



CULHAM ST GABRIEL'S
CHAMPIONING RELIGION AND WORLDVIEWS EDUCATION

Culham St Gabriel's Trust

Annual Review 2023-24

Registered Address

30, St Giles,

Oxford

OX1 3LE

Registered Charity No: 309671



Dr Linda Whitworth

Introduction from Culham St Gabriel's Trust, Chair of Trustees

This year has been one of change and growth and I begin my introduction to this annual report by expressing my thanks to our Kathryn, our CEO, and Tracey, our digital manager, for managing the changes which have taken place, while growing our presence in the world of religion and worldviews education. We have expanded our employee team from three to six and this has improved our capacity to develop areas of growth such as grants and develop discussions and strategy with external groups involved in Religious Education.

It has also been a year of goodbyes and welcomes and I would like to thank the consultants who worked most generously with us until part-way through this year. We value all that they did to develop the Trust's role in the RE world and wish them well. We have also said farewell to Rev. Peter Ballard and Mrs. Deborah Weston who gave freely of their time and wisdom as trustees for many years. We welcome Mr. Paul Knappett to the trustee body and welcome his financial specialism. We are an active trustee body and I am grateful to all trustees for their guidance and support through the developments which have taken place.

As a trust we are governed by our strategic objectives, as is clear from the layout of this annual report. The trust is currently well-positioned to promote our vision for Religion and Worldviews. We continue to provide a range of opportunities for teachers and leaders in personal and professional development and are engaged in active discussions about developments to enhance our subject

L Whitworth



Dr Kathryn Wright

Introduction from Culham St Gabriel's Trust, Chief Executive

This has been a year of change! In the last 12 months we have made three new appointments to our staff team, and my focus has been on building and nurturing a thriving team. It has been a delight to welcome Liz, Julia and Fiona. This has enabled the Trust to become more agile and responsive, to develop new innovative pieces of work and to better support our stakeholders. However, we also said 'goodbye' to several of our consultants who I worked closely with over the last five years. Kate, Kevin, Claire, Justine and Stacey gave a huge amount to the Trust and we are extremely grateful to them. As I write we are in the midst of a DfE Curriculum and Assessment Review Call for Evidence. For me there has never been a more important time to advocate and support religion and worldviews education. After refining its strategic objectives in 2023-24 and enhancing its staff team capacity, the Trust is in a strong position to inform and influence decision makers and empower teachers, leaders and stakeholders into the future.

Kathryn Wright

Our Strategic Objectives 2023-2026

1. Promoting positive public perception and understanding of religion and worldviews education
2. Influencing governments' policies in supporting a high-quality religion and worldviews education¹, including the implementation of a National Plan in England
3. Advocating for the importance of high-quality religion and worldviews education within the education world
4. Empowering the current and next generation of religion and worldviews education teachers and leaders
5. Fostering and nurturing collaborative partnerships within the religion and worldviews education community

Our vision, mission, values, and strategy are rooted in our core charitable objectives which have at their heart the promotion of higher and further education, life-long learning, research, and development of religious education.



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¹ By the phrase religion and worldviews education, we are including what is currently referred to in legislation as Religious Education in England, Religion Values and Ethics in Wales, Religious and Moral Education in Scotland and Religious Education in Northern Ireland.

Promoting positive public perception and understanding of religion and worldviews education

Our Goals in 2023-24 were:

- Utilising freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) networks to promote positive understanding of religion and worldviews education
- Working with the RE Policy Unit and other stakeholders to promote religion and worldviews education
- Build on projects promoting religion and worldviews education with parents
- Creating and nurturing new partnerships with those working in informal or alternative education settings

We believe we have contributed to a culture shift in the religion and worldviews community where FoRB is now regularly discussed and on the agenda. Across the year partnerships have been developed with UK FoRB Forum, the UK FoRB Forum Education working group and through direct contact with the UK Special Envoy for FoRB, Fiona Bruce MP before the July election. An [extensive literature review](#) of FoRB and education was undertaken to identify the gaps in research and practice. As a result the Trust facilitated conversations with a range of organisations working in the FoRB space, particularly those seeking to combat antisemitism and Islamophobia. This group aims to influence policy through collaborative working in 2024-25. A primary phase project [reported](#) in November 2023 evidencing the impact of interventions to introduce FoRB principles with young children.



