



THINKING
SCHOOLS
ACADEMY TRUST

Impact Report 2023 - 2024






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The content provided in this report is to highlight some key updates from the Thinking Schools Academy Trust for the 2023/2024 academic year. While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained herein, we apologise for any errors, omissions, or changes in the content. Readers are advised to consult with Thinking Creative on any questions or concerns regarding this report at admin@thinking-creative.com



“None of what has been
achieved within the past year
would have taken place
without the excellent work of
our school staff and specialist
teams across Thinking
Solutions for Education.”

Stuart Gardner
Chief Executive Officer
Thinking Schools Academy Trust

“I firmly believe our work truly makes a difference”



Welcome by Stuart Gardner
Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to the Thinking Schools Academy Trust's Impact Report for 2024. As a growing Multi-Academy Trust, I am incredibly proud of the achievements across our schools and within the regions we serve.

Our mission is to Transform Life Chances and provide the thousands of pupils across our schools with the best opportunities to succeed at life, regardless of their circumstances.

None of what has been achieved within the past year, which you will read more about within this report, would have taken place without the excellent work of our school staff and specialist teams across Thinking Solutions for Education.

The work of all members of staff to uphold our value of being Child First is remarkable and I thank everyone for their contribution.

Throughout the year, we had the pleasure of developing our relationships with Colchester Royal Grammar School in Essex, Paignton Academy, Lodestar Academy, Kings

Ash Academy and Curledge Street Academy within Devon, all of whom joined us within the last academic year.

These schools are now well embedded into our way of working and the metacognitive approach we have to teaching and learning, using thinking tools to help pupils to think about their thinking and become lifelong learners.

Across Thinking Schools Academy Trust, we remain committed to improving our teaching and learning curriculum to align with the needs of our children and young learners.

To further enhance our school improvement vision, our Education Strategy Team consisting of Trust experts, continue to be dedicated to offering comprehensive support to our schools.

They have been instrumental in working with our leadership teams to deliver a robust structure for quality assurance, and continue to focus on working collaboratively with school

teams on improving curriculum, driving positive outcomes for all our pupils.

As Chief Executive Officer, I firmly believe our work truly makes a difference to the life chances of others and the communities we serve.

The work to achieve this can be seen across our website, especially our latest news section, so I invite you to look back on some of the wonderful milestones there.

But, for now, I'm looking forward to seeing more positive outcomes and accomplishments across our trust, some of which you will see throughout the pages on this report.

Enjoy your read!

The Thinking Schools Academy Trust's Portfolio

26
Schools

16,000
Students

**Over
2,000**
Staff

£100m+
Charity

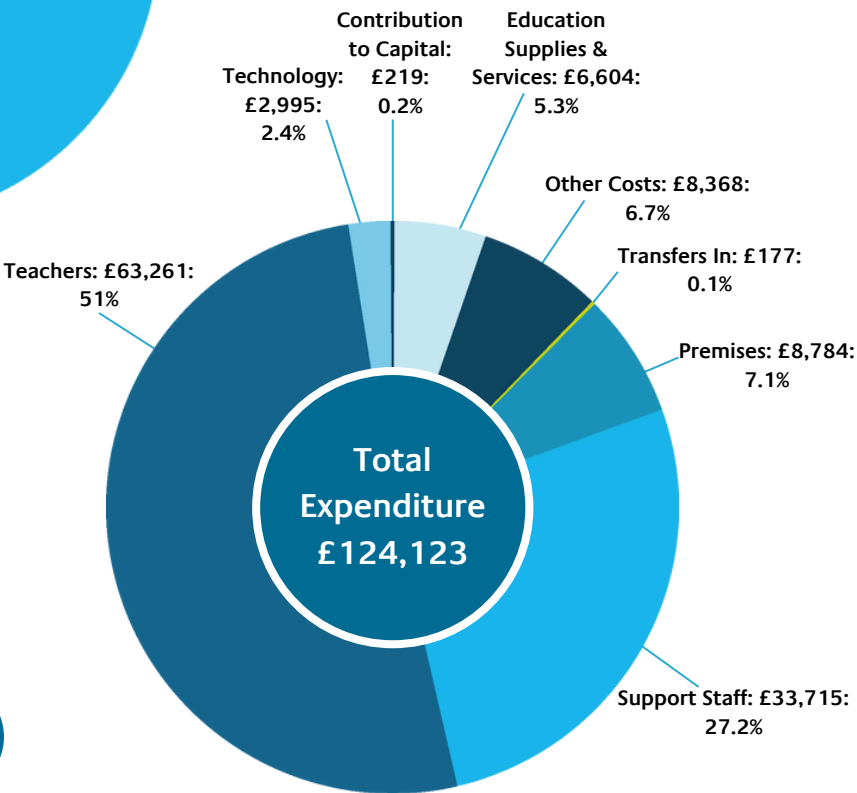
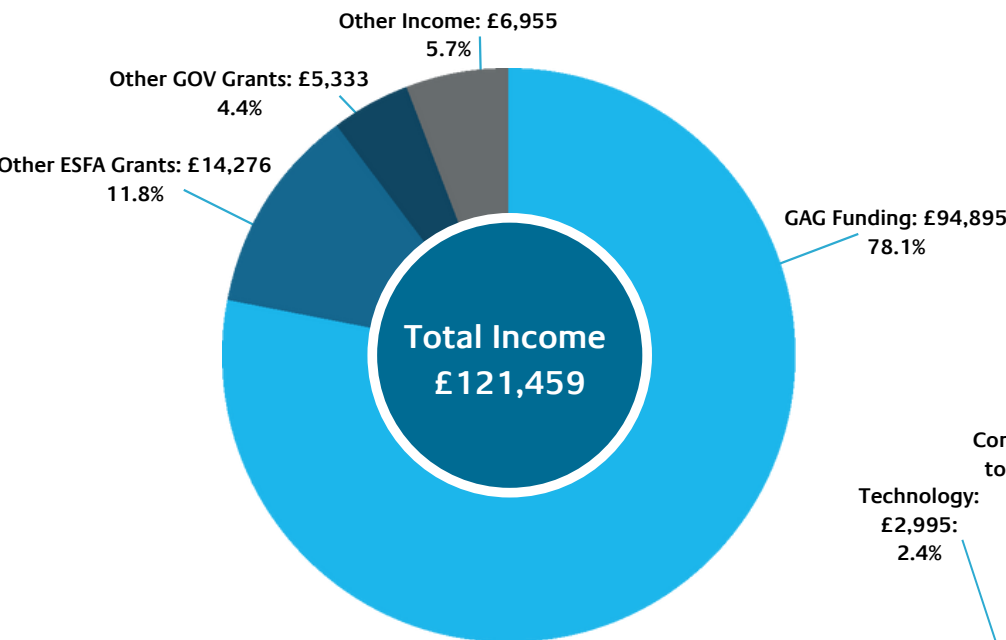
**Across
300**
Miles

