



**Ambition
Institute**

Annual Report

2024/2025



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Welcome message from our Chair

At Ambition Institute, our mission is clear: to help teachers and school leaders serving children from disadvantaged backgrounds to keep getting better.

This year, we have continued to extend our reach across the sector, supporting tens of thousands of teachers and school leaders, and, through them, millions of pupils. This scale of reach represents countless moments of learning, development and opportunity for children, particularly those facing the greatest barriers.

We have strengthened our partnerships across schools, trusts and the wider system, delivering high quality professional development to educators at every stage of their career. Through this work, we are helping to build a more expert, confident and resilient education workforce.

In 2024 we set a clear long-term strategy, focusing our efforts on the areas where we can make the greatest difference for children facing disadvantage. We are encouraged by the progress we are making against these priorities, while recognising that sustained commitment will be needed to achieve lasting change.



I am particularly proud of how Ambition has responded to the evolving needs of the sector. This year saw us invest considerably in our future – to launch new and targeted programmes, expand our research and innovation, and deepen our commitment to inclusion, especially in supporting pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

While there is much to celebrate, we know there is still work to do. The attainment gap remains stubborn, and the challenges facing schools are significant. But I am optimistic. Our work continues to be grounded in rigorous evidence, and we remain focused on the areas where we can make the greatest difference.

None of this progress would be possible without the support and collaboration of our partners and funders, and the shared commitment across the sector to improving outcomes for all children. Together, we are working towards a fairer education system that gives every child the best possible start in life.

Rich Jefferson, Chair of Trustees

Welcome message from our CEO

We believe that the most powerful way to improve outcomes and life chances for all children is by developing the professional expertise of teachers and school leaders. This year's annual report gives us an opportunity to reflect on the progress we have made with our partners in the sector.

Ambition Institute has operated at a large scale across the country this year, reaching over 56,000 teachers and school leaders from nearly 11,000 schools, trusts and early years settings. This is more educators and more children than we have ever reached before, and this is only possible because of the dedication and expertise of our partners – our delivery partners who help us work with tens of thousands of educators, and our funding partners who enable us to innovate and create long-term solutions.

Last year, we set out our long-term strategy, which is focused on making the greatest difference to children facing disadvantage, where it matters most. Teachers and school leaders consistently tell us that the need is greatest in special educational needs and disabilities, and in the early years – and the evidence is clear that high quality support can make a real difference to children's life chances. We have therefore increased our focus on inclusion and early years to help support the sector.

Nearly two in five children will be identified as having a special educational need at some point during their time at school, and we know many continue to face challenges that affect their outcomes into adulthood. Supporting every pupil to thrive in the classroom is therefore part of every teacher and school leader's role. We have embedded inclusive teaching principles and content across our core programmes which reach tens of thousands of educators – from Initial Teacher Training, to early career teachers and mentors, through to National Professional Qualifications for leaders. We have deliberately developed and tested new approaches, including original research, specialist programmes,



and sector-led initiatives to share emerging, promising practice in this crucial area of education.

The foundation of a child's development begins before school, and early education is vital for closing the disadvantage gap, particularly in communication and language. We have strengthened early years content within our programmes, created specialist pilots, and worked with partners to understand what makes the greatest difference for children and families.

So that we can provide high quality, evidence-informed support in these areas, we have invested significantly in building our expertise, developing new partnerships, and piloting and testing new approaches. We have used some of our charitable reserves to fund this important, forward-looking work, recognising that supporting the sector to meet future challenges requires both commitment and resources. In the coming year, we look forward to expanding this work and supporting even more practitioners to give all children the best possible start.

None of this progress would be possible without our committed and talented staff, or the tireless teachers, school leaders, expert partners and practitioners who do everything possible to address educational disadvantage. Thank you for your dedication and for the difference you make every day.

Together, we are shaping an education system where every child can thrive, no matter what their background.