Our CEO has worked closely with the RE Policy Unit throughout the year. We provided insight and support in relation to a new theory of change document, as well as to specific campaigns. This led to a focus on the business world, and the [REady for work](#) initiative. Over 40 organisations have endorsed the campaign. In addition, one of our grant funded projects is seeking to develop a Religion and Belief Literacy Standard for those working in the public sector, whilst another worked with the media across different cities to build relationships between faith and belief communities, teachers and journalists.

We awarded a grant to Faith and Belief Forum to develop their [Identity Unboxed](#) project with parents of school age children. The team have presented widely about the interim findings at several conferences.



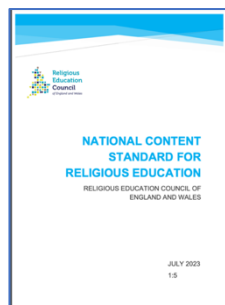
The response from parents involved in the pilot has been overwhelmingly positive. During 2023-24 a new participatory grant making project with home educators was developed with St Peter Saltley Trust and All Saints Educational Foundation. Whilst impact is yet to be assessed, the learning from this is already impacting on other aspects of the Trust's work in terms of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Finally, in August we took an exhibition stand to the Greenbelt Festival. The aim this year to engage particularly with home educators and governors, as well as to ask festival goers what their education priorities would be for the new Labour government.

Influencing governments' policies in supporting a high-quality religion and worldviews education², including the implementation of a National Plan in England

Our Goals in 2023-24 were:

- Establish a unified approach to a National Plan, including a National Content Standard for RE in England
- Advocate for a funded National Plan
- Influence governments' policies through established relationships



Our strategic partnerships with the Religious Education Council of England and Wales, (REC) and with the RE Policy Unit have continued to have an impact this year. Our CEO has worked alongside the REC to support the recommendation of the [National Content Standard for RE](#) (NCS). This provides clarification and sets a benchmark for high-quality RE in the subject for all types of school in England. It is a potential game-changing document for the sector. Through her advocacy work our CEO has helped to ensure this document is widely welcomed by multi academy trusts, faith school providers, and organisations such as the National Governance Association. Before the election, she met with ministers in the DfE to explain the document's importance.

The Trust has supported lobbying with all political parties regarding the importance of a National Content Standard, but also in particular in relation to teacher recruitment and retention. The Trust utilised its social media platforms creating new assets to promote recruitment. It funded an Open Letter with cross-party support about the crisis in recruitment specifically in September 2023. Bursaries were reinstated in Autumn 2023; however subject knowledge enhancement funding was removed in April. Our CEO met with the Department for Education to raise concerns over this decision. We published a [briefing paper](#) which was shared with civil servants and ministers.



The Trust funded, and attended, a conference in Scotland. [The Scottish Teachers Association of Religious and Moral Education \(STARME\)](#) were awarded a grant for a Festival of Learning to showcase best practice in the subject enabling participants to enhance the quality of curriculum enactment and classroom pedagogy. In addition, the Trust is funding Queen's University Belfast for a project entitled 'RWE for All'. The project aims to create spaces for listening, dialogue and learning around issues related to religion and worldviews education in Northern Ireland, working with educators, parents and other stakeholders.



² By the phrase religion and worldviews education, we are including what is currently referred to in legislation as Religious Education in England, Religion Values and Ethics in Wales, Religious and Moral Education in Scotland and Religious Education in Northern Ireland.

Advocating for the importance of high-quality religion and worldviews education within the education world

Our Goals in 2023-24 were:

- Embed outcomes from our senior educationalists focus group
- Utilise one-to-one relationships with key educationalists and influential organisations to advocate for the subject
- Establish stronger relationships with subject associations beyond RE

We have strengthened our relationships with a range of partners over the last year including promoting our work through The Confederation of School Trusts, National Governance Association, National Institute of Teaching and Myatt & Co. Our CEO has been on the advisory group for OAK National Academy as well as some exam boards. We have listened to the views of senior leaders and this is shaping our future programmes particularly around teachers with other specialisms and raising up leaders with UK minority ethnic and global majority heritage backgrounds. Often it is the 'unseen' work of the CEO such as one-to-one conversations with individual school leaders that support the wider impact of the Trust.