**Leading
every
type of
school**

Balance Sheet Summary

	£000	£000
Fixed assets		194,388
Current assets		
Cast at bank and in hand	12,774	
Other current assets	4,008	
	16,782	
Creditors due <1 year	9,905	
Net current assets		<u>6,877</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		20,1265
Creditors due > 1 year		78
Pension liability		817
Total net assets		<u>200,370</u>
Funds of the Trust		
Restricted funds:		
Fixed asset funds	196,501	
Restricted income funds	757	
Pension reserve	(817)	
	<u></u>	
Total restricted funds		196,441
Unrestricted income funds		3,929
Total funds		<u>200,370</u>

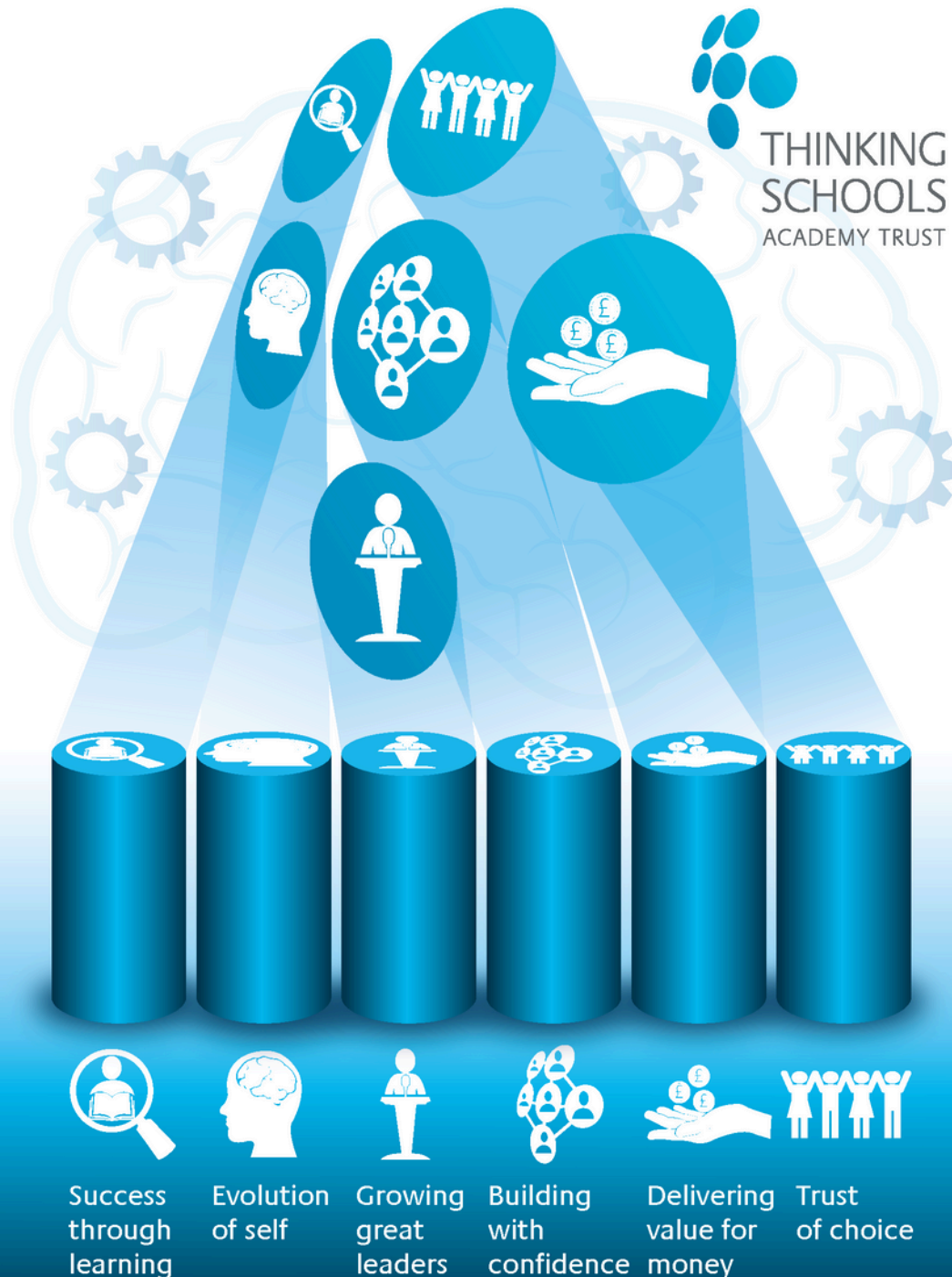
Income and expenditure summary (£000s)