Hilary Spencer, Chief Executive Officer

Strategic report

Objectives and activities

A great teacher changes the future every day. They can be the critical factor in a child's success, especially for those who have had a tough start in life. At Ambition Institute, we support teachers and school leaders at every stage of their careers, helping them to keep getting better. We are a charity providing training and professional development based on the most rigorous research and evidence about what really works. Together, we're shaping the future of education to help give every child the best start in life.

What we do

Training and development programmes

We work with teachers at every stage of their career, from those just starting out to experienced professionals, headteachers, CEOs leading multiple schools. Through high quality training and development, we support teachers, early years practitioners, and school leaders to make an even greater difference for children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, while building long and fulfilling careers in education. Our programmes are grounded in robust evidence of what works and equip educators with practical tools to address the challenges they face in the classroom and across their schools.

Influence across the education sector

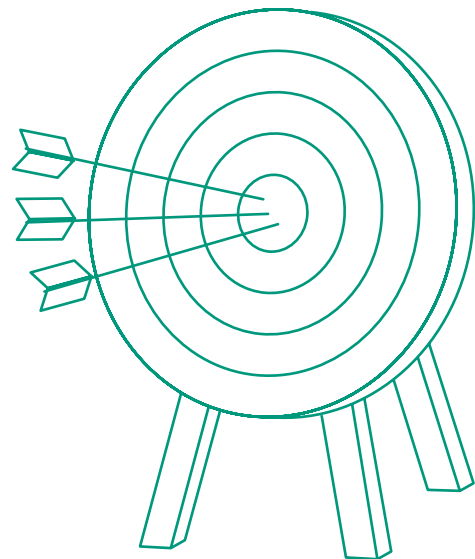
Beyond our direct work with educators, we collaborate across the education sector and with policymakers to strengthen understanding of effective professional development. We carry out research, work with partners, and share evidence-informed practice to benefit the whole sector.

56,000

In 2024/25, we reached over 56,000 teachers and school leaders from nearly 11,000 schools, trusts and early years settings.

4.3m

Together, these schools reach over 4.3 million pupils across the country.



Why we do it

Too many children from disadvantaged backgrounds start school behind their peers. The attainment gap doubles by the end of primary school and doubles again by the end of secondary school, limiting their future opportunities.

Great teaching changes lives.

Evidence shows that the quality of teaching is the single biggest factor influencing what a child achieves. It has three times more impact than any other factor within a school's control.

Access to excellent teachers transforms learning. Pupils taught by one of the best teachers can learn in six months what it takes an average teacher a year to teach. Those taught by the weakest teachers can take over two years to achieve the same progress. Effective teaching benefits all children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Strong leadership helps schools thrive.

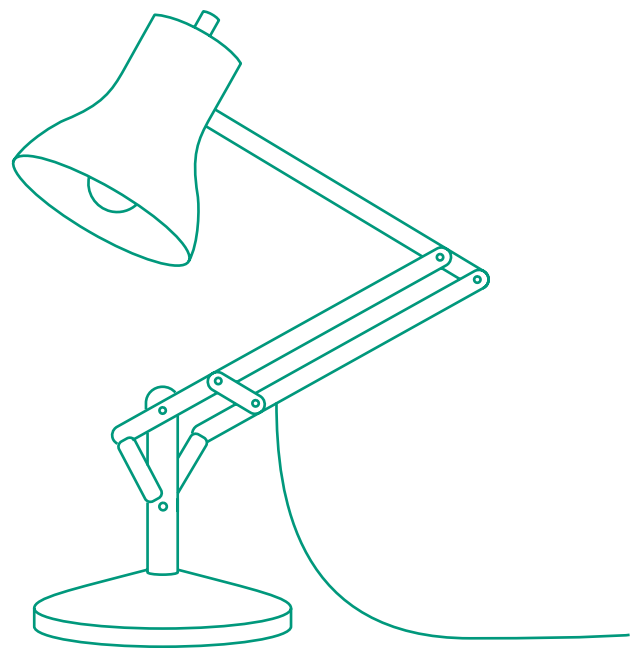
Effective school leaders improve outcomes for children and create environments where teachers are more likely to stay, develop, and feel fulfilled in their work.