We helped three teachers achieve the Chartered College of Teaching Evidence-Informed Practice Module. We sponsored a leader of the subject through the MTPT Coaching scheme and provided additional opportunities for them to network with other leaders. We took 11 through our Year 1 and eight through Year 2 of [Leadership scholarship programme](#). Of these participants, five have taken on further leadership responsibilities locally and/or nationally. This programme is now well established and highly regarded within the religion and worldviews community.

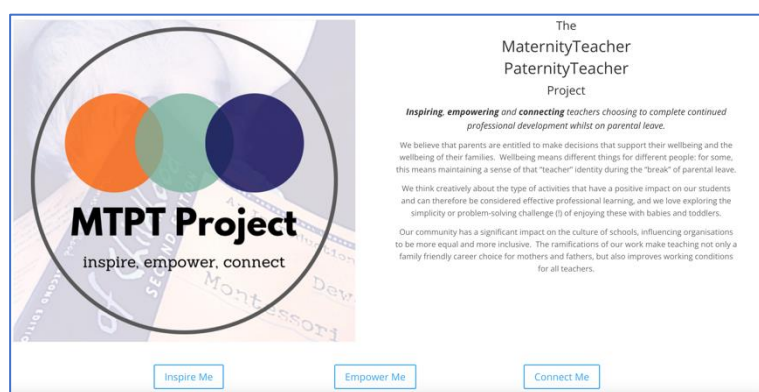
“

Mentors have been brilliant. Having time with someone to talk about leadership has been really incredibly helpful.

“

The mentors have been brilliant – words of wisdom and the right recipe. I really enjoyed being part of the reading group – great to have dialogue – zoom didn't hinder the process in any way. It is all making sense to me now – at the time I found them hard, but it was good for me to be stretched.

We have worked closely with subject associations particularly in relation to advice and resourcing post October 7th 2023.



Empowering the current and next generation of religion and worldviews education teachers and leaders

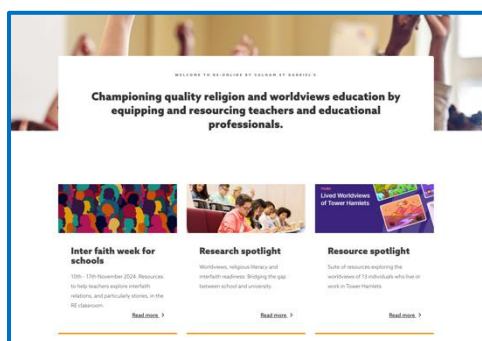
Our Goals in 2023-24 were:

- Embed all scholarship programmes into the heart of the Trusts' wider work
- Tailor all programmes to meet needs of those at different stages of their careers, with a particular focus on engagement with research
- Nurture beginner teachers and their mentors to ensure effective recruitment and retention
- Tailor programmes to adapt to changing contextual factors
- Embed RExChange as the 'go to' conference for teacher-researcher engagement

Over 2300 people enrolled on [e-learning courses](#) an increase of 300 on the previous year. Over 1188 course completions were recorded, an increase of 162 on the previous year. This means that the Trust had a significant impact on the professional development of teachers over the last year. Many completing our courses are undertaking initial teacher education. Some courses were reviewed in light of the Religion and Worldviews Approach Handbook launched by the RE Council in May, as well as a new course about the National Content Standard. In addition, new bitesize animations were trialled as a new way of providing professional development.



Our [scholarships](#) ran at maximum capacity during the year, with almost 40 teachers benefitting from our programmes in a variety of ways – masters, doctoral, CTeach and leadership. Scholars are increasingly writing for publication and presenting at conferences, thus demonstrating the impact of our support.



[RE:ONLINE](#) had a refresh in early 2024 as part of a wider move to focus more on the Culham St Gabriel's brand bringing consistently to our messaging and making it easier to understand who we are and what we offer. Sessions per month remain around 20,000. We have experimented with new approaches to sharing of research. [The Culham St Gabriel's website](#) saw increased traffic due largely to job adverts and our work around freedom of religion or belief. We have over 400 people registered for [RExChange](#) which takes place in October 2024.

Use of **social media** to promote our work continues to be of increasing importance but has been challenging in the last 12 months due to wider contextual factors. Although followers on platforms such as X/Twitter remain high (over 10,000) we have noticed a drop in engagement. However, our LinkedIn following has almost doubled in the last year and we are seeing more people move to this platform to interact with our work.

The Trust supports other organisations who are working in this field. Our CEO works regularly with the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) and the Association of Advisers, Inspectors and Consultants (AREIAC) to promote work with Multi-Academy Trust RE leads. She has attended symposium and networking events relating to teachers with other specialisms, recruitment and retention. She recorded two podcasts on the National Content Standard (RE Podcast) and importance of the humanities (Humanities 2020). A strategic funding award to NATRE enables leading teachers to take part in vital national conversations with the Department for Education and Ofsted.

Fostering and nurturing collaborative partnerships within the religion and worldviews education community

Our Goals for 2023-24 were:

- Actively supporting collaborative initiatives within the religion and worldviews community
- Brokering conversations and partnerships across different sectors of the religion and worldviews eco-system
- Establishing joint areas of funding with those working in the religion and worldviews space

Our CEO and Chair of the Trust work tirelessly to network with the religion and worldviews community, and with other funders supporting this field. Having a presence and engaging in conversations at national conferences has been significant this year. Our CEO also spoke at the following events: Catholic Inspectors and Advisers Conference, Royal Wootton Bassett International Conference, NASACRE conference, Joint AREIAC/AULRE conference, Ormiston Academies RE Lead Network.

We have nurtured and strengthened partnerships through advice and support with: The Woolf Institute, Faith and Belief Forum, Theos, Religion Media Centre, Association of Church College Trusts, Templeton World Charity Foundation, Jerusalem Trust, Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, Greenbelt Festival, Open University, Independent Schools Association.

The Trust continued to fund RE Hubs (Infrastructure Programme). During this year the hub leads have worked strategically to network with multi-academy trusts, learned more about CPD provision in their areas and contributed regularly their website.

A Spotlight on our Home Education Fund.

A joint fund with St Peter Saltley Trust and All Saints Educational Foundation.

This fund is for [home educating families](#) in the West Midlands region. Applicants can apply for a small grant to support your children and young people to learn about different worldviews (religious and non-religious). It can help them explore, experiment with, or adapt their approach to religion & worldviews education. The fund has been co-designed with a group of home educating families. Funding for education is often directed to formal settings, while home educators often have little access to support or grants. We wanted to set up a new fund designed for and by the home education community, in the hope that it might pave the way for similar funds in the future. At the heart of the fund is a community panel of home educators who decide on the awards to be made.



List of all funding awards 2024-25

Masters Scholarships

The Trust has funded nine new **masters' scholars** (with additional funding from Hockerill Educational Foundation £12,000).

Doctoral Scholarships

The Trust funded three new **doctoral scholars (£30,000)**

Chairs Fund

The Trust made £10,000 worth of hardship fund awards.

The Trust awarded six strategic funding awards (donations)

The Religious Education Council of England and Wales to support core costs and operations over the next three years: £150,000 over three years beginning September 2024

RE Policy Unit to continue its campaigning advocacy and lobbying work: £100K over 3 years beginning September 2024.

Theos Think Tank to support their project 'Where is religion and worldviews education?' Awarded £33,125

NATRE Leadership Fund to enable teachers to attend meetings with high level officials, Ofsted, Ofqual and so on £1,500

RE Policy Unit to support PR work in relation to religion and worldviews in particular the work of the champions £5,000

Edge Hill University to support their summer school in 2024 £8,000

The Trust awarded eight project grants

Queen's University Belfast for a project entitled 'RWE for All'. Grant Awarded £20,037

Open University for a project entitled 'The Docutube Method: Teacher training, policy and practice across the UK. Grant Awarded: £22,478

Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education for a project entitled 'Empowering Voices, Exploring Worldviews'. Grant awarded: £5,000

The **Religion and Belief Literacy Partnership** for their project: *The Public Sector Religion and Belief Literacy Standard (ReLit Standard)*. Grant Awarded: £20,000

Catholic Bishop's Conference and Bible Society for their project: Made in God's Image, focussing on the development of resources to support teacher and pupil engagement with the exhibition. Grant Awarded: £5,000

Staffordshire SACRE for their project: Developing and defining strategic leadership in RE. Grant Awarded: £6,510

The Scottish Teachers Association of Religious and Moral Education (STARME) for a Festival of Learning to showcase best practice in the subject enabling participants to enhance the quality of curriculum enactment and classroom pedagogy. Grant Awarded: £5,049

The Faith and Belief Forum for their project: North-West and West Midlands Parental Engagement Project. Grant Awarded: £29,772

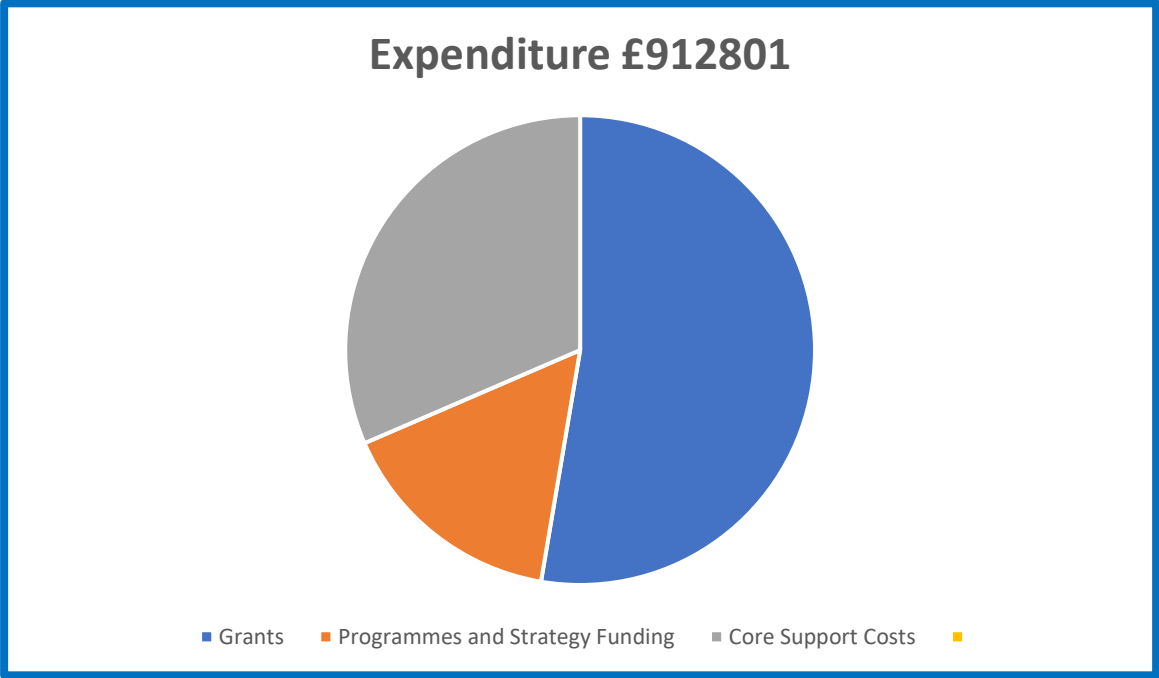
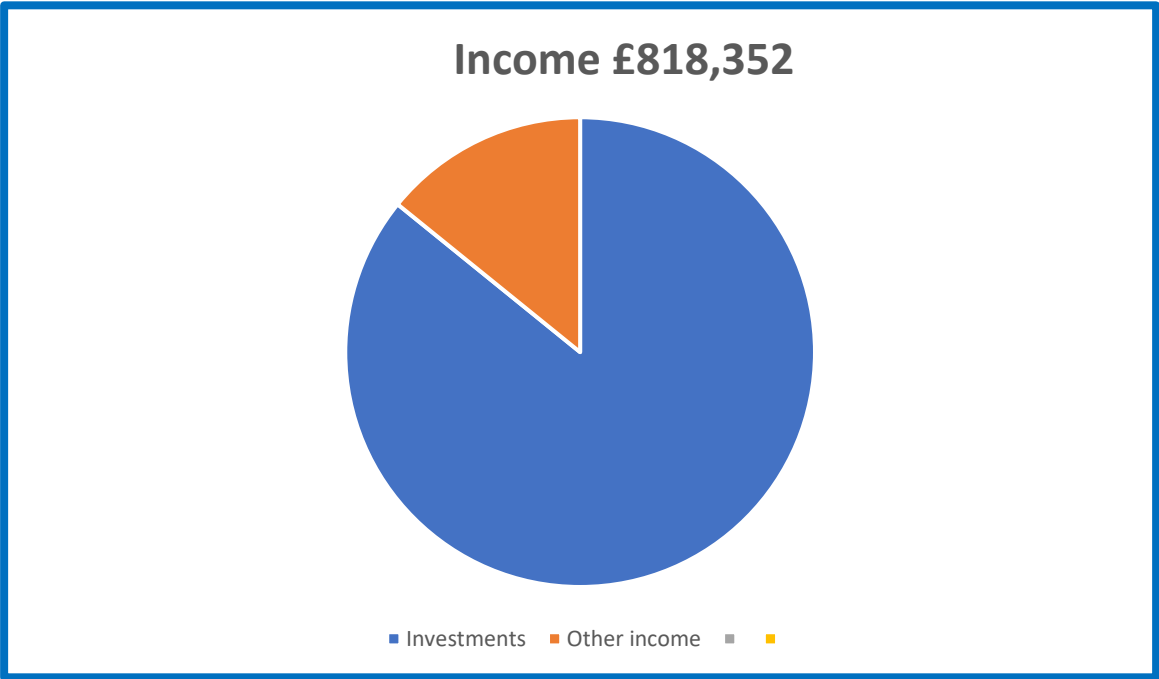
Looking to the future

Whilst this report focuses on the external impact of the Trust, we have five internal objectives that support our outward facing work. Significant streamlining of our book-keeping and financial processes has occurred to enable trustees to receive more meaningful reports. We have placed a strong emphasis on staff well-being, including introducing a Jubilee (7 year) Service Award and employer supported volunteering. Cyber security measures and development of a CRM system are supporting operational effectiveness.

These internal foci provide firm foundations for our future work as we build capacity through our strong staff team. As we look ahead the DfE curriculum and assessment review is likely to have an impact on our work, as is the continued number of teachers without an RE specialism who are teaching the subject in secondary schools. We are also seeking to reach into new education sectors such as alternative provision and into spaces where religion and worldview literacy is of increasing importance.

As well as new colleagues we have new trustees joining us in 2024-25, ensuring a highly skilled and effective Culham St Gabriel's Team to help us work towards fulfilling our mission.

Summary of Income and Expenditure



Governance of the Trust

Trustees 2023-24

Co opted Trustees:

Ms Alysia-Lara Ayonrinde 2022-2026

Ms Susie Al-Qassab 2022-2026

Revd Canon Peter Ballard 2020-2024 (Chair Finance and General Purposes Committee, Resigned January 2024)

Professor Robert Bowie 2023-2027

Mr James Cowen 2024 – 2028 (Co-opted September 2024)

Ms Nansi Ellis 2023-2027 (Chair of Grants and Education Committee)

Ms Gillian Georgiou 2021-2025

Canon Dr Ann Holt OBE 2020- 2024

Mr Paul Knappett 2024—2028 (Co-opted April 2024)

Dr Richard Kueh 2024 – 2028 (Co-opted September 2024)

Mr Krystian McInnis 2022-2026

Ms Caroline Weir 2023-2027

Mrs Deborah Weston OBE 2020-2024 (Final term ended 31st August 2024)

Dr Linda Whitworth 2022-2026 (Chair of Trustees, Interim Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee)

Nominated Trustees:

Revd Mark Bennet 2020-2024

Diocese of Southwark Nomination -Vacancy

Mr Tony Wilson 2023-2027

Ex Officio:

Revd Canon Nigel Genders CBE

The Trust website is updated regularly with any changes to personnel, including changes in Trustees.
www.cstg.org.uk/people.