Deficit
£2,664



THINKING
SCHOOLS
ACADEMY TRUST



A young man with dark, wavy hair and black-rimmed glasses is smiling at the camera. He is wearing a grey school blazer over a white collared shirt and a dark blue tie. A blue ribbon is draped around his neck. The background is a blurred classroom setting with shelves and posters. The entire image has a semi-transparent blue overlay.

“It’s humbling to witness
the work taking place to
transform the life chances of
the young people in our
care.”

Gerard Newman
Chair of the Board of Trustees
Thinking Schools Academy Trust

“It’s humbling to witness the work to transform lives”



Message by Gerard Newman
Chair of the TSAT Board

This past year has continued to be incredibly busy for our schools across the Thinking Schools Academy Trust.

As the Chair of the Board of Trustees, I am fortunate to work both across our schools with leaders and staff, as well as directly with our trustees and governors.

The passion and dedication I have witnessed from staff across all levels within every school and region has been extraordinary.

It’s humbling to witness the work taking place to transform the life chances of the young people in our care.

Within the past year, I have seen many examples of teams being united in their commitment to having a positive impact on the lives of all our young people, regardless of their individual circumstances.

Last year, I wrote of my delight in welcoming Colchester Royal Grammar School, Paignton Academy, Kings Ash Academy, Curledge Street

Academy and Lodestar Academy into our Multi Academy Trust.

They have settled into the Thinking Schools Academy Trust well, and I look forward to seeing how we continue to work together, and learn from their expertise.

The educational landscape is – as always, ever-changing, and our schools continue to face challenges amid rising living costs and ongoing uncertainty surrounding the funding of public services.

At the time of writing, we have a relatively new government with plans to reform elements of education, so together with my fellow Trustees and Governors, we will closely monitor proposals and developments, and will support leaders across our Trust where needed when we have clarity of what is to come.

Nonetheless, and despite the challenging period that education is experiencing, I would like to give a heartfelt “thank you” all our staff for

their perseverance and drive to ensure the pupils we serve continue to receive the best education and care that we can give them.

In expressing my gratitude, I would also like to thank Trustees, Directors, and our Governors for their unwavering commitment to deliver on our values and supporting every member of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust community.

Thank you again for everything you have done for the last year, and I wish you well for the next.



“Our governance framework
and the actions of our
Governors are key
components in achieving
our vision and success.”

Kelly Denton
Head of Governance and Compliance

Governance at Thinking Schools Academy Trust



Message by Kelly Denton
Head of Governance and Compliance

Our Trust has a proud track record of success in growing the number and performance of schools within the Trust family.

This success is driven by our strong educational vision of fully integrated Thinking Schools within a framework of cognitive-based education.

This approach supports our children in developing their ability to think and act independently, boosting their confidence and success for their future.

Our governance framework and the actions of our Governors are key components in achieving our vision and success.

By working with our leadership and all our staff, providing oversight, challenge, and support, we aim to ensure that each school within the Trust upholds the highest standards and delivers the best to every student.

A Multi-Academy Trust governance model differs from the governance of non-academy schools.

Essentially, there are different governing bodies responsible for various elements of school and trust governance.

Local governance is delivered via the Academy Advisory Boards (AAB), which work closely with one academy, engaging with local stakeholders and monitoring individual school performance.

AABs feed into Regional Governing Bodies (RGB), which are linked to a Director of Education and are responsible for the regional performance, finance, and staffing of a hub of schools.

The RGBs feed into the Board of Directors, who are responsible for the strategy and vision of the Trust, Trust-wide performance, and Trust-wide decisions.

A full cycle of governance meetings occurs three times a year, starting with School Student Councils, which feed into Academy Advisory Board meetings, then into Regional Governing Bodies, and culminating in the Board of Directors meeting.

Mechanisms are in place to ensure that key information, risks, and decisions are communicated across the different governing bodies.

All Governors attend a virtual business meeting at the beginning of each academic year to review Trust-wide performance, set strategic direction for the year, and participate in Governors' training and support.

For more information about TSAT governance, please go to tsatrust.org.uk/about/governance

Outcomes & Progress

Early Years Foundation Stage

EYFS	2022/23	2023/24		
	Trust	Trust	National	Difference to National
% of pupils achieving GLD	64	63	68	-5
% of pupils at expected for all ELG	63	60	66	-6

Key Stage 1

KS1	2022/23	2023/24		
	Trust	Trust	National	Difference to National
% of pupils passing phonics check in Year 1	73	76	80	-4
% of pupils passing phonics check in Year 2	88	89	91	-2

Outcomes & Progress

Multiplication Tables Check

MTC	2022/23	2023/24		
	Trust	Trust	National	Difference to National
% of pupils scoring full marks 25/25	27	38	34	4
Average score /25	19.7	20.9	20.6	0.3

Key Stage 2

KS2	2022/23	2023/24		
	Trust	Trust	National	Difference to National
Reading EXP+ %	69	75	74	1
Writing EXP+ %	68	68	72	-4
Maths EXP+ %	71	74	73	1
Combined EXP+ %	55	61	61	0

Outcomes & Progress

Key Stage 4


KS4	2022/23	2023/24		
	Trust	Trust	National	Difference to National
Number of students	1796	1753	-	-
English/Maths 5+ %	47%	49%	46%	3%
English/Maths 4+ %	64%	65%	65%	0%
Attainment 8	47.7	47.8	45.9	1.9
Progress 8	-0.2	-0.3	-0.03	-0.27

Key Stage 5 (A Levels)

KS5 A Levels	2022/23	2023/24	
	Trust	Trust	Trust Difference
Number of students	430	610	180
A*-A %	19.60%	30.60%	11
A*-B %	-	54.10%	-
A*-C %	60.50%	73.80%	13.3
A*-E %	93.20%	95.50%	2.3
VA	-0.72	-0.43	0.29

Ofsted Outcomes

Ofsted	Sep 2016	Sep 2019	Sep 2021	Sep 2022	Sep 2024
Outstanding	1 (9%)	2 (12%)	2 (12%)	2 (11%)	0 (0%)
Good	3 (27%)	12 (71%)	14 (82%)	15 (79%)	19 (73%)
RI	3 (27%)	2 (12%)	0	1 (5%)	5 (19%)
Inadequate	0	0	0	0	0
No judgement	4 (36%)	1 (6%)	1 (6%)	1 (5%)	2 (8%)

A young child with curly hair, wearing a school uniform consisting of a white collared shirt, a striped tie, and a dark blue V-neck sweater. The child is looking upwards and to the right with a joyful expression, showing their teeth. The background is a blurred school setting. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent blue overlay.

“Thinking Solutions for Education
services have consistently
provided invaluable expertise to
our schools, and I am proud of
the achievements so far.”

Lee Miller MBE
Deputy Chief Executive

Supporting our schools to be child first with expert services



Message by Lee Miller MBE
Deputy Chief Executive

Throughout the academic year, our Thinking Solutions for Education services have consistently provided invaluable expertise to our schools, and I am immensely proud of the remarkable achievements we have accomplished so far.

Our six dedicated services support our schools in adopting a child-first approach.

Their specialist knowledge enables school staff to focus on their primary mission—supporting the holistic development of our pupils and transforming their life opportunities.

Thinking Facilities has worked on capital projects across our trust, investing thousands to improve facilities for the benefit of our children and staff.

We have also welcomed the positive steps taken by Thinking Technology over the school holidays to enhance software and infrastructure across regions.

Moreover, Thinking Personnel has developed our People Strategy, collaborating with Thinking Creative to communicate this to our staff, demonstrating our commitment to

putting staff first so they can do their best to support the children we serve.

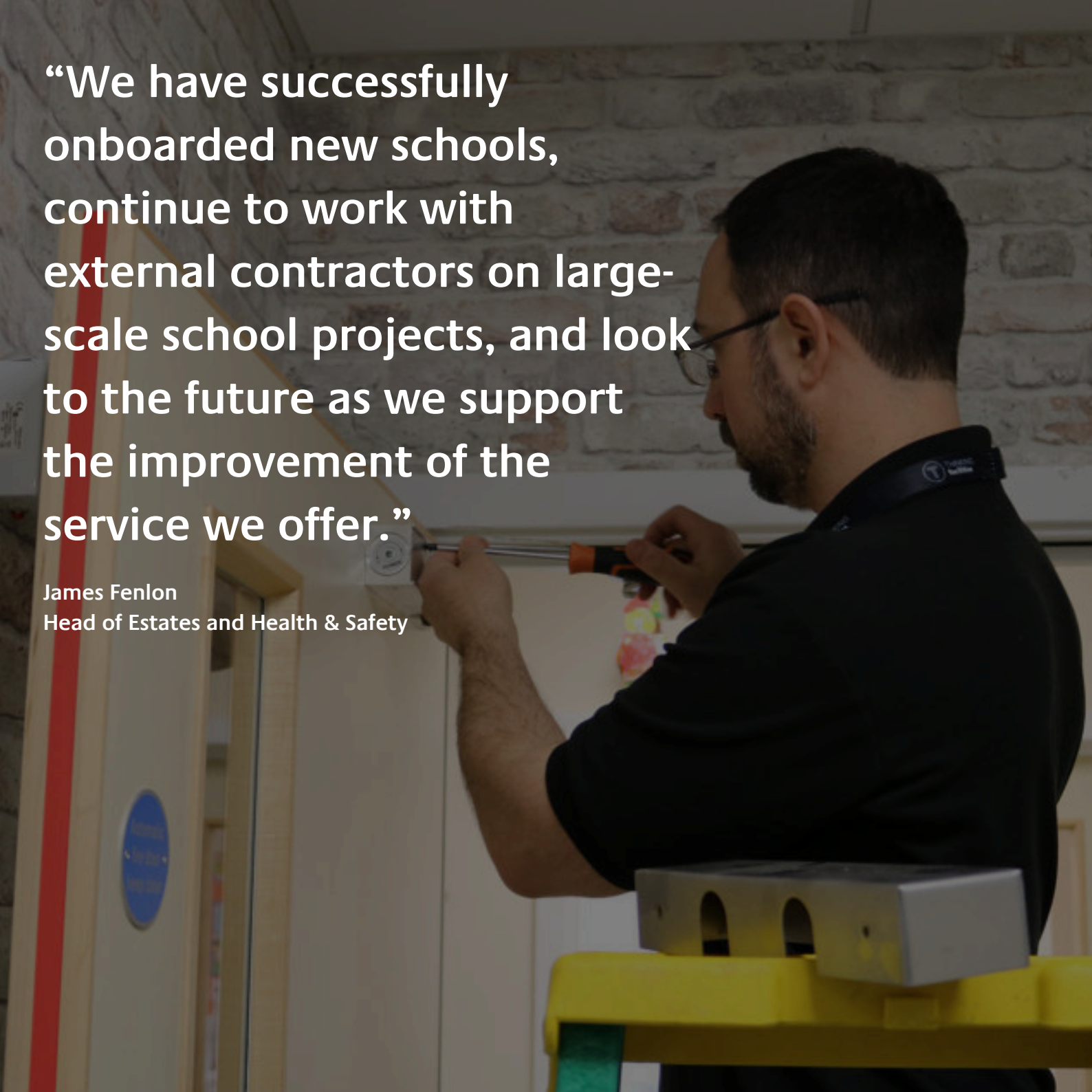
In the following pages, you will read detailed accounts of the significant achievements across Thinking Solutions for Education and our ambitious plans for the 2024/2025 academic year, which aim to further enhance our support and continue driving excellence in education.

Thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to our shared goals. Together, we are Transforming Life Chances.



“We have successfully onboarded new schools, continue to work with external contractors on large-scale school projects, and look to the future as we support the improvement of the service we offer.”

James Fenlon
Head of Estates and Health & Safety





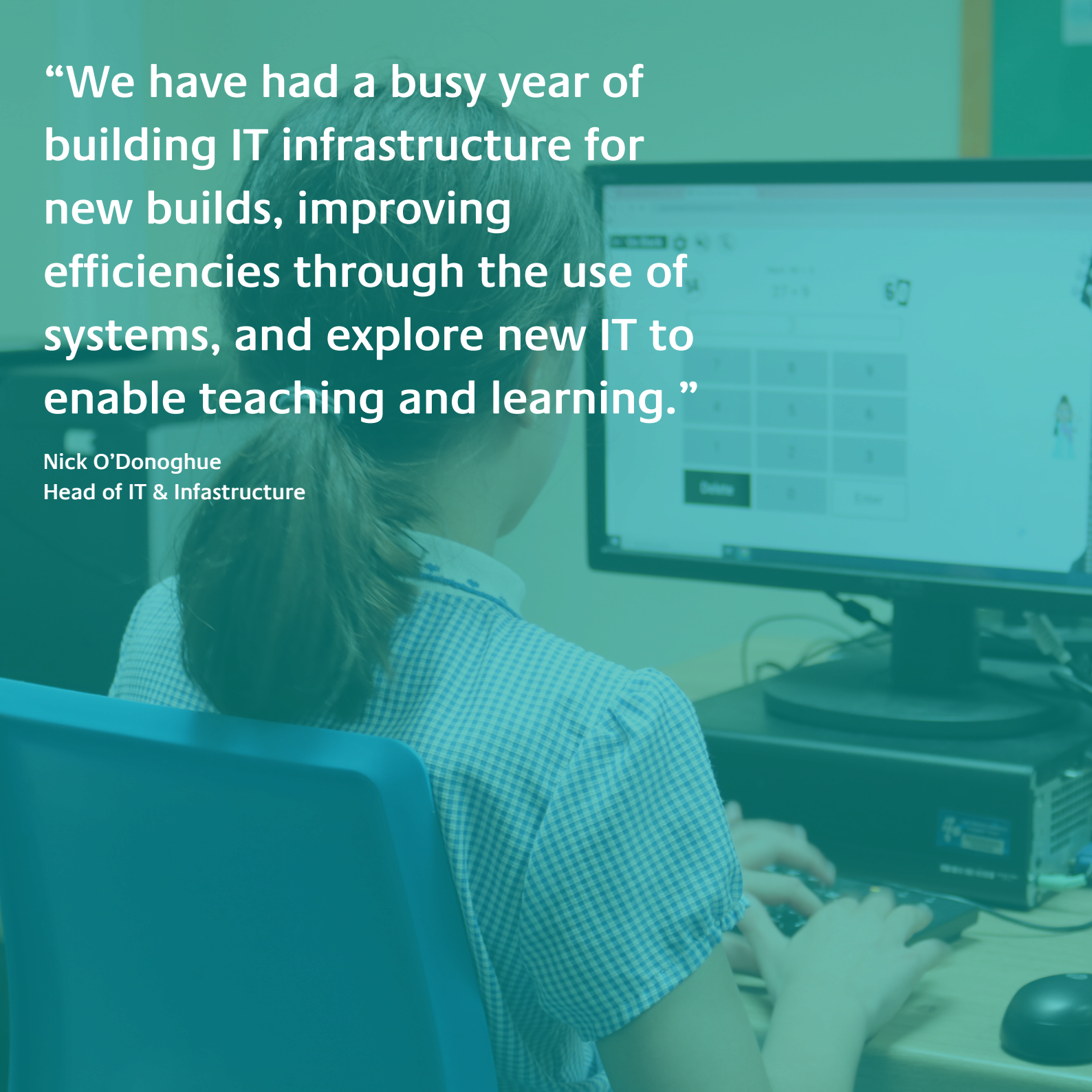
Achievements for 2023/2024:

- Worked with the Chair of the Operations committee to develop a suite of KPIs for reporting on the H&S paper.
- Took part in a full consultation and restructure of the department, alongside Thinking Technology, to result in a modified and improved Operations Directorate.
- Recruited a new H&S Advisor to provide support to Thinking Facilities Senior Leadership Team.
- Restructured to form three Deputy Heads of Estates (DHoE), one for each region: South-East, South and South-West.
- Completed various 'Pot 4' school refurbishment projects across the Trust, at a total cost of £300,000.
- Delivered an external AP unit for The Portsmouth Academy (named The ARCH) located at New Horizons Primary School.
- Provided advice, guidance and risk assessments for the Cryptosporidium outbreak in the Brixham area.
- As part of the Operations directorate, a significant number of SCA projects were delivered across the Trust. Notable projects including NHP windows, boiler replacement at Brixham College and The Portsmouth Academy; playground works at Cedar Children's Academy and window replacements at Curledge Street Academy.

- Worked alongside external contractors and local authorities to start major building work at The Victory Academy (new 6th form and SEND locks) and STEPS/SEN provision at Paignton Academy (Borough Road site).
- Onboarded new schools in Paignton: Paignton Academy, Curledge Street Academy (CSA), Kings Ash Academy (KAA) and the Lodestar Academy.
- Provided additional support for schools undertaking OFSTED inspections by utilising mobile members of Thinking Facilities staff.
- Helped to deliver the Maritime Academy site over Summer 2024 with additional Thinking Facilities staffing.
- Resolved the sinkhole issue at PHSG with close liaison with contractors, surveyors, insurance and legal teams.
- Worked to deliver a suitable SLA for Little Thinkers in Portsmouth and helped to ensure building works have been completed at CSA, KAA and potentially Furzeham for further expansion of this brand.
- Worked with Thinking Technology to support the installation of the Trust Single Network (TSN) into Paignton Academy (both sites).
- Took on the provision of bus transport for Brixham College pupils, including sourcing a replacement double decker bus in Term 1.

Plans for 2024/2025:

- Develop a thorough facilities compliance reporting strategy with the H&S compliance tactical group, with suitable KPIs to facilitate reporting.
- Work with the service delivery tactical group to develop the Trust Asset Management Plan (AMP) linked to Top desk and suitable KPIs.
- Develop Thinking Facilities coaching culture so that coaches are available within all regions and at different levels/roles.
- Develop Estates Vision, Strategy and asset management plan with policies in place to ensure a strategic review can be performed in the future (GEMS guidance).
- Develop capital sustainability strategy and timeline to work alongside the DfE net zero ambition.
- Develop suitable Thinking Facilities partnership agreement to support Little Thinkers in every region in a consistent manner.
- Support the catering tender in relevant areas: kitchen equipment, maintenance and fabric.
- Promote the H&S/ Thinking Facilities intranet to ensure school users can find answers to common queries and share common documentation.
- Review of contracts at a Hub, Regional and National level to drive better value across the service.



“We have had a busy year of building IT infrastructure for new builds, improving efficiencies through the use of systems, and explore new IT to enable teaching and learning.”

Nick O'Donoghue
Head of IT & Infrastructure



Achievements for 2023/2024:

- Led on the ICT implementation for the new Maritime Academy site, with the school opening successfully as planned on the 9th September (despite handover from the contractor being delayed from the 24th June until the 16th August).
- TSN Onboarding for Paignton Academy in August 2024, with positive feedback from senior leaders about the transition.
- Took part in a full consultation and restructure of the department, alongside Thinking Facilities, to result in a modified and improved Operations Directorate.
- Following the restructure of the Operations Directorate, a review of administrator privileges was undertaken, and greater permissions were delegated to Regional Engineering Managers and IT Engineers across all hubs.
- Initial pilot implementation of Aruba Central and Aruba Clear pass across PNA and MA to improve the identity management and authentication of devices and user accounts on the TSN whilst also providing an enhance management toolkit to maintain the Trust's core network infrastructure.
- Upgrading core network infrastructure at Paignton Academy, including 41 new edge switches and 187 wireless access points.
- Initial deployment of the Microsoft

Teams Phone System at Paignton Academy.

- Supported the launch of a Trust-wide staff Intranet using Microsoft Sharepoint and Cloud Design Box.
- Continuation of the technology investment programme to provide a consistent and reliable end user experience when using IT in the Trust, with other 900 desktops and 900 laptops being procured and configured for staff and student use.
- Implementation of 19 new interactive display screens and enhanced teacher-toolkits within New Horizons Children's Academy.
- Further expansion of the Trust's One:One device programme, with an additional 280 devices at Portsmouth Academy and 230 at Maritime Academy.

Plans for 2024/2025:

- Implement Aruba Central across the Trust to provide an enhanced management toolkit to maintain the Trust's core network infrastructure.
- Develop a dedicated Cyber Security and Information Security Strategy, which aids the implementation of the Trust's Digital Learning & Technology Strategy, whilst maintaining the integrity of the Trust Single Network and associated services.

- Review the Trust's existing CCTV systems across all academies and to develop a project proposal to replace any systems that currently do not comply with the Trust's CCTV policy.
- Increase the use of service levels and the creation of a technology calendar to effectively plan the timeline of key milestones.
- Increasing visibility of events and the communication plan.
- Migrate away from the VMWare virtualisation platform that is currently utilised across the Trust's server infrastructure.
- Implement the roll-out of the Trust's new IP telephone solution (Microsoft Teams) across all academies within the Trust.
- Develop a long-term strategy for the replacement of ICT assets, to reduce the impact on revenue budgets.
- All Regional Engineering Managers to undertake a "Network Engineer" level 4 apprenticeship during 2024/25.



Achievements for 2023/2024:

- Successfully covered the role of Head of HR internally whilst off on maternity leave, and still providing full People Directorate deliverables.
- New recruitment system – Eploy widely well received and providing valuable data to inform recruitment and retention initiatives.
- Onboarded Lodestar Academy onto the payroll and onto Think Ahead.
- Paignton Academy, Curledge Street and Kings Ash all trained and using Think Ahead with staff using from January 24 – positively received.
- Launched new model of Think Ahead (Professional Growth), driving objective setting across all schools to provide a clearer link to school/dept/Trust development plans – tracking completion at part of fortnightly check-ins.
- Completed Think Ahead reflections, linked to pay reviews all pay appeals completed in accordance with policy.
- Successfully completed school workforce census for all schools in November 2023.
- Achieved our accreditation from Investors in People both at IIP (standard) and Wellbeing (standard) - and have formulated a plan to integrate actions/areas for improvement with Trust Development Plans for 24/25 onwards.

- Embedded our Trade Union model and we have undertaken all of our meetings in line with this – we have also developed better working relationships across all areas. Launched first central staff employee representative model March 24.
- HR Partner role is developing well and is not linear but is proving to be effective in different ways across the regions.
- Developed the Policy Schedule for review and this continues to be done in collaboration with other staff and departments.
- Wrote the 5 Year Trust People Strategy for 2024-2029 and the 1 Year People Strategy for focus in 2024-25 – launched with key stakeholders/ready to launch with all staff in Sept 2025.
- Reviewed the induction process and updated to improve efficiency and impact – established 3 formal induction dates across the year to ensure all staff have consistent welcome and improved retention.
- Continued to embed the staff wellbeing strategy, recruitment and retention initiatives, etc. Lead Welbee survey in Term 6 which showed significant improvement in 23 out of 26 schools and a huge increase in engagement.
- Have provided HR services to 12 external customers (Parallel Learning

Trust, 10 schools in SW and Sir John Hunt Trust).

Plans for 2024/2025:

- In light of sector-wide financial challenges, support the restructure of centrally funded roles (including Thinking Personnel) to secure sufficient savings to allow the Trust and all services and schools to submit a balanced budget for 25/26.
- Move Directorate model to 4 directorates and update TORs to reflect change to strategic and tactical team membership and coverage.
- Complete Tender process and Implement new HR/payroll system effectively for deadline of April 25. Onboard all TSAT schools to new payroll system and investigate commercial opportunity for additional payroll clients.
- Making data more effective, for improved data analysis which informs strategy and decisions for improvement.
- Develop people's personal and professional skills and knowledge, fully using the Professional Growth model.
- Enable people to take the lead in setting stretching and relevant objectives that support and respond to goals and plans for change.



Plans for 2024/2025:

- Deliver training for all staff in setting appropriate objectives for 24/25.
- Create a pipeline of talent which secures succession planning and which enables staff to see and secure their next steps; Vacancies are filled increasingly through internal promotion opportunities. Eploy tracks internal vs external appointments.
- Develop and implement an EDI strategy.
- Develop and deliver a fair equitable and inclusive rewards and recognition mechanism that staff value.
- Develop career progression pathways and a succession plan framework. Talent pipelines are developed for each pathway, ensuring clarity for staff progression.
- Deliver a physical, mental and emotional health and well-being vision and strategy to support our people priorities. HSE management standards are met and improve outcomes from Wellbeing survey reported.
- Mental health and wellbeing ambassador programme extends to supporting staff by end of Year 1.
- Launch effective job evaluation scheme including senior roles and restructured roles.
- Address key priority from Welbee and IIP - to provide greater clarity of role, skills, knowledge for current and next steps - support internal promotion and succession planning (supporting improved retention).
- Delivery of Year 1 of the People Strategy.
- Build a professional learning offer which emphasises collaboration and the sharing of practice with a focus on professionalism and pedagogy.
- Ensure our people take ownership of their own learning and development effectively to support the organisation's objectives and build capability and sustainable success.
- Effective comprehensive induction programme for all staff new to post; and a comprehensive onboarding programme for all staff new to the Trust.
- Develop a comprehensive workforce plan, including strategies to reduce turnover, increase retention and attract new staff.
- Develop Leaders' people management skills, establish clear roles and responsibilities and make use of HR data to inform strategic recruitment and consistent people management decisions.
- Enhance the use of accredited apprenticeship levy programmes and similar funding opportunities to support our priorities.
- Develop our coaching culture.
- Maintain awareness of future challenges and consciously develop leadership capabilities, and partner with stakeholders to respond to these challenges.
- Use 360-degree feedback and audits against ASK criteria and Nolan Principles, Leaders reflecting on their attitudes, beliefs, behaviours and conduct in order to ensure positive impact on others.

“From delivering successful PR campaigns to building the Trust-wide intranet, we’ve had an exceptional year strengthening communications and marketing across our Trust.”

Lauren Wilson
Head of Brand Strategy and Partnerships





Achievements in 2023/2024:

- Built and launched the Trust Intranet for all staff to access a central communication platform.
- Developed internal schedules for communications to staff through a new delivery platform to improve engagement and reduce inbox traffic.
- Delivered four successful launch events for Lodestar Academy, Paignton Academy, Kings Ash Academy and Curledge Street Academy.
- Refreshed Trust website to streamline its brand and content.
- New Trust assets have been developed to include case studies and video series.
- Successful reputation management of a variety of school incidents from parent engagement and leadership changes to water crisis and outcomes.
- Eight successful #WeAreOne events - introduced a new WeAreOne event - World Earth Day, inspired by Trust Student Councils.
- Continued support for the launch of Maritime Academy with design of signage and launch event.
- Onboarded Plympton Academy reprographics team in Thinking Creative to increase design workflow.
- Significantly increased Facebook and LinkedIn following and lead training with senior teams to develop their

own profiles to advocate key Trust messages.

- Development and release of Trust-wide new school websites and business development websites.
- 100 press releases shared across the Trust including Pupil Voice meetings and school onboarding.
- Delivered a Trust-wide conference across MS teams and in person.
- Provided marketing and design support for the development of Little Thinkers in South and South-West regions.
- Regional communications role embedded into structure.

Plans for 2024/2025:

- Support the plans for the restructure of centrally funded roles to secure sufficient savings to allow the Trust and TSFE services to submit a balanced budget for 25/26.
- Development of TSFE Website to promote commercial services.
- Refocus Trust PR strategies.
- Develop phase 2 of the Trust Intranet. This will include academy sections for each school and further improvements suggested by staff voice.
- Introduction of new 'WeAreOne' Event – tailored to key Trust messages, Thinking Week and TSAT Kindness week.

- Develop trusted partnerships that will increase Trust exposure through joining relevant conversations, events and initiatives. Improve collaboration with students and schools to improve the delivery of WeAreOne events and Trust campaigns.
- Restructure of department to focus on income strategies (Grants and funding) and strategic communications for schools.
- Increase use of video to promote the stories and work of our schools and Trust.
- Support the implementation of the commercial directorate for TSfE and commercialisation for selected central services.
- To develop the use of analytics across social media and websites to track the effectiveness of recruitment and marketing campaigns.



“Thinking Financial
continues to improve
efficiencies and develop
new processes to enable
us to provide the very
best service to our
schools.”

Doug Stewart
Head of Finance



Achievements in 2023/2024

- Joining Academies added to our finance systems.
- Online ordering portal rolled out to joining Academies, to give easy access to ordering through a virtual portal.
- 2024/25 budgets generated, and forecasts produced throughout the year.
- External audit completed with extremely good results.
- Internal audit completed, which also had great results.
- Annual accounts submitted to Companies House.
- Relocated offices, to ensure Trust teams are positioned in the best areas to support Academies promptly.
- A grant of £600,000 was negotiated with the DfE to support the Torbay schools, for receipt during the 2025-26 academic year.
- Significant external customer work completed, across 4 Trusts, bringing in additional income to TSAT.
- Benchmarking rolled out across monthly reports, to give schools a better comparison of data, to enhance decision making.


- Successfully completed all Department for Education financial returns.
- Successfully completed all Department for Education financial returns.
- Moved the weekly payments of invoices to a new system with the bank, providing a cheaper running cost.
- Development of new reports using automation to improve efficiency.
- Processed over 32,000 invoices.

Plans for 2024/2025

- Development of the 'cost per pupil' model, looking at splits to ensure the basis remains fair, as DfE funding is not linear across the Academies.
- Reworking of monthly reports further, with continued benchmarking focus.
- Development of Thinking Financials Intranet site, to give staff easy access to information.
- Following restructure work with staff to learn new roles.
- Continue to develop a culture of cost analysis.
- Increase the usage of Purchase Orders within the Trust, to ensure that all purchases are pre-approved,

-policy backed, and in line with Academy aims.

- Develop new month end reconciliation documents, to ensure any efficiencies are captured.
- Continue to work with external customers, generating additional income to TSAT.



“Our Thinking Fitness gyms continue to grow in popularity with more locations open and memberships, generating profits to benefit our schools and positively impact the pupils we serve.”

Nick Forward
Head of Business Development



Thinking Lettings boasts a number of versatile spaces that you can hire for events of all sizes - at the right cost.

We have an approachable and trusted lettings team, who manage facilities across various communities in the South of England.

We offer a range of venue solutions, including outdoor sports pitches, dance studios, spacious halls with staging areas for performances and huge sports halls for fairs and exhibitions.

As a non-profit business, the funds made through our lettings are directly invested

back into our schools, furthering our purpose of transforming life chances for all children at the Thinking Schools Academy Trust.

The funds raised from Thinking Lettings has been supported by Thinking Fitness, our gym franchise, who have welcomed more memberships than ever before, bringing more money into our trust for the benefit of every school.

Achievements in 2023/2024:

- Onboarding of Paignton Academy, now a Thinking Lettings site.
- SchoolHire onboarded across all schools- improvement in the booking system.

- Record member numbers- 1,300 across four sites.
- Internal audit has been complete.
- All sites have gone cashless.
- Development of staffing- including Regional Managers.

Plans for 2024/2025:

- Maritime Academy site opening.
- Focus on maximising income opportunities amongst the team.
- New membership management software.
- A consistent new member sign-up offer.
- Target grant funding- main focus, Maritime and Brixham 3Gs.
- Hit £1 million of revenue from Thinking Lettings.



Park Crescent, Chatham, Kent, ME4 6NR
info@tsatrust.org.uk | tsatrust.org.uk