Professional development is the most powerful lever for improvement.

Research shows that high quality professional development is the most cost-effective and sustainable way to build the skills of teachers and school leaders. This supports today's classrooms while nurturing the leaders of tomorrow.

Investing in educators is an investment in the future.

At Ambition Institute, we deliver the highest quality professional development, grounded in rigorous evidence of what really works – helping to secure a better future for schools and for children.



Our strategy

In 2024 we launched our five year strategy. This guides our next chapter in building an education system that works for all children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. As we reach the second year of delivering this strategy, we are proud of what we have achieved, but we remain ambitious.

Our goal is to continue making a significant impact on closing the disadvantage gap: ensuring that every child can reach their potential and that all teachers and school leaders have access to high quality professional development. This strategy focuses our efforts where they can have the greatest effect on children's learning and wellbeing, informed by evidence and our expertise in education.

A thank you to our partners

We know we achieve more when we work together. Our delivery partners allow us to reach tens of thousands of teachers and leaders across the country, while funding partners enable us to innovate and create long-term solutions. Collaborating with organisations across sectors, supporting research, and influencing policy all amplify our impact. By combining partners' expertise with our reach and knowledge of professional development, we can create practical solutions that make a meaningful difference for teachers, leaders, schools, and, ultimately, the children they serve.

Our six strategic priorities

1 Behaviour

Every pupil deserves a calm and supportive environment where they can learn and feel a sense of belonging at school. When behaviour is well-managed and pupils are engaged, they make an extra four months' progress in a year. Absence and pupil disruption are ongoing challenges in schools, with disadvantaged pupils experiencing the most impact.

2 Early years

The foundation of a child's development begins before school. Early education is critical for closing the disadvantage gap, particularly in communication and language. Targeted early teaching and leadership ensure children are prepared to succeed throughout their school years.

3 Literacy

Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are essential predictors of success across all subjects and later life. Teachers and leaders need support to prioritise effective literacy instruction, which benefits disadvantaged pupils most, helping to close attainment gaps of up to 19 percentage points.

4 Maths

Mathematical skills influence achievement across school subjects and life outcomes. Developing teacher expertise in maths is vital, particularly as only 44% of maths teachers hold a degree in the subject, and disadvantaged pupils face an average attainment gap of 20 percentage points.

5 Recruitment and retention

Attracting and keeping high quality teachers and leaders improves pupil outcomes and strengthens schools. Schools serving disadvantaged communities often face staffing challenges, making targeted professional development and retention strategies critical.

6 Special educational needs and disabilities

Nearly 40% of children have some form of special educational need or disability at some point in their school lives. In inclusive schools each pupil is accepted, supported and celebrated as a valuable member of the community, and teachers and school leaders are central to making this a reality.

Our programmes

In 2024/25, we delivered more programmes than ever before, reaching:

56,000

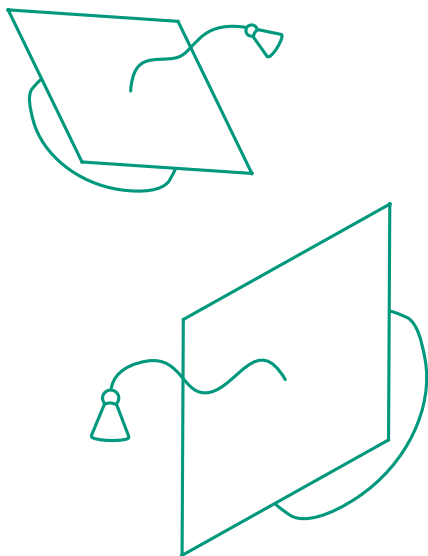
teachers and school leaders

11,000

From nearly 11,000 schools, trusts and early years settings

1 in 9

teachers and leaders in state-funded schools



Our 'golden thread' programmes

The Department for Education-backed 'golden thread' of professional development programmes helps every teacher and school leader build their expertise and practice in a coherent, cumulative way, using the same secure evidence base.