Structure of the Trust

The Trust operates with two committees with defined roles in relation to finance and general purpose, and grant-giving and education, each reporting to the Full Board of Trustees. All documentation including policies, standing orders, agendas and minutes are managed through Microsoft Teams. New trustees meet with the Chair and Chief Executive before a recommendation is made to the Board. All trustees have signed the Trustee declaration and completed the register of interests. The Chief Executive provides a termly newsletter to trustees between Board meetings as well as an operational report at each Full Board meeting.

Reserves Statement

The unrestricted investments and deposit account shall be maintained at a figure approximating to twelve months' investment income (approximately £650K). At this level of reserves, it should be possible to absorb future Stock Exchange fluctuations, other unforeseen contingencies and any higher-than-average grant applications or programme costs in any one year. At 31st August 2024 the unrestricted funds balance was £697,451 (2023: £835,622), of which £898,239 (2023: £1,016,445) was held in investments. Trustees are ensuring that they are meeting particular areas of need within the education sector especially during these uncertain times and used £250K of cash reserves to commit to funding the RE Policy Unit and Religious Education Council of England and Wales over the next three years. The level of unrestricted reserves and the charity's reserves policy will continue to be reviewed regularly.

Investments and Risks Policy

The Culham St Gabriel's investment objectives are:

- To protect, so far as is reasonable, with the avoidance of undue risk, the real value of the capital and stability of income for the portfolio after allowing for inflation;
- To maintain a proactive ethical stance through investment strategy.

The two objectives are of equal importance.

The major risks to which the Trust is exposed, in particular those related to the operations and finances of the Trust have been reviewed in light of the impact on investments of the continued war in Ukraine and the Middle East. Systems and procedures have been established to minimise and manage risks. Insurance policies have been reviewed in light of the changing operations of the Trust.

Key Management Personnel Remuneration

The pay of all employees is reviewed annually. Two new members of staff (Finance and Administration Officer and Grants, Governance and Partnership Manager) joined the Trust in 2023-24. These were newly created roles, and their salaries were benchmarked before advertising. Remuneration is reviewed to ensure that it is fair and not out of line with similar roles. Payments to consultants are also reviewed on an annual basis.

Public Benefit Statement

The Trust furthers its charitable purposes for the public benefit by advocating for and championing an education in religion and worldviews as set out in this annual review. In setting its operational plans and activities the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. During the year ended 31st August 2024, the Trust has continued to provide support through strategic funding awards, grant-making and programmes as set out in this review. It has also developed its strategic partnerships with like-minded funders and other organisations with similar purposes.



CULHAM ST GABRIEL'S
CHAMPIONING RELIGION AND WORLDVIEWS EDUCATION

Charity Information

CEO: Kathryn Wright

Auditor: Wenn Townsend
Chartered Accountants
30 St Giles'
Oxford
OX1 3LE

Bankers: National Westminster Bank plc
11 Market Place
Abingdon
Oxon
OX14 3HH

Investment Managers: CCLA Investment Management Limited
Senator House, 85 Queen Victoria Street
London
EC4V 4ET

Solicitors: Winckworth Sherwood
16 Beaumont Street
Oxford
OX1 2LZ

Registered Charity No: 309671

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). The law applicable to charities in England and Wales 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 Charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the Charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity 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 Charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and Trust Deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The Trustees, in exercising their powers and duties, have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission.

ON BEHALF OF THE TRUSTEES



Linda Whitworth

11th December 2024



CULHAM ST GABRIEL'S
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