime pre-tax earnings compared to graduating from a less competitive university.

Sadly, access to these life changing opportunities is not equal:

At present, less advantaged students are 19.1 months behind their more advantaged peers by the time they take their GCSEs. This gap remains larger than its pre-pandemic levels, and the Education Policy Institute estimated in 2020 that at its current rate, the attainment gap between advantaged and less advantaged students will never close. For the second year running, the percentage of disadvantaged students continuing education after Key Stage 4 has fallen.

In England, 20.3% of students eligible for free school meals were accepted into university, compared to 37.7% of those not eligible. This gap has remained steady for the last three years.

When it comes to going to university, where you grow up matters. In England in 2024/25, 26.5% of 18-year olds from the least advantaged postcodes entered university, compared to 48.6% from the most advantaged (UCAS End of Cycle data, using IMD quintiles). 23.5% of young people from the lowest participation areas are accepted into university, compared to 50.6% of the highest participation areas (POLAR4).

29.2% of 18-year-olds in Wales progress to university, and 29.5% from the North East. When you compare this to the 51.4% of the 18-year-old population in London going on to higher education, the regional disparity is clear.

Targeting

We target our programmes at students who are least likely to access the most competitive universities because of their background.

We work with teachers in our partner schools to ensure that the majority of students enrolled on our programmes, meet at least one of three target measures:

- 1 Educational measure of deprivation (free school meals or equivalent)
- 2 No parental history of higher education in the UK
- 3 Deprivation according to postcode

The Scholars Programme – Targeting Criteria	
Target Pupils	77%
Pupil Premium	50%
No parental history of higher education	47%
IDACI bottom 40%	58%

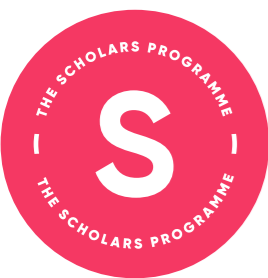
“ My favourite part about tutoring these bright minds is the kind of scholars you have at the end of the tutorials in comparison to the ones at the beginning. It is very fulfilling to see the timid scholars become very confident, both in their participation in class and in their essays. As for the ones that are very vocal and confident from the start, it is refreshing to engage with their ideas and thought processes throughout the tutorials.

Tutor, Teesaside University

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‘Getting in’: Access Programmes



The Scholars Programme

Our Scholars Programme gives less advantaged young people the skills, knowledge and confidence necessary to apply and progress to the most competitive universities. This year, we worked with 15,055 students through the programme.

Students aged 8-18 take part in seven university-style tutorials delivered by a trained PhD tutor, over the course of one academic term. Students write a final assignment of 1,000-2,500 words, depending on their age group. A selection of these is published in our academic journal, [The Scholar](#).

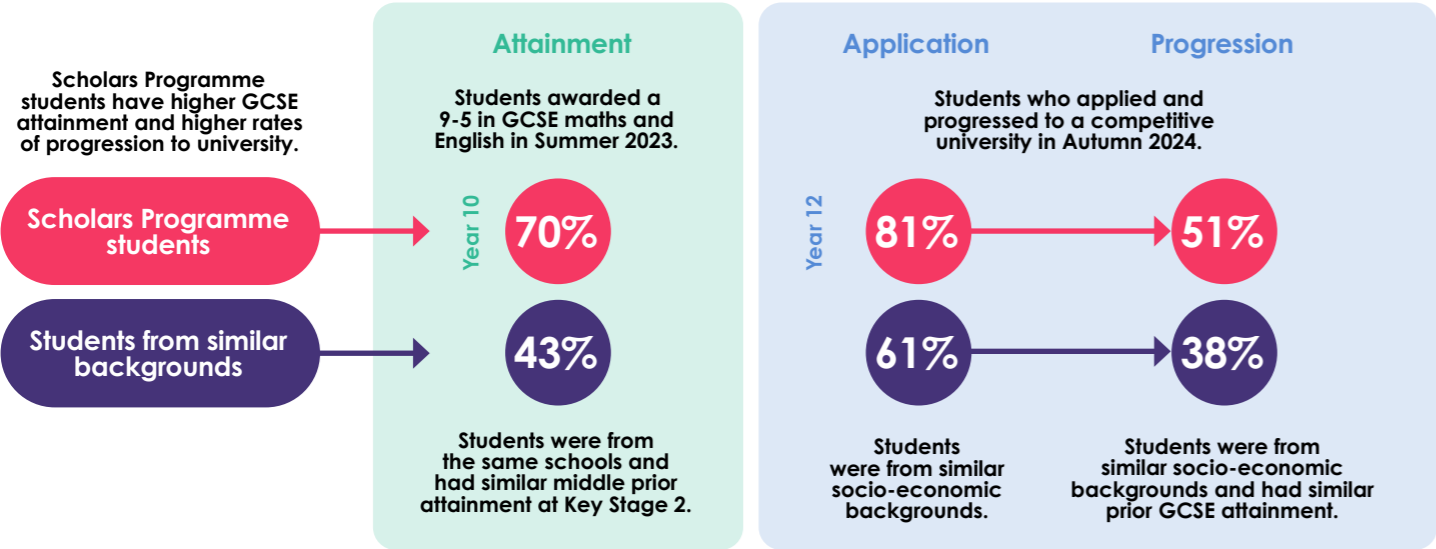
The programme ends with a Graduation Event at a competitive university. This gives students the opportunity to celebrate their achievements, as well as to find out more about university learning, tour a campus, and meet current undergraduates.

Through baseline checks before the programme and post-programme

assessment, we can monitor the progress made by students in several key areas. In 24/25, pupils made 26% progress in written communication and 28% in critical thinking. There was also a 20% increase in university knowledge.

Students who participate in The Scholars Programme achieve higher grades at GCSE than other students from their schools with similar prior attainment. Our [evaluation](#) found that students who did The Scholars Programme in Year 7, 8, 9 or 10 were more likely to achieve a 9-5 in maths and English than students who scored similarly at Key Stage 2 within their schools.

For nine consecutive years, [independent evaluation with UCAS](#) has shown that Scholars Programme graduates progress to competitive universities at a higher rate than other students from similar backgrounds.



“ Throughout the course, I developed not just academic knowledge, but real confidence in my ideas, my writing, and my ability to engage with complex subjects. I learned to think critically, to write with purpose, and to speak with intention, and these are skills I'll carry with me into whatever I do, because they go beyond the classroom. They shape how I understand the world. This experience has absolutely made me think more seriously about going to university...Thank you for being part of a programme that believes in young minds, that trusts us with serious conversations and complex ideas. You've given us more than just an academic opportunity. You've given us the belief that we belong in spaces where change happens.

Aida, Year 9, Lealands High School ”



‘Getting on’: Success programmes



Join the Dots

It is crucial that less advantaged students feel equipped to navigate their new life at university. Evidence shows that students with high self-efficacy, metacognition and sense of belonging are more likely to succeed at university. These form the foundation of our student success programme, Join the Dots.

Join the Dots brings schools and colleges together with universities to support during the transition to university. It is targeted at students who are most likely to face barriers in making a successful transition to university, supporting them from Year 12, 13 or equivalent, all the way to their first six months of university.

Join the Dots runs in two parts:

- UniPrep supports Year 12, Year 13 and equivalent students with university application and preparation, through a series of webinars run throughout the year in collaboration with present university students and other organisations in the industry. Webinar partners have included BlackBullion, Nightline, UpReach and Bloomsbury
- Students who attend one of our partner universities then receive academic coaching in 1:1 and peer group sessions led by a PhD Coach.

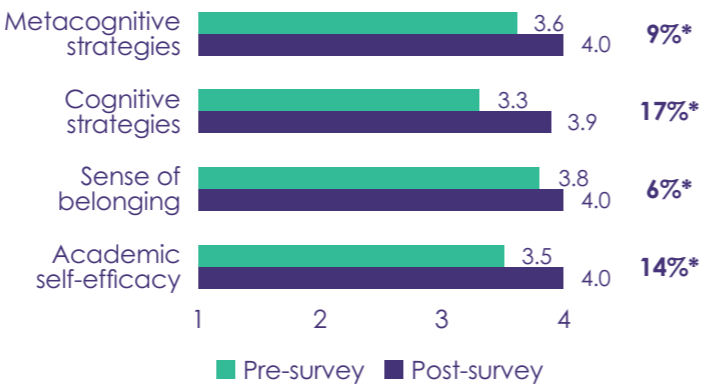
1208 Year 12s were registered to UniPrep in 2024/25

Through surveys before and after webinars, we learned that confidence in choosing a university rose from 5.7 to 7.9 out of 10.

Confidence in managing their well-being at university rose from 4.8 to 8.1. We are delighted that Join the Dots shows strong results in key areas of undergraduate student development, including a statistically significant improvement in metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, sense of belonging and academic self-efficacy.

Programme Outcomes and Impact

Findings from pre-and post- programme surveys show students experienced improvements in key outcomes.



Note: Pre/post survey results for 99 students, 1-5 from (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neither disagree nor agree. (4) agree or (5) strongly agree. % denotes the average score for each index. *denotes statistical significance.



Impact Statements

Comparing responses to questions in the pre and post surveys, the percentage of students agreeing or strongly agreeing increased notably in these statements:

‘I can tell which information is most important when I study’
38% → 75%

‘I feel I belong at university’
60% → 76%

‘I feel confident I can manage my studies’
46% → 83%

Alongside our seven university partners, in 2024/25 we supported 257 students to navigate the opportunities and challenges of making the transition to university.

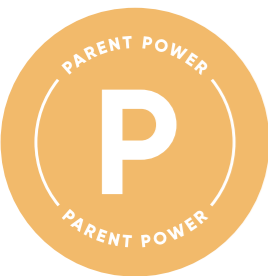


An absolutely amazing programme that provided the best support and tailored advice for all of my concerns, which I no longer have, thanks to how efficient, fun and comfortable the sessions were!

Join the Dots student, King's College London



Communities:



Parent Power

Communities: Parent Power

Parent Power creates networks of parent communities across the UK, each one facilitated by The Brilliant Club and an anchor institution. Parents are empowered to ensure their children have a fair chance at education and their future careers by:

- Developing community organising and leadership skills.
- Parents attend advice and guidance sessions on accessing higher education, so they are empowered to make change in their children’s future and ensure they have a fair chance at success in education and beyond.

In 2024/25, there were 13 Parent Power chapters across the UK and we worked with 836 parents. The chapters were Abbey (Cambridge), Birmingham, Bradford, Cardiff, East London, East Oxford, Fenland, Knowsley, Newport, Oldham, Swindon and Wythenshawe.

Recent Parent Power campaigns have addressed the localised barriers to education in communities across the UK:

- Fenland parents continue to lobby for the introduction of a cycle lane that will connect Guyhirn to March, making travel out of the area safer and easier so more children can take part in extra-curricular activities

- Knowsley parents are campaigning to bring A-level provision back to the area. Knowsley is the only borough in the UK where you can’t study A-Levels.
- Bradford parents have initiated ‘The Learning Legends Club’, a community-led tuition group, which secured £9,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund for enrichment activities and learning resources

100% of parents/carers say they are able to talk to their children about higher education

97% of parents/carers say they are able to talk to people in their community about higher education

94% of parents/carers say they have gained new knowledge about higher education

94% of parents/carers are confident they can support their children to access university and succeed when they get there

In August 2025, we held our second Parent Power National Conference at Trinity College, Cambridge University. **40** parents from across the UK attended, to connect and build relationships with each other, deliver sessions to share campaign best practice and engage in community organising training.

“ I believe I can speak for every parent in saying how incredibly proud we are to be part of such an organisation that so inspires and believes in the potential of our young generation. ”

Parent, Parent Power National Conference 2025

Access Projects

Alongside our core programmes, we collaborate with institutions to deliver additional projects to support their priorities. Each project is specific to the needs of the partner.



Office for Students’ Equality in Higher Education Innovation Fund

In February 2025, we announced that we had been successful in our bid to the [Office for Students’ Equality in Higher Education Innovation Fund](#). Over the next two years, in partnership with the [University of Sheffield](#), [London Academy of Excellence](#) Tottenham (LAET), and [Frontline](#), we will deliver an innovative project focused on what works for supporting children on a child protection plan (CPP) on their educational journeys.

The initial phase of the project was completed in summer 2025. It focused on capturing stakeholder voice, in consultation with social workers, teachers, and former LAET students with lived experience of education while on a child protection plan. This phase culminated in a report which was shared with the sector, and a half-day in-person symposium, hosted at the University of Sheffield.

Key findings of [the report](#) included how:

Children on a CPP often experience similar levels of trauma and disruption as care experienced young people, yet receive significantly less support and are not routinely included in HE access interventions or contextual admissions.

Persistent absence, and disrupted focus can impact attainment, as well as causing students on a CPP to miss out on the information required to make positive future plans.

Insights reflected that schools and professionals sometimes hold lower expectations for children on a CPP, and that young people themselves often internalise these, seeing university as unattainable or not for “people like me”.



Make your Mark

Make your Mark has been created to boost attainment for less advantaged Year 10 students, via 12 hours of small group tutoring. Tutorials focus on the English or maths curriculum and embed study strategies throughout. Our tutors are current undergraduate and PhD students from our partner universities who have undergone rigorous assessment and undertaken our high-quality training.

In 2024/25 we expanded Make your Mark with Arden University, delivering the programme to 173 students from 16 local schools. We saw a 13% improvement in academic self-efficacy, 15% improvement in study strategies and 9% improvement in cognitive strategies. We look forward to working with Arden University again in 2025/26.



It is a great opportunity to challenge yourself, learn new skills and gain confidence...fantastic support from The Brilliant Club staff, and well-prepared training and teaching materials.

Parent, Parent Power National Conference 2025



The Turing Summer Experience

In August 2025, we ran the Turing Summer Experience alongside our partners, The Alan Turing Institute, for Year 12 students. The project ran for one week in Manchester, and two concurrent weeks in London. The Experience focuses on developing students' skills and confidence in data science and AI.

Project leads from The Alan Turing Institute and The Brilliant Club were present for each week of delivery, as well as two PhD tutors and several members of staff from the Alan Turing Institute. Talks and sessions were delivered by a wide variety of colleagues and subject experts, including Turing researchers and members of their Skills Team, alongside guest speakers from government defence and security partners.

By the end of the project, 97% of participants agreed to the statement "I would recommend the Turing Summer Experience to other students."

In a survey prior to the start of the Turing Summer Experience, 64% of students agreed to the statement "I am confident that one day I could get a job in data science and artificial intelligence if I wanted to." At the end of the week, 94% of students agreed.





Capabilities

To deliver our programmes with scale and impact, we must continually develop and strengthen our organisational capabilities.

Operations

Our Operations team consists of our Finance and HR team overseeing both staff and tutors. Our operational processes and culture are a key component of delivering our five-year strategy.

In 2024/25, both our Human Resources and Finance team have worked hard to improve efficiency across the organisation. Supported by technology, we have automated the onboarding of tutors including communication and the collection of payroll information. For staff, we finished migrating to a different HR platform (Personio), this has improved staff experience and efficiency across the employee lifecycle.

Our Human Resources team renewed our Disability Confident Accreditation Level 2 and the finance team has continued to improve the accuracy and robustness of financial forecasting during the year.



Research and Impact

The charity's research and impact team conduct evaluations to enhance outcomes for underrepresented groups. Specifically, we evaluate the charity's university access and success programmes and conduct external evaluations for mission-aligned organisations via [Brilliant Consulting](#).

Through our [programmes evaluation](#) work we evidence the impact The Scholars Programme is having on GCSE attainment and university progression. This year, we also published an [economic evaluation](#), showing the long-term impact of The Scholars Programme: increased lifetime earning potential of £160,000 for graduates of the programme. Students who take part in the Scholars Programme are more likely to apply and progress to more competitive universities than students from similar backgrounds. When you combine progression rates for the programme and lifetime earning potential, each cohort of 1,200 year-12 Scholars Programme students that moves into higher education is unlocking £30 million in additional pre-tax earnings.

Brilliant Consulting is an evaluation and strategy unit, and we specialise in qualitative and quantitative research and strategy development. In 2024/25, we supported a wide range of organisations through our consultancy work. Some examples include: Durham University, King's College London, NEON, Loughborough University, Ormiston Trust and The Sutton Trust.

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The Brilliant Club have continued to be invaluable to the evaluation of Year 2 of the TechUPWomen Click Start project. Their independent approach ensures we are collecting valuable, high quality data which will not only feed into wider ClickStart evaluation, but will also help inform future TechUPWomen programmes, helping us reach even more women from underserved communities.

Johanna Waite, TechUP Programme Manager, Durham University

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External Affairs

Our External Affairs team leads the charity's fundraising, marketing, communications and policy work, as well as bringing together our Friends of The Brilliant Club network.

Fundraising is a growing income stream for The Brilliant Club and provides essential income for the charity, complementing income from schools, universities and other partners. The funding environment for both schools and universities has become increasingly challenging over recent years, and we are therefore relying on growing philanthropic support to be able to sustain and develop our programmes.

We are so grateful to all our partners who generously supported our work in 2024/25 and would welcome conversations with anyone interested in supporting us, especially ahead of the launch of our new strategy in 2026.

In the first months of the 2024/25 financial year, we featured on a BBC Radio 4 Appeal presented by the comedian John Robins, and – thanks to one of our philanthropic partners – had two full-page adverts published in the Financial Times. Both pieces of work have generated income and introduced us to new collaborative opportunities.

We publish our journal of academic work, [The Scholar](#), once a year. The essays published are from a range of subject streams and by students ranging from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 5. In this year's publication, essay topics included social robots, industrial model villages, and gender and peace.

One of the charity's greatest assets is the strong community of friends who support us. We bring together our [Friends of The Brilliant Club network](#) three times a year to share what we're working on, explore opportunities to work together and connect people with each other. This year, our events have included a look at social mobility, and a

discussion on our student transitions research report, [Roadblocks or Roadmaps?](#)

Technology

Our technology team manages the charity's IT infrastructure, supporting staff and tutors to deliver our programmes nationally.

To achieve programme scale, we work to continually transform and improve our technology platforms so that they are fully aligned to the needs of the students, teachers and tutors using them. Our strategy requires a transformative approach to how we work digitally. We see digital solutions and ways of working as integral to unlocking growth at the charity. We need to be agile and innovative in our decision making to support the communities we serve in a landscape of turbulence and fast-paced technological growth.

In 2024/25, we redesigned our Scholars Programme platform, The Hub, for teachers and added Google Drive submissions for students, alongside other new features. 89% of teachers then told us that The Hub was easy for them to use.

We continue to ensure that we hold Cyber Essentials and ISO 27001 certificates. The Hub is also penetration tested annually.

Over the last year, we have been training a group of colleagues across the organisation as 'Tech Leads'. In this role, they can develop professionally and share ideas as a group, as well as have greater input into tech advancements that will benefit their teams. Through the Tech Leads, The Scholars Programme has added more automated elements, streamlining our delivery cycle,

and tutor training has been developed on our tutor platform, Tutor Zone.

Diversity and Inclusion

As a UK-wide, inclusive employer, we want to make it easy for people to apply and work for us, from a range of different backgrounds and experiences. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is a key strategic priority that spans every team and every area of our work.

In 24/25 we had a member of staff working part-time as our Diversity and Inclusion lead. They are supported by our Executive and Senior Leadership teams as well as our Staff Networks. This year, we published an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) glossary for the organisation, as well as establishing a dedicated [EDI page](#) on our website alongside career progression stories.

We have six active staff networks:

- REACH (Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage Network)
- Pride (LGBTQIA+ employees and allies)
- Working Parents and Carers Network
- Gender Equity Network
- Social Mobility Network
- Neurodiversity Umbrella Network



Constitution

The Brilliant Club is a Registered Charity in England and Wales (No. 1147771) and Scotland (No. SC048774) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (No. 07986971).

Public Benefit Statement

The Directors of The Brilliant Club have considered the requirements of the Charity Commission with regards to public benefit. The relevant sections of this report set out The Brilliant Club's objectives, report on the activity and successes in the year to 31 July 2025 and outline the plans for the 2025/26 financial year.

The Trustees have considered this matter and concluded that:

- The aims of the organisation continue to be charitable.
- The aims and the work done give identifiable benefits to the charitable sector and both directly and indirectly to individuals in need.
- The benefits are for the public; are not unreasonably restricted in any way and certainly not by ability to pay.
- There is no detriment or harm arising from the aims or activities.

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and planning future activities.

Board of Trustees

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees that consists of 12 professionals from a wide range of backgrounds including schools, universities, legal and accountancy backgrounds. In 2024/25, one trustee resigned from their position on the board, and four joined. Trustees are responsible for decision-making on long-term strategic direction and governance, meeting formally four times a year. The Trustees receive quarterly updates on day-to-day activities, including risk and financial performance, which informs their decision-making. There are two sub-committees: the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee and the People Committee.

The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee lead on the financial governance of the charity. It consists of five Trustees, each of whom bring relevant professional experience to the role. The Committee meets at least two times a year and oversees budgeting, reporting, audit processes and risk. The Committee reports on detailed financial strategy, management accounts, cashflow, reserves and risk at each Board of Trustees meeting.

The People Committee, consists of three trustees and meets three times a year, In liaison with the Finance Committee, the People Committee approves salary bands, senior staff salaries and benefit changes. The Committee also conducts performance reviews and professional development meetings with the CEO and sets the CEO salary.

New Trustees are appointed through a combination of targeted and open recruitment. They receive an induction with the Chair of Trustees, and the CEO. The charity arranges training in line with new charity protocols and the Charity Governance Code, as needed.

Management

Day-to-day running of the charity is managed by the Executive Leadership Team, led by the CEO and the full list of key management personnel can be found on page 73. Throughout the majority of 2024/25, the charity had five Executives who report to the CEO, the Chief Programmes and Communities Officer, the Chief Operating Officer, the Chief Engagement Officer, the Chief Digital Officer, and the Chief Impact and Strategy Officer. During 2024/25 the substantive CEO was on maternity leave, leading to acting up arrangements across the Executive team. At the end of 2024/25, the Chief Impact and Strategy Officer left the charity. That role has been replaced by a Director of Research and Impact, reporting to the Chief Programmes and Communities Officer.

Pay and Remuneration of Key Management

The salary of the CEO is set by the People Committee following an annual performance review. This review is also used to set targets and development objectives for the year ahead. The People Committee also approves organisational salary band changes and benefits, and any salary increase for employees who earn over £60,000. The Brilliant Club aims to be competitive in terms of salary, regularly completing a salary benchmarking exercise to ensure we attract excellent candidates.



List of Principal Risks

The Board of Trustees implements an ongoing risk management strategy, covering a broad spectrum of risk including financial, reputational, operational, safeguarding, and legal risk. The designated Risk Trustee reports on the risk register at each Board of Trustees meeting.

Risks are rated according to impact and likelihood and the risk register is actively used to monitor, evaluate and resolve potential risks to the organisation.

The principal risks that the charity have identified are:

Long term Financial Sustainability

Mitigations for this risk include:

- The charity has diversified its income streams throughout the course of the Join the Club strategy, continues to seek new sources of revenue and is aiming to increase fundraised income.
- The charity maintains sufficient reserves as per the reserves policy.
- The Executive Leadership Team, along with relevant Directors, holds regular meetings to oversee the different revenue streams. The Finance, Risk and Audit Committee reviews sustainability and income levels at each sub-committee meeting.

IT, Data Protection and Business Continuity

Mitigations for this risk include:

- The charity has obtained ISO 27001 accreditation and CyberEssentials Certification and has an internal IT Support team to help with data security.
- The charity has a business continuity plan, which outlines contingency steps needed should any risk occur.
- We have implemented two factor authentication on key accounts and systems, we penetration test our platforms and use device management software that tracks the charity’s digital assets.

Short-term Financial Risks and Fraud

Mitigations for this risk include:

- The COO and Finance Director review income streams and cash flow regularly.
- The Executive Leadership Team reviews the management accounts monthly, and the Board of Trustees reviews management accounts quarterly.
- The charity has a qualified accountant on the Board of Trustees and employs two full-time accountants within the Finance Team.
- The charity has robust anti-fraud policies, training, and systems in place.

Safeguarding

Mitigations for this risk include:

- The charity has a designated Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding and internal Safeguarding Leads.
- The charity has robust policies and training for all staff and PhD tutors and has updated its Safeguarding Policy to take into account any additional risks.
- The charity has designed digital delivery of its key programmes with safeguarding built in.



Fundraising Statement

The Brilliant Club is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and adheres to the Code of Fundraising Practice to deliver fundraising activity that is transparent and meets regulatory requirements.

Fundraising is overseen by the Chief Engagement Officer, who reports on fundraising progress quarterly to the Board of Trustees. Members of the charity's Executive Leadership team attend regular meetings with the fundraising team to review progress and agree on approaches. The fundraising team is led by the Director of Philanthropy.

Fundraising activity is supported by the Marketing team and wider organisation. We offer training, guidance, and briefings to staff to ensure compliance with the Code of Fundraising Practice. The processes for prospect research, making enquiries and applications, and accepting donations, are managed and undertaken by the charity's fundraising team, in line with the charity's Donations Policy, which is available on our website.

We do not employ any third parties to fundraise directly on the charity's behalf. Fundraising approaches to individuals are made in line with current data protection legislation and our Privacy Policy. Any approaches are made by employees or Trustees of the charity.

Safeguards are in place to ensure that all potential funders, including vulnerable people, are protected from unreasonable intrusion on their privacy, unreasonably persistent approaches or pressure to give. We do not canvas face to face, nor do we send out mass fundraising appeals via post.

The charity's fundraising strategy is largely focused on trusts, foundations, corporates, and major gifts from individuals. This year we also made an appeal on BBC Radio 4, which resulted in a significant number of donations from the public. We are registered with Just Giving to enable us to receive donations from individuals.

We promote opportunities to support on our website, through social media and in our community newsletter, which people opt in to receiving. On our website, we invite those interested in supporting the charity to get in touch with our fundraising team and discuss their fundraising plans with us, whether they are fundraising via places we have secured in challenge events, or self-organising fundraising activity.

We have a Fundraising Pack available on the website which is designed to be a helpful guide for anyone who expresses an interest in voluntarily fundraising in aid of The Brilliant Club and describes what they can expect from the charity and our expectations of them.

We have not received any complaints about the charity's fundraising activity. If we were to receive a complaint, this would be managed in line with our Complaints Procedure, which is available on our website. Our fundraising team are committed to continually reviewing our approach to fundraising and to staying up to date with the latest regulations and best practice.

Financial Review

The Brilliant Club incurred a planned deficit of £320,653 in the 2024/25 financial year. This approach was part of a strategic decision to utilise designated funds accumulated through surpluses generated in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years. The Trustees had earmarked these funds, known as the 'strategic fund', to support new initiatives aligned with the charity's 2021-26 five-year strategy, Join the Club. During the year, £150,000 from the strategic fund was drawn down, leaving a remaining balance of £250,000.

Total income remained broadly consistent with the previous year, showing only a 1% variance. Growth in income from the Scholars Programme, Communities Programme, Join the Dots, and Brilliant Consulting offset declines in Access and Success Projects, as well as in charitable grants, donations, and fundraising activities.

Designated funds will continue to support the expansion of new programmes, helping to build a robust evidence base and achieve economies of scale for long-term financial sustainability. These funds also provide a buffer to maintain financial stability in the coming year, particularly as many key stakeholders, including schools and universities, face budgetary pressures due to income shortfalls and rising costs.

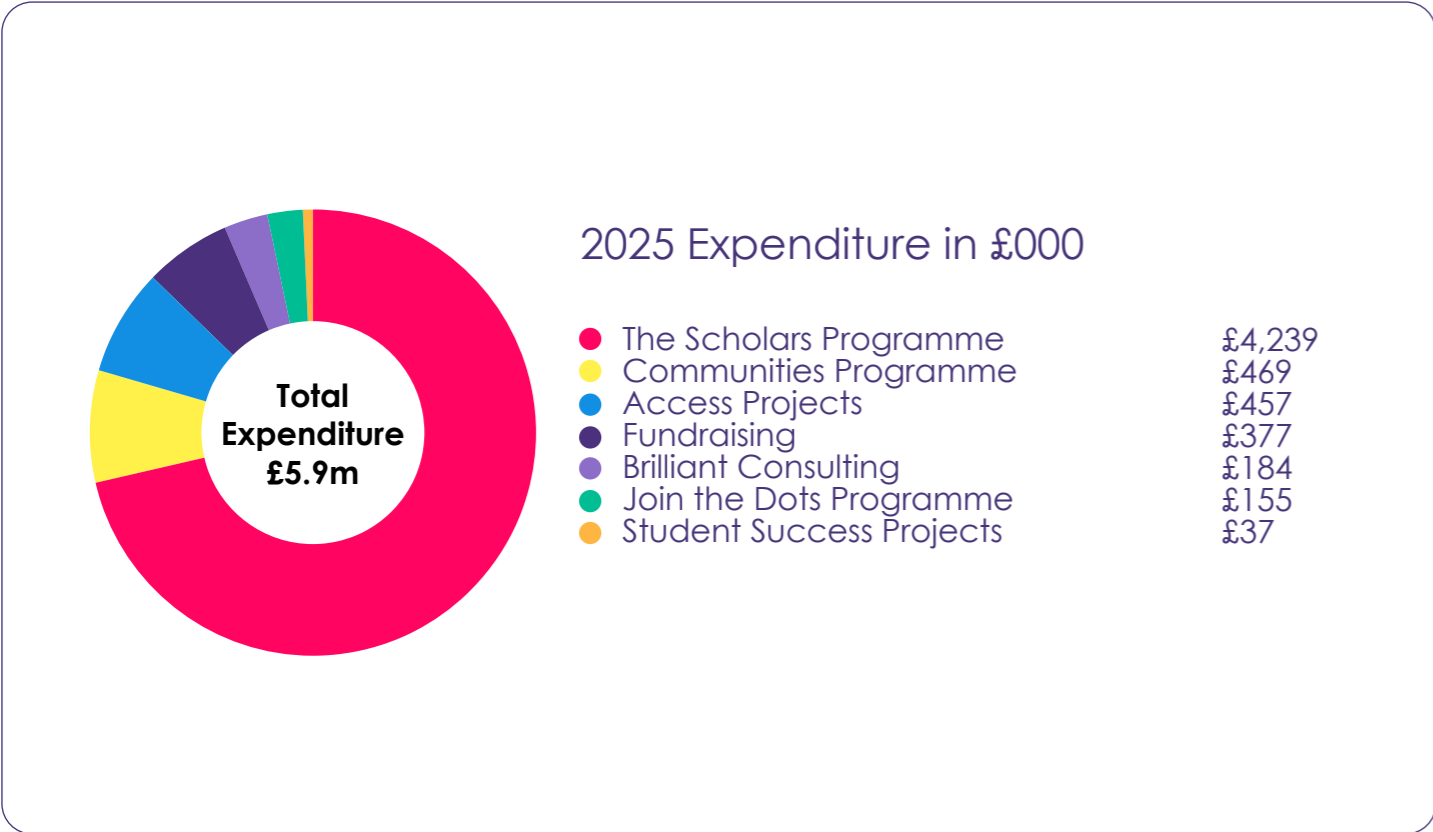
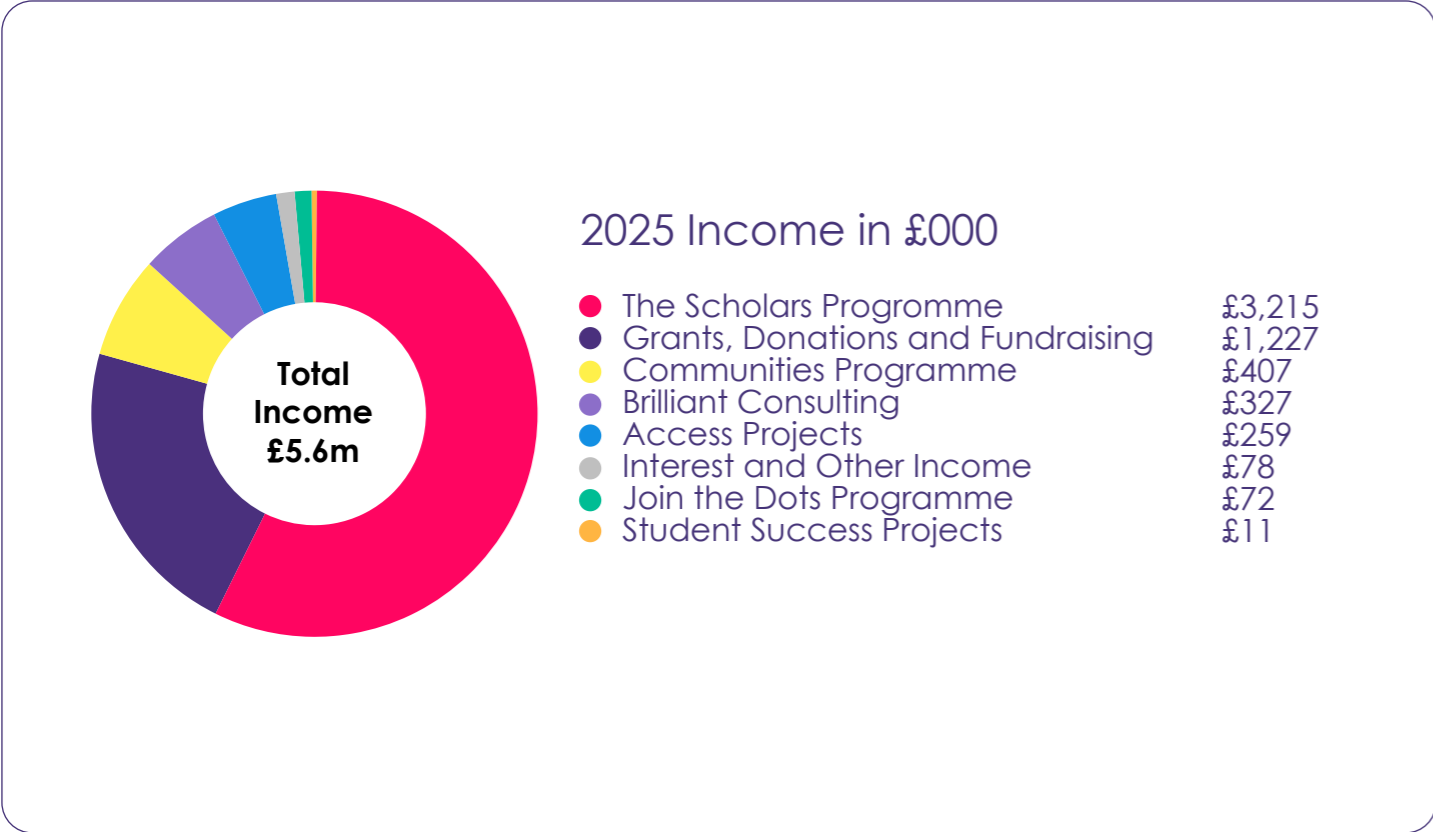
Expenditure was approximately £400,000 lower than in 2023/24, primarily due to a planned reduction in staff costs. The charity maintained a strong focus on cost control and expenditure management across all areas, helping to mitigate the impact of inflationary pressures.

We are actively monitoring financial risks, including cost pressures and income uncertainties across our programmes and projects, to safeguard the charity's financial health. External funding will remain essential for the Scholars Programme and several newer initiatives, ensuring affordability for schools and universities. As such, securing ongoing funding remains a priority.

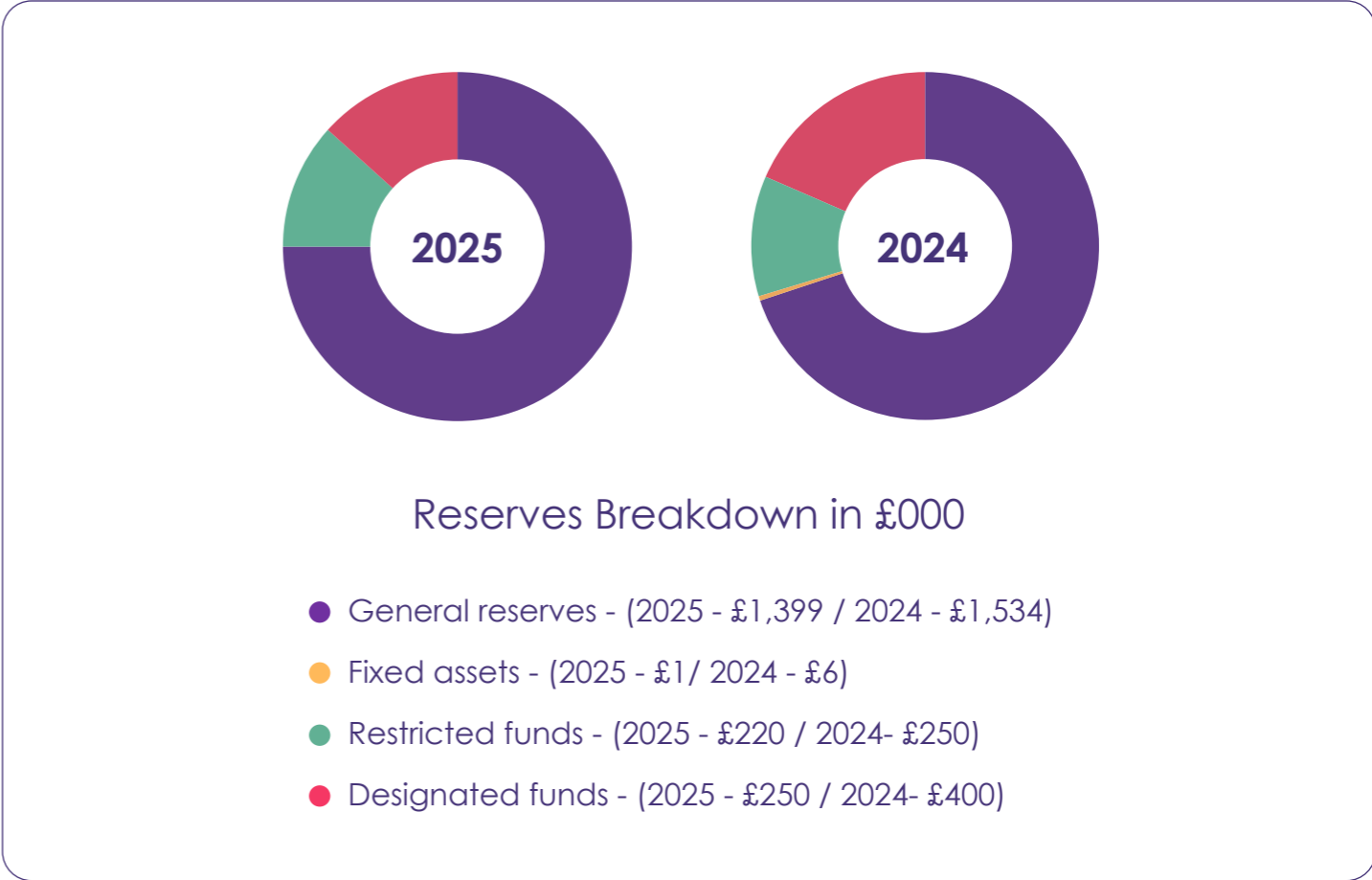
Our five-year strategy centres on scaling existing programmes and developing new areas of work. We anticipate further drawdown on reserves in the coming year to support growth and maintain high quality delivery of our university access and success programmes. The current level of reserves also provides a vital safeguard against rising costs and financial risks.

This balance of growth and stability is critical as we enter the final year of our strategy, aiming to support more disadvantaged students than ever before in accessing and succeeding at the UK's most competitive universities.

Income and Expenditure



Reserves Policy



The Brilliant Club’s reserves policy is to maintain a sufficient level of reserves to enable operating activities to continue, taking account of potential risks and contingencies that may arise from time to time.

The Board of Trustees has set the charity’s reserves requirement as at least three but not more than four months of certain core costs. This corresponds to one school term, which is the basis of the charity’s invoicing cycle. According to this policy, the charity needs to ensure general reserves of approximately £1,065,000 - £1,420,000 at the end of the 2024/25 financial year.

The balance sheet shows total funds of £1,869,719 at 31st July 2025 (2024: £2,190,372), which includes:

- Free reserves of £1,398,960 (2024 - £1,533,826) which is in line with the charity’s reserves policy.
- Designated funds of £250,000 (2024 - £400,000).
- Restricted funds of £219,574 (2024 - £250,417).
- Fixed assets of £1,185 (2024 - £6,129).

We anticipate incurring a planned deficit in our 2025/26 financial year and further utilising the designated reserves. This will maintain our reserves within our reserves policy and as such, we will have sufficient reserves to continue as a going concern.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Brilliant Club for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the income and expenditure of the charitable company 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 Accounting and Reporting by Charities: 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);
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable United Kingdom 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 charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Each of the Trustees confirms that:

- So far as the Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware; and
- the Trustee has taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charitable company's auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of section 418 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Auditors

The auditors, Buzzacott Audit LLP, will be proposed for reappointment in accordance with section 485 of the Companies Act 2006.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities', and in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small entities.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on and signed on their behalf on 29th January 2026 by:

Josephine Valentine .

Dr Josephine Valentine OBE
Chair of the Board of Trustees



Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement

Statement of Financial Activities

(Including the Income and Expenditure Account)
For the Year Ended 31 July 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2025 £
Income from				
Donations and legacies	2A	713,692	354,534	1,068,226
Gift in Kind	2B	6,477	-	6,477
Charitable activities	3	4,161,399	282,139	4,443,538
Trading activities	4	32,202	-	32,202
Investments and interest		45,502	-	45,502
Total income		4,959,272	636,673	5,595,945
Expenditure on				
Raising funds	5	377,248	-	377,248
Charitable activities	5	4,871,834	667,516	5,539,350
Total expenditure		5,249,082	667,516	5,916,598
Net expenditure		(289,810)	(30,843)	(320,653)
Net movement in funds		(289,810)	(30,843)	(320,653)
Fund balances brought forward 1 August 2024		1,939,955	250,417	2,190,372
Fund balances carried forward 31 July 2025	15/16	1,650,145	219,574	1,869,719

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised during the year.

The notes on pages 46 to 63 form part of the financial statements.

Statement of Financial Activities

(Including the Income and Expenditure Account)
For the Year Ended 31 July 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2024 £
Income from				
Donations and legacies	2A	731,034	393,881	1,124,915
Charitable activities	3	4,254,015	205,799	4,459,814
Trading activities	4	23,231	-	23,231
Investments and interest		70,551	-	70,551
Total income		5,078,831	599,680	5,678,511
Expenditure on				
Raising funds	5	236,769	-	236,769
Charitable activities	5	5,590,864	490,124	6,080,988
Total expenditure		5,827,633	490,124	6,317,757
Net (expenditure)/income		(748,802)	109,556	(639,246)
Net movement in funds		(748,802)	109,556	(639,246)
Fund balances brought forward 1 August 2023		3,019,228	103,412	3,122,640
Fund balances carried forward 31 July 2024	15/16	1,939,955	250,417	2,190,372

Balance Sheet

For the Year Ended 31 July 2025 (Company Number: 07986971)

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	11	1,185	6,129
Total fixed assets		1,185	6,129
Current assets			
Debtors	12	428,328	457,016
Short term deposits		107,172	103,529
Cash at bank and in hand	21	1,838,292	2,027,212
Total current assets		2,373,792	2,587,757
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	(505,258)	(403,514)
Net current assets		1,868,534	2,184,243
Total assets less current liabilities		1,869,719	2,190,372
Total net assets		1,869,719	2,190,372
Represented by			
Designated funds	16	250,000	400,000
General funds	16	1,400,145	1,539,955
Total unrestricted funds		1,650,145	1,939,955
Total restricted funds	15	219,574	250,417
Total		1,869,719	2,190,372

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small entities.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on and signed on their behalf on 29th January 2026 by:

Josephine Valentine .

Dr Josephine Valentine OBE – Chair of the Board of Trustees

The notes on pages 46 to 63 form part of these financial statements.

Cash Flow Statement

For the Year Ended 31 July 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Cash flow from operating activities			
Cash used by operations	20	(230,779)	(771,856)
Net cash flow from operating activities		(230,779)	(771,856)
Cash flow from investing activities			
Payments for short term deposits		(3,643)	(103,529)
Investment income and interest received		45,502	70,551
Payments to acquire tangible fixed assets	11	-	(1,423)
Net cash flow from investing activities		41,859	(34,401)
Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents	21	(188,920)	(806,257)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	21	2,027,212	2,833,469
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	21	1,838,292	2,027,212

The notes on pages 46 to 63 form part of the financial statements.



Notes to the Financial Statements

Notes to the Financial Statements

1. Accounting Policies

a) General information and basis of preparation

The Brilliant Club is a company limited by guarantee in the United Kingdom. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 72 of these financial statements. The nature of the charity's operations and principal activities are set out on pages 14 to 28.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Companies Act 2006 and UK Generally Accepted Practice.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

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

b) Going concern

The Trustees have assessed whether the use of the going concern assumption is appropriate in preparing these financial statements. The Trustees have made this assessment in respect to a period of at least one year from the date of approval of these financial statements.

The Trustees have considered several factors in concluding that the adoption of the going concern basis in the preparation of these financial statements is appropriate.

These have included:

- The level of reserves held.
- The expected level of income and expenditure for the 2025/26 financial year.
- Cash management to mitigate potential risks of late payment by suppliers and funders and that restricted grants are being appropriately managed.
- The impact of inflation on the charity.

c) Judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

Accounting estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

Key judgements that the charity has made which have a significant effect on the accounts include:

- Estimating the useful economic lives of tangible fixed assets for the purpose of determining the annual depreciation charge. The annual depreciation charge for tangible assets is sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on technological advancement, future investments, economic utilisation and physical condition of the assets. See note 11 for the carrying amount of the tangible fixed assets and note 1.J for the useful economic lives for each class of assets.
- Estimating the value to the charity of gifts in kind provided by third parties. The charity has made the judgement that for any donated services or goods that they would not be willing or able to pay on the open market for an alternative item that would provide a benefit to the charity equivalent to the donated item, then these gifts are to be valued in the financial statements at £nil. For all remaining donated services or goods, the contribution is to be included in the financial statements as both income and expenditure at its estimated fair value based on the value of the contribution to the charity, unless that estimated fair value is a trivial amount.
- Estimating the value of income to be recognised in respect of ongoing projects. The charity recognises all grant income without performance related conditions under donations and legacies. For grants which have performance conditions attached, these are recognised within income from charitable activities.

d) Legal status

The Brilliant Club is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of a winding up is limited to £1.

e) Funds accounting

Restricted funds – these are funds which can only be used for specific restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Designated funds – these are funds which have been set aside by the Board of Trustees to be used for specific projects as outlined in the notes to the financial statements.

Unrestricted general funds – these are funds which can be used in accordance with the charitable objects at the discretion of the Trustees.

f) Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably, and it is probable that the income will be received. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Donation income including grants, sponsorship and donations is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable. Grants, where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.
- Gifts in kind - Where goods or services are provided to the charity as a donation that would normally be purchased from suppliers, this contribution is included in the financial statements as both income and expenditure at its estimated fair value based on the value of the contribution to the charity.
- Income from charitable activities includes income from performance fees received under contract, and specific grants which have performance conditions attached. Income included within this category received in advance for activities taking place in future periods are deferred until the income recognition criteria are met. Income is recognised where there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.
- All trading income is represented by rental, licence, sponsorship and other trading income and is included in the accounts for the period it relates to.

g) Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Expenditure is recognised where there is a legal or constructive obligation to make payments to third parties, it is probable that the settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. The irrecoverable element of VAT is included with the item of expense to which it relates. It is categorised under the following headings:

- Costs of raising funds are those costs incurred in attracting donation income.
- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

h) Support costs allocation

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly represent charitable activities and include office costs, governance costs, administrative and payroll costs. They are incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charity and include project management carried out at Headquarters. Costs relating to a particular activity are allocated directly; others are apportioned on an appropriate basis, for example, time spent, per capita or floor area.

i) Taxation

The charitable company is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part II Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

j) Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives as follows:

Computer equipment – 33% on cost

Computer equipment costing more than £500 is capitalised, where it has an expected useful life of at least three years.

k) Debtors

Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid. Accrued income is measured at the amount due to be received.

l) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term, highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

m) Short term deposits

Short term deposits include investments and bank deposits with a maturity of more than three months but less than one year from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

n) Creditors

Creditors are recognised when there is a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Other creditors and accruals are recognised at their settlement amount due.

o) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

p) Leases

Rentals payable and receivable under operating leases are charged to the SoFA on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

q) Pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution group personal pension scheme for employees. Contributions by the charity in respect of the pension scheme are charged to the SoFA in the period in which they are payable, in accordance with FRS 102.

2A. Income from Donations and Legacies

2024-25

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2025 £
Grants	697,500	300,694	998,194
Donations	16,192	53,840	70,032
Total grants and donations receivable	713,692	354,534	1,068,226

2023-24

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2024 £
Grants	709,876	334,646	1,044,522
Donations	21,158	35,235	56,393
Legacies	-	24,000	24,000
Total grants and donations receivable	731,034	393,881	1,124,915

2B. Income from Gift in Kind

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Gift in Kind income	6,477	6,477	-	-
Total grants and donations receivable	6,477	6,477	-	-

3. Income from Charitable Activities

2024-25

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2025 £
The Scholars Programme	3,214,914	-	3,214,914
Student Success Projects	11,210	-	11,210
Join the Dots Programme	71,610	-	71,610
Access Projects	259,263	-	259,263
Communities Programme	277,420	130,063	407,483
Fundraising – Performance-related	-	152,076	152,076
Brilliant Consulting	326,982	-	326,982
Total	4,161,399	282,139	4,443,538

2023-24

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2024 £
The Scholars Programme	3,299,665	-	3,299,665
Student Success Projects	71,848	-	71,848
Join the Dots Programme	45,200	-	45,200
Access Projects	343,430	-	343,430
Communities Programme	234,622	-	234,622
Fundraising – Performance-related	-	205,799	205,799
Brilliant Consulting	259,250	-	259,250
Total	4,254,015	205,799	4,459,814

4. Income from Trading Activities

	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Rental income	-	-	20,581	20,581
Other trading income	32,202	32,202	2,650	2,650
Total	32,202	32,202	23,231	23,231

5. Expenditure

2024-25

	Staff costs (note 9) £	Direct costs £	Support costs (note 6) £	Total costs 2025 £
Raising funds				
Fundraising costs	361,681	3,241	12,326	377,248
The Scholars Programme	3,490,867	238,695	508,969	4,238,531
Access Projects	403,012	9,729	43,985	456,726
Student Success Projects	30,295	68	6,284	36,647
Communities Programme	400,822	30,298	37,701	468,821
Join the Dots Programme	138,332	4,134	12,567	155,033
Brilliant Consulting	164,382	359	18,851	183,592
Total charitable activities	4,627,710	283,283	628,357	5,539,350
Total expenditure	4,989,391	286,524	640,683	5,916,598

2023-24

	Staff costs (note 9) £	Direct costs £	Support costs (note 6) £	Total costs 2024 £
Raising funds				
Fundraising costs	219,051	3,055	14,663	236,769
The Scholars Programme	3,837,094	280,873	504,251	4,622,218
Student Success Projects	123,164	1,172	12,299	136,635
Join the Dots Programme	102,979	4,326	6,149	113,454
Access Projects	547,928	15,648	49,195	612,771
Communities Programme	399,242	16,999	36,896	453,137
Brilliant Consulting	112,652	23,972	6,149	142,773
Total charitable activities	5,123,059	342,990	614,939	6,080,988
Total expenditure	5,342,110	346,045	629,602	6,317,757

6. Support Costs

2024-25

	Fundraising costs £	Charitable activities £	Total costs 2025 £
Governance (note 7)	-	73,953	73,953
Depreciation	109	4,835	4,944
Office costs	6,516	289,667	296,183
HR & other staff costs	1,356	60,270	61,626
Information technology costs	2,805	124,714	127,519
Travel	994	44,169	45,163
Gift in Kind	-	6,477	6,477
Other	546	24,272	24,818
Total governance and support costs	12,326	628,357	640,683

2023-24

	Fundraising costs £	Charitable activities £	Total costs 2024 £
Governance (note 7)	-	43,030	43,030
Depreciation	223	8,707	8,930
Office costs	7,207	281,080	288,287
HR & other staff costs	1,679	65,487	67,166
Information technology costs	3,283	128,054	131,337
Travel	1,522	59,376	60,898
Other	749	29,205	29,954
Total governance and support costs	14,663	614,939	629,602

7. Governance Costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Auditor's remuneration – statutory audit	18,840	17,940
Auditor's remuneration – other services	2,190	4,200
Consultancy fees	19,908	-
Other professional fees	33,015	20,890
Total	73,953	43,030

8. Trustees’ Remuneration and Benefits

None of the Trustees received emoluments or were reimbursed expenses during the year (2024: £nil).

9. Staff Costs and Key Management Personnel

	2025	2024
Employee numbers during the year were:		
Average number of staff employed by the charity	95	114
Average number of tutors employed by the charity	270	233
Employee costs during the year were:		
	£	£
Salaries and wages	4,347,926	4,677,332
Employer's NI	419,511	427,110
Employer's pension	221,954	237,668
Total	4,989,391	5,342,110

Tutors are part-time doctoral or postdoctoral researchers that deliver the programmes and projects.

Included in the salaries and wages amount for 2025 are redundancy and termination payments totalling £40,356 (2024 – £nil).

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) during the year between:

	2025	2024
£60,000 - £69,999	3	3
£70,000 - £79,999	3	2
£80,000 - £89,999	2	2
£90,000 - £99,999	2	1
£100,000 - £109,999	-	1

During 2025, the key management personnel of the charity comprised of the Trustees and the Executive Leadership Team (as listed on page 73 of the financial statements). The total employee benefits of the Executive Leadership Team of the charity were £601,007 (2024 - £654,331). As per note 8, the Trustees received no employee benefits.

10. Net Income for the Year

	2025 £	2024 £
This is stated after charging		
Auditor's remuneration		
- For audit	18,840	17,760
- For other services	2,190	3,150
Rental payments under operating leases	254,839	200,422
Depreciation	4,944	16,322

11. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Computer equipment £
Cost	
As at 1 August 2024	71,453
Additions	-
Disposals	(1,223)
As at 31 July 2025	70,230
Depreciation	
As at 1 August 2024	65,324
Charge for year	4,944
Disposals	(1,223)
As at 31 July 2025	69,045
Net book value at 31 July 2025	1,185
At 31 July 2024	6,129

12. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade debtors	333,163	337,002
Prepayments	56,395	82,369
Other debtors	38,770	37,645
Total	428,328	457,016

13. Creditors

Creditors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	16,499	31,676
Accrued expenses	79,933	85,157
Deferred income (note 14)	330,525	224,610
Other payables	78,301	62,071
Total	505,258	403,514

14. Deferred Income

	2025 £	2024 £
Balance at 1 August	224,610	186,346
Amount released to incoming resources	(209,465)	(176,656)
Amount deferred in year	315,380	214,920
Balance as at 31 July	330,525	224,610

The deferred income includes revenue that was invoiced in the 2024/25 financial year but relates to activities for future periods.

15. Restricted Funds

2024-25

	Balance 1 August 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance 31 July 2025 £
IT Development fund	-	31,250	(31,250)	-
The Scholars Programme fund	121,691	311,590	(406,867)	26,414
Student Success fund	44,000	25,000	(44,000)	25,000
Communities fund	-	165,139	(83,391)	81,748
Fivefields	84,726	103,694	(102,008)	86,412
Total	250,417	636,673	(667,516)	219,574

2023-24

	Balance 1 August 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance 31 July 2024 £
IT Development fund	53,207	15,945	(69,152)	-
The Scholars Programme fund	87,654	364,314	(330,277)	121,691
Student Success fund	-	67,750	(23,750)	44,000
Research and Impact fund	-	50,000	(50,000)	-
Fivefields	-	101,671	(16,945)	84,726
Total	140,861	599,680	(490,124)	250,417

IT Development fund: Funding received to support digital transformation at the charity, including the development of the charity’s Virtual Learning Environment and other technological improvements.

The Scholars Programme fund: Funding to contribute towards costs for The Scholars Programme, which may be for a specific geographical area, pupil age group, subject area or academic year.

Student Success fund: Funding to contribute towards costs for student success activities including the Join the Dots programme.

Communities fund: Funding to contribute towards the costs for the Parent Power programme.

Fivefields: Funding received to contribute towards costs of Head Office accommodation in London.

Research and Impact fund: Funding received to support the charity’s research and impact work.

16. Unrestricted Funds

2024-25

	Balance 1 August 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance 31 July 2025 £
General funds	1,539,955	4,959,272	(5,099,082)	-	1,400,145
Designated funds					
Strategic Fund	400,000	-	(150,000)	-	250,000
Total designated funds	400,000	-	(150,000)	-	250,000
Total unrestricted funds	1,939,955	4,959,272	(5,249,082)	-	1,650,145

The designated funds represent money set aside to meet the charity's working capital requirements as it implements its strategy for 2021-2026.

2023-24

	Balance 1 August 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance 31 July 2024 £
General funds	1,588,757	5,078,831	(5,127,633)	-	1,539,955
Designated funds					
Strategic Fund	1,100,000	-	(700,000)	-	400,000
Total designated funds	1,100,000	-	(700,000)	-	400,000
Total unrestricted funds	2,688,757	5,078,831	(5,827,633)	-	1,939,955

17. Allocation of Net Assets Between Funds

2024-25

The funds of the charity are represented by the following net assets:

	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	1,185	-	-	1,185
Current assets	1,904,218	250,000	219,574	2,373,792
Current liabilities	(505,258)	-	-	(505,258)
Total	1,400,145	250,000	219,574	1,869,719

2023-24

The funds of the charity are represented by the following net assets:

	Unrestricted funds £	Designated funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	6,129	-	-	6,129
Current assets	1,937,340	400,000	250,417	2,587,757
Current liabilities	(403,514)	-	-	(403,514)
Total	1,539,955	400,000	250,417	2,190,372

18. Leases

The charity had total commitments under operating leases as follows:

	2025	2024
	Property £	Property £
Within one year	226,333	215,027
Between one and five years	172,824	372,794
Total	399,157	587,821

19. Related Parties

Income of £5,425 (2024 - £5,292) was received from partner schools belonging to Compass Education Trust during the year ended 31 July 2025, where a Trustee of the charity, Dr Josephine Valentine, is also a Trustee.

Income of £19,652 (2024 - £21,578) was received from partner schools belonging to Danes Educational Trust during the year ended 31 July 2025, where a Trustee of the charity, Dr Josephine Valentine, is the CEO and also a Trustee.

Income of £2,779 (2024 - £5,292) was received from partner schools belonging to Exceed Learning Partnership during the year ended 31 July 2025, where a Trustee of the charity, Rob Carpenter, was a Director during the year.

Income of £13,895 (2024 - £18,186) was received from partner schools belonging to Haberdashers' Academies Trust South during the year ended 31 July 2025, where a member of the Executive Leadership Team of the charity, Sabrina Luisi, is a Trustee. At the balance sheet date, £2,779 (2024 - £nil) was due from the charity to one of the partner schools, which had paid in advance for programme activity due to take place in the forthcoming financial year.

Income of £21,560 (2024 - £27,270) was received from partner schools belonging to Middlesex Learning Trust during the year ended 31 July 2025, where a Trustee of the charity, Pawan Dhir, is also a Trustee.

Income of £307,989 (2024 - £218,461) was received from the member institutions of the University of London during the year ended 31 July 2025, where a Trustee of the charity, Pawan Dhir, is also a Trustee. At the balance sheet date, £68,342 (2024 - £63,999) was due to the charity from member institutions of the University of London.

A donation of £500 was received from one Trustee of the charity during the year ended 31 July 2025 (2024 - £330 received from one Trustee).

Other than those stated above, no amounts were outstanding at the balance sheet date for 2025 or 2024.

20. Reconciliation of Net Income to Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities

	2025 £	2024 £
Net expenditure for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	(320,653)	(639,246)
Adjustments for:		
Investment income and interest received	(45,502)	(70,551)
Depreciation charges	4,944	8,930
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	28,688	(53,371)
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	101,744	(17,618)
Net cash provided by operating activities	(230,779)	(771,856)

21. Analysis of Changes in Net Debt

2024-25

	At 1 August 2024 £	Cash Flows £	At 31 July 2025 £
Cash at bank and in hand	2,027,212	(188,920)	1,838,292
Total	2,027,212	(188,920)	1,838,292

2023-24

	At 1 August 2023 £	Cash Flows £	At 31 July 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	2,833,469	(806,257)	2,027,212
Total	2,833,469	(806,257)	2,027,212



**Independent Auditor's
Report to the Trustees and
Members of The Brilliant Club**

Independent Auditor’s Report to the Trustees and Members of The Brilliant Club

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Brilliant Club (the ‘charitable company’) for the year ended 31 July 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows, the principal accounting policies and the notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 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 charitable company’s affairs as at 31 July 2025 and of its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

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 charitable company 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 charitable company’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 trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor’s report thereon. 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 is also the directors’ report for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the trustees’ report, which is also the directors’ report for the purposes of company law, 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 charitable company 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 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- proper and 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;
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies’ exemptions in preparing the trustees’ report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company 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 charitable company'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 charitable company 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:

Our approach to identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, was as follows:

- the engagement partner ensured that the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- we obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks that are applicable to the charitable company and determined that the most significant frameworks which are directly relevant to specific assertions in the financial statements are those that relate to the reporting framework (Statement of Recommended Practice Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing this accounts in accordance with the Financial reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the Companies Act 2006), those legislative frameworks that relate to data protection (General Data Protection Regulation) and those in relation to safeguarding.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charitable company's financial statements to material misstatement, including obtaining an understanding of how fraud might occur, by:

- making enquiries of management as to their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud; and
- considering the internal controls in place to mitigate risks of fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations.

To address the risk of fraud through management bias and override of controls we:

- performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships; and
 - tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions; and
 - assessed whether the judgements and the assumptions made in determining accounting estimates for the recognition of income and the valuation of gifts in kind were indicative of potential bias.
- In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, we designed procedures which included, but were not limited to:
- reading the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance; and
 - enquiring of management as to actual and potential litigation and claims.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and to the charity's trustees as a body, in accordance with Section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company'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 charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Buzacott Audit LLP

Catherine Biscoe (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Buzzacott Audit LLP, Statutory Auditor
130 Wood Street
London
EC2V 6DL

Date: 30 January 2026

Buzzacott Audit LLP is eligible to act as an auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.



Trustees	Dr Josephine Valentine OBE	Chief Executive Officer	Anne-Marie Canning MBE (resigned 15 September 2025)
	Robert Carpenter (appointed 14 October 2024)	Chief Operating Officer	Leanne Adamson
	Rita Chudasama (appointed 14 October 2024)	Interim Chief Operating Officer	Dr Matt Plen (resigned 20 September 2024)
	Hannah Chukwu	Chief Programmes and Communities Officer	Susie Whigham (Interim CEO from 1 January 2025)
	Cara Cinnamon	Chief Impact and Strategy Officer	Dr Lauren Bellaera (resigned 18 July 2025)
	Sir Ivor Crewe	Chief Digital Officer	Nikki Labrum (Interim CPCO from 6 January 2025)
	Pawan Dhir	Chief Engagement Officer	Sabrina Luisi
	Jonathan Ferguson		
	Dominic Herrington		
	Paul Kearns (appointed 14 October 2024)		
Charity Registration Number	Jonathan Keil (appointed 14 October 2024)		
	Adriana Selage		
	John Timothy (resigned 4 September 2024)		
Scottish Charity Registration Number	1147771		
Company Registration Number	SC048774		
Registered Office	07986971 (England and Wales)		
Auditor	Fivefields 8-10 Grosvenor Gardens London, SW1W 0DH		
Banker	Buzzacott Audit LLP 130 Wood Street London, EC2V 6DL		
Solicitor	HSBC Bank 17 Gerrard Street London, W1D 6HB		
	Mills & Reeve LLP 24 King William Street London, EC4R 9AT		
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Registered charity no: 1147771 (England and Wales) SC048774 (Scotland)

The Brilliant Club is a company limited by
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