Initial Teacher Training

Our first cohort successfully completed their programme, bringing over 400 new qualified teachers into the profession.

Early Career Teachers

Nearly 6,500 early career teachers and 4,400 mentors started the Early Career Teacher programme. Our early career programme was assessed as 'outstanding' by Ofsted, with a number of elements of quality and delivery described as 'exceptional'.

National Professional Qualifications

Over 8,300 teachers and leaders started a National Professional Qualification (NPQ) with us. We also introduced the new NPQ for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators.

Targeted programmes

In addition to our 'golden thread' programmes, we are proud to have a suite of targeted programmes addressing specific needs or areas of teaching expertise.

We have also launched a range of pilot programmes this year, testing different topics and modes of delivery, with special educational needs and disability (SEND) as a specific area of focus. Alongside our pilots, we are also delivering several directly commissioned programmes and pieces of work for our partners.

Initial Teacher Training

Our postgraduate Initial Teacher Training (ITT) programme equips people entering the profession with the skills and confidence to become effective teachers who can transform outcomes for all pupils.

Key achievements

First year of delivery

In September 2024 we began our first year of delivering ITT and we are pleased to have played a part in bringing over 400 new qualified teachers into the profession. The programme is delivered together with our network of 20 partners, stretching from Kent to Cumbria, and with Liverpool Hope University which validates the curriculum and assessment approaches for awarding the Post Graduate Certificate in Education.

Recruiting a diverse cohort

Diversity in ITT is crucial, particularly ethnic and racial diversity. National research shows there are still clear disparities in who gets into training, who stays, and who progresses into leadership. This means the profession does not yet fully reflect the communities it serves (National Foundation for Educational Research, 2024).

With 34% of our cohort identifying as Black, Asian or minority ethnic, compared to 27% of initial teacher trainees nationally, we are proud to be building a more representative and inclusive pipeline into teaching.

In 2024/25, we recruited more than 440 new teachers to start training in September 2025, making us the seventh largest postgraduate ITT provider in England.

91%

of trainees agreed that their training gave them the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to begin their career in teaching.

What our trainees and partners said:

“The programme provided strong mentorship and clear feedback throughout, helping me grow steadily and confidently. I never felt like I was going it alone.”

A trainee

“The ITT programme provided a strong balance between practical classroom experience and research-informed training. The programme also allowed for reflection, collaboration, and gradual development of confidence in managing behaviour, planning, and assessment. It prepared me well for the ECT year.”

A trainee

“I’m very impressed by the quality of the curriculum materials. The pedagogical thread running through everything is great. My trainees really understand the aligned curriculum - they’ve really embraced it. I’ve especially enjoyed delivering professional studies. It’s so easy to see the thread that runs through these sessions and the signposting is so clear.”

A partner

Early Career Teachers

Our Early Career Teachers programme provides extensive support for recently qualified teachers, including a dedicated mentor who works with them one-to-one. With a carefully sequenced and evidence-informed curriculum, the programme focuses on what and how teachers learn. It supports those new to teaching to stay in the profession.

In 2024/25, we onboarded a cohort of 11,100 including 6,400 early career teachers and 4,700 mentors.

Key achievements

An 'outstanding' Ofsted inspection

In Summer 2025 our programme was inspected and graded 'outstanding' across all areas. Inspectors said our early career teachers are "exceptionally well prepared to apply what they have learned across a range of phases and settings," meaning they are "fully equipped to enjoy successful and fulfilling careers in teaching." The report also highlighted that our "commitment to improving the life chances and outcomes of disadvantaged pupils is reflected in the exceptional training early career teachers receive."

Refreshed programme for 2025

In Summer 2025 we launched a new, refreshed programme, based on the new, national ITTECF framework and building on the successes of the previous programme. Key changes include a refreshed, more focused mentor programme; pastoral coaching to support new teachers more effectively; and greater emphasis on supporting children with special educational needs.

92%

of early career teachers and mentors were satisfied with their programme.

92%

of school leaders of early career teachers agreed the programme provides a good foundation for a career in teaching.

100%

of partners were satisfied with their partnership and said they would recommend Ambition Institute.

What our participants and partners said:

"The main benefits of this programme are that it has helped me become more confident and effective in the classroom. It has given me clear, practical strategies that I can use straight away, which has made my teaching more focused and organised."

An early career teacher

"It is rewarding to have time to watch a colleague develop and flourish as well as helping you to also reflect upon your own practice as a teacher and perhaps also try out new ideas. It helps to keep teaching alive and fresh. It is important."

A mentor

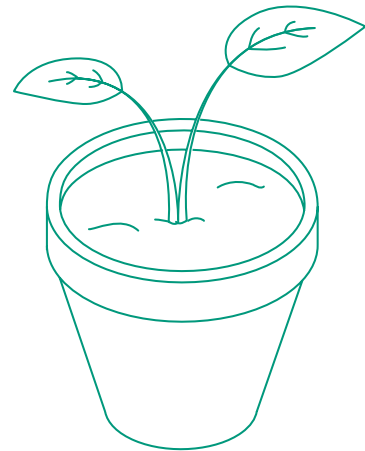
"The programme is well structured and has a high impact on the teaching in our schools. I feel very well supported as a delivery partner from Ambition."

A partner

National Professional Qualifications

Our National Professional Qualification (NPQ) programmes develop teachers and school leaders' specialist knowledge and leadership skills. This empowers them to drive lasting improvements and make a meaningful impact across their schools.

In 2024/25, more than 8,300 teachers and school leaders began an NPQ with us.



Our National Professional Qualifications

- > **Leading Behaviour and Culture**
Builds participants' understanding of behaviour management and how to create a school culture where staff and pupils can thrive.
- > **Leading Literacy**
Develops teachers to become expert leaders of literacy and learn its importance in enabling young people to reach their full potential.
- > **Leading Primary Mathematics**
Supports teachers to become expert leaders in primary maths and embed mastery approaches across schools.
- > **Leading Teacher Development**
Equips participants to become expert teacher educators, helping other teachers improve their practice.
- > **Leading Teaching**
Explores what outstanding teaching looks like and supports participants to become high-performing leaders of teaching.
- > **Senior Leadership**
Strengthens leaders' knowledge and expertise to improve outcomes for teachers and pupils across a school.
- > **Headship**
Develops the knowledge underpinning expert school leadership to support participants in becoming outstanding headteachers.
- > **Executive Leadership**
Supports leaders to drive change and improvement across a group of schools or multi-academy trust.
- > **Early Years Leadership**
Prepares leaders of early years education to give all children up to age 5 the best possible start in life.
- > **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators**
Supports SENCOs to implement and lead their school's SEND provision effectively.

Key achievements

High demand for NPQ programmes

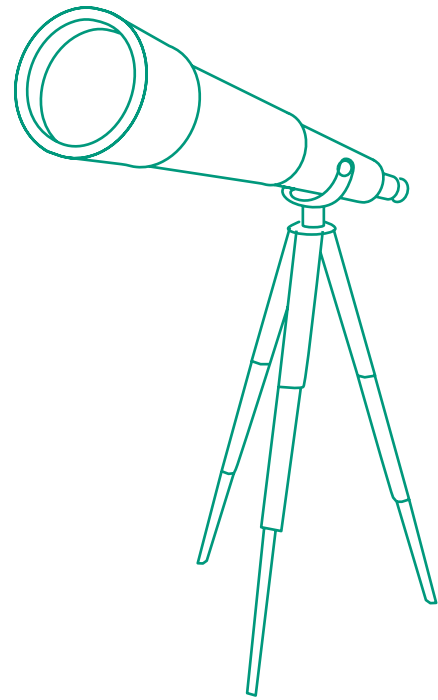
In 2024/25 the Department for Education funded fewer NPQ places than in previous years. We had around 1,000 self- or school-funded participants this year, showing that the programmes are valued across the sector. The NPQ for SENCOs proved highly popular, reaching full capacity due to strong demand.

94%

of participants agreed that their NPQ had helped them to develop their expertise as a school leader.

96%

of delivery partners said that our NPQ programmes had a medium or high impact on schools in their delivery network.



What our participants and partners said:

“The structure of the course is flexible around a busy workload and home life, which made it manageable and sustainable. The balance of practical strategies, reflection, and collaboration makes it a valuable programme I would recommend to colleagues who want to develop their leadership.”

NPQ participant

“Colleagues feel more confident in adapting and improving their skills, due to having experience of engaging with academic materials, research, and evidence-informed practices that are curated for their particular area of study.”

A partner

“The programmes are an effective tool to ensure staff’s confidence grows and they can feel prepared to contribute, challenge or reshape the current dynamics of their school setting.”

A partner

Targeted programmes and pilots

Alongside our 'golden thread' programmes, we offer a suite of smaller-scale, high quality targeted programmes. This year we have also invested in testing and piloting different topics and modes of delivery to address pressing sector needs and gaps in professional development.

This year we delivered four established programmes:

1. **Curriculum for Senior Leaders** – supporting school leaders to implement a whole-school curriculum with confidence.
2. **Instructional Coaching** – developing expertise to use instructional coaching as a technique to improve teacher practice in schools.
3. **Teacher Education Fellows** – supporting teacher educators to develop their expertise and practice.
4. **Transforming Teaching** – a whole-school programme developing teacher education teams.

We piloted a range of new programmes:

1. **Leading Trust Improvement: SEND** – supporting trust senior leaders to develop and lead a multi-school approach to special educational needs and disabilities.
2. **High Impact Maths** – supporting teachers of secondary maths to build their confidence and develop evidence-informed teaching techniques.
3. **Build Pupil Engagement and Belonging** – helping school leaders foster engagement in pupils, increasing the value and enjoyment pupils get out of going to school every day.
4. **Leading Professional Development for Teaching Assistants** – helping schools deliver high quality professional development to their teaching assistants and learning support assistants.
5. **Adaptive Teaching: Train the Trainer** – developing classroom teachers' expertise so that they can adapt their teaching to a diverse range of pupil needs and improve learning for all.
6. **Leading Reading: Fluency and Comprehension** – equipping literacy leaders with expertise and strategies to support pupils to read effectively.

Direct commissions for our partners

We work with trusts and groups of schools to meet their workforce needs in a bespoke way. In 2024/25, our directly commissioned projects included:

- > The third year of the programme for Sustainable Leadership, Curriculum, and Teaching in Liverpool, with Liverpool City Council and School Improvement Liverpool.
- > A SEND and inclusion programme for Gloucestershire County Council.
- > A new approach to recruiting and developing headteachers for Lift Schools.

What our participants and partners said:

.....
"An academic and rigorous course which promotes complex thinking about student engagement and motivation which has implications for staff and students in all academic settings. The practical support and take-aways are extremely useful."

Build Pupil Engagement and Belonging participant

.....
"This programme has deepened my understanding of how to support all learners through practical, evidence-informed strategies tailored to our school's context. It's empowered me to lead impactful CPD in a bid to build a shared culture of adaptive, inclusive teaching."

Adaptive Teaching participant

.....
"Ambition listened, found out about the good work already happening and valued Liverpool's context. They adapted existing programmes, introduced bespoke SEND content and expanded the offer with their new Instructional Coaching programme. This flexible approