



**Odyssey Collaborative Trust  
Annual Report to School Communities  
2022**



## Who we are

Odyssey Collaborative Trust was formed in 2019 to provide opportunities for collaboration, support and challenge among schools in Derby, while allowing each school to retain its identity and accountability to its local community.



We educate 2,409 pupils.



We are responsible for around £13.5m of public money.



We employ 363 colleagues.

We have seven schools in our trust...

						
Asterdale Primary	Beaufort Primary	Borrow Wood Primary	Cherry Tree Hill Primary	Oakwood Juniors	Portway Juniors	Springfield Primary
Joined March 2019	Joined April 2019	Joined March 2019	Joined April 2019	Joined April 2021	Joined April 2019	Joined March 2019
238 pupils	299 pupils	346 pupils	631 pupils	345 pupils	339 pupils	338 pupils
Headteacher: David Evans	Headteacher: Carla Dewberry	Headteacher: Zoe Fletcher	Headteacher: Paul Appleton	Headteacher: CT Atwal	Executive head: David Blackwell Head of School: Emma Wilkinson	Executive head: David Blackwell Head of School: Jane Joyce

## Why we are writing this report

Odyssey Collaborative Trust was formed to provide opportunities for collaboration, support and challenge for the schools of Derby, while allowing each school to retain its identity and accountability to its local community. An important part of this is being transparent in the way we work and answerable to the communities we serve.

Much of this report is based on our annual accounts. Academy trusts are highly accountable, more so than maintained schools owing to the publication of the annual accounts. The accounts are long, detailed documents designed to ensure compliance with the requirements placed on academy trusts, rather than be read by wide audience. This document highlights key messages from our annual accounts and also provides further details that are less financially centric. Unlike our accountability to the government, there is no legal requirement surrounding accountability to our local communities, but as a trust we think this is of equal importance and so we hope as many people as possible read this report. The accounts are also worth reading and can be found on [our website](#).

A few notes on this report: This report contains rounded, figures (to the nearest thousand, or for larger amounts, to the nearest hundred thousand). The annual accounts cover the academy financial year (September through to August), but some of the information in this document also refers to events since then. **Ian Dewes, CEO, Odyssey Collaborative Trust**

## Governance

To provide added assurance, an academy trust has several layers of governance. At the top of the structure are the **Members** who check that the Board of Trustees are carrying out their duties. The **Board of Trustees** are ultimately responsible for the activities of the schools in the trust.

Members	Trustees
Mark Needham (Chair)	Claire Brown (Chair)
Krishna Naidu	Sue Pringle
Rev. Robert Atkins	Dr. Sarah Charles
Dr. Alison Hardman	Mike Moore
Arron Anderson	Tom Clay
	Gareth Allen
	James Wright
	Jane Green
	Jessica Barker

Trustees write a Scheme of Delegation which sets out what they do and what activities are delegated to others. Some are delegated to the **Trust Central Team** which includes myself, the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Finance Officer and the Chief Operations Officer.

Trust Central team
Ian Dewes, Chief Executive Officer
Jo Bunting, Chief Finance Officer
Anita Breeze, Chief Operations Officer
Karen Windsor, Senior Administration and Finance Officer

Some activities are delegated to each school's **headteacher** or **Local Governing Board**. These people are focused on one of the trust's individual schools, while the Trust Central Team work across the seven schools. Each Local Governing Board has a chairperson and meet regularly:

	Chair of Local Governing Board
Asterdale	Evonne Williams
Beaufort	Marion Close
Borrow Wood	Christine Merrick
Cherry Tree	Gareth Allen
Oakwood	Rose Richmond
Portway	Elizabeth Dark
Springfield	James Wooley

At the time of writing, the trust's Scheme of Delegation was being reviewed following an externally-led review of governance, something which all trusts are expected to do every three years.

## Education

Our aim is for all pupils to experience excellent standards of education. While COVID has been a considerable distraction from day-to-day work of school improvement, there has still been a focus on making improvements where necessary.

The following actions have taken place:

- Leadership networks reintroduced, following a hiatus caused by COVID, where groups of staff across the trust who have the same role meet for mutual support and sharing of ideas.
- A new external school improvement partner has been appointed to provide additional expertise and advice.
- Resumption (again, following a break caused by COVID) of School Performance Reviews. These are termly visits to each school where advice is offered by the school improvement partner, other headteachers and myself on how a school can improve.
- Professional development courses for school leaders including access to the revised National Professional Qualifications and training on evaluation of school performance.
- A range of different activities have taken place to enable pupils to learn at home at a time when COVID has restricted access to schools. This varies from school to school, but commonly IT hardware has been given out to particular pupils, other learning resources have been shared, online resources prepared and visits to some families' homes have been carried out.



Keeping children safe is a vital part of the work of the trust.

- We have introduced termly safeguarding reviews across the trust's schools.
- All schools have continued to complete Derby Local Authority's annual audit of safeguarding and improvements identified have been planned and, in many cases, made already.
- There has been a new system of reporting to trustees introduced, so that those with overall responsibility for the safety of pupil have clearer assurance that all that can be done in this area is being done.
- In a small number of cases where concerns have been identified about a certain child's experiences at home, school leaders have worked hard to liaise with the relevant authorities to ensure that child is protected.



*Pupils at Oakwood with their Peace Doves – part of an art installation at Derby Cathedral.*

- The trust has been revising the process for recruiting staff in order to ensure that we are compliant with national requirements and good practise.

One of the main ways schools are judged is through OFSTED inspections. No schools have been inspected recently, with the pandemic leading to a delay in the inspection cycle. The most recent inspections are as follows:

	OFSTED grade	Date of inspection
Asterdale	Good	September 2018
Beaufort	Good	October 2017
Borrow Wood	Requires improvement	March 2017
Cherry Tree Hill	Good	May 2018
Oakwood	Good	January 2018
Portway	Good	July 2017
Springfield	Good	May 2018

While Borrow Wood’s last inspection had an outcome of ‘requires improvement’, the trust believes it currently offers a good level of education and are confident this will be reflected in the next inspection. This view has been verified by external experts.



*An Easter tradition at Asterdale - the annual Easter Bonnets and egg decorating competition.*

## Community Links

Odyssey Collaborative Trust was set up with a focus specifically on the pupils and families of Derby. Each school has built strong links with local organisations and the Trust encourages these links. Through such relationships we are able to root ourselves in the work and needs of the communities our schools serve.

Some examples include:

**Local charities** such as Spondon Relief, the Padley Centre and food banks, both those in our community and in our schools.

**Cultural organisations** such as Derby Book Festival, Hot House Music School, Chaddesdon Historical Group, Key Strings, Derby Dance Works and a range of libraries local to our school.

**Emergency services** such as local Police Community Support Officers and the fire service at Nottingham Road.

Organisations which promote **sports and healthy lifestyles** such as Cycle Derby, Derby Sports Partnership and Derby County Community Trust,

**Educational organisations** such as Our Future Derby, Derby University as well as secondary schools are pupils go to and our feeder nurseries and infant schools

**East Midlands Chamber of Commerce and local businesses** such as Rolls Royce, Celenese, JCB, Asda, Severn Trent Water, CEVA,

**Care homes for the elderly** such as Laurels Nursing Home, Willowcroft Residential Home, Tree Tops Hospice

**Religious organisations** such as St. Werburgh's Church, Derby Open Centre and St. Mary's Church, Chaddesdon.



*Community litter pick with Springfield pupils.*



*Pupils from Beaufort at Derby Museum and Art Gallery learning about the paintings of Joseph Wright.*

## Finance

Our [annual accounts](#) detail key figures relating to the finances of the trust for year leading up to the end of August 2021. Rounded figures are as follows:

### Money we have received:

- Total incoming resources were £17,800,000. This includes the money the government gives us to operate the schools, some additional money to improve some of the school buildings, plus the value of Oakwood Junior School's land and buildings after they joined the trust. The annual amount 'usual' income is £13,500,000.
- The Trust was successful in bidding for £2,700,000 to improve the school buildings.

### Money we have spent:

- Total expenditure was £13,500,000.
- As is the case in all schools, staffing costs were the highest expenditure. Total staff costs (including pension costs and staff training) were £10,600,000. With a new school joining the trust (Oakwood) our staff number has increased by 38.
- There have been some academy trusts where there have been controversies over the pay of the Chief Executive Officer. At Odyssey Collaborative Trust there are rigorous processes in place to ensure salaries are proportionate and lower than the sector average, meaning the trust's central leadership costs are kept to a minimum.
- Following successful bids to improve the school buildings, the following amounts were spent on each school:
  - o New roofing and boiler for Asterdale Primary (£270,000)
  - o A new roof for Beaufort Primary (£970,000)
  - o New windows for Beaufort Primary (£87,000)
  - o Refurbishment of the roof at Cherry Tree Hill Primary (£1,100,000)
  - o New windows for Springfield Primary (£180,000)
  - o Improvements in fire safety at Oakwood Juniors (£80,000)

It is important that our schools have some money in reserve, but not too much, as the money should be spent on pupils' education. The main source of funding for each school is called the General Allocation Grant and we aim for each school to have between 5% and 8% of the sum in reserve. Some of our schools currently exceed this amount, so we are looking to spend more money in 2022.

Each school receives the following services from the central trust team:

Support from the central team members: CFO for finance; COO for site, buildings, health and safety and policies; CEO for school improvement, governance and general	Access to National Professional Qualifications for staff and paid for non-contact time to allow staff to make the most of the professional development
Auditors who give assurance that the trust's finances are sound	Support for writing SEF and SIP, Pupil premium and sports funding documents
Trade Union Facilities time and negotiations with unions on relevant matters	Policy management with the majority of statutory policies written for the school
Pension and actuary costs	Headteacher performance management

It also includes the cost of the following services purchased by the Trust on behalf of schools:

Management Information System (RM Integris)	Education Welfare Officer (currently procured from Derby)
Writing, securing and project managing bids for capital improvements (Edisons)	Finance system and support (Access for Education)
Budget planner (Access for Education)	Annual subscription to the School Bus
Data Protection Officer (John Walker). This includes help with any subject access data requests	Property support & helpdesk (Strictly Education) – does not include the cost of repairs/maintenance but invoices are paid directly to supplier at cost with no management fee
Online training (National College)	Free School Meal checking service (Link2ICT)
NGA gold package and GovernorHub	Payroll system (Derby City Council)

In addition to the services listed above the Central Team provide the following support and advice:

Monthly budget monitoring reports and regular finance meetings	Headteacher and leadership network meetings
Training on new finance & budget systems	Attendance at termly Health & Safety and property services visits if required
Fortnightly SBM support meetings covering Health & Safety, Safeguarding, HR, Finance	Budget planning

All academy trusts must have their finances independently audited each year. Our auditors are UHY Hacker Young and they have reviewed the financial activities of the trust in detail. They have given assurance that the trust’s accounts meet all the laws and regulations they are obliged to meet. They have written a formal report as part of the Trust’s full annual report. In this they must report if they have any concerns over the Trust’s accounts. They had nothing to report in this area.



As is the case with all academy trusts, as CEO I also have the role of accounting officer. This is a role particular to academies which provides assurances that the money given to the trust is used appropriately. As accounting officer, I am personally responsible to parliament for the use of financial resources. As part of the external audit process, UHY Hacker Young checked that money is being used appropriately.

As well as external auditors, all academy trusts are required to undergo an internal audit process. While this can be carried out by the trust’s own staff, as an additional level of scrutiny, the trust have chosen to use an external audit firm for this purpose. Smith Cooper were employed to carry out a series of checks and their findings were shared with the trust’s central team and the Board of Trustees.

*Thank you for your interest in Odyssey Collaborative Trust. I hope you have found this report useful. For more information visit our website or contact us at [enquiries@odysseyct.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@odysseyct.org.uk).*

*Ian Dewes, June 2022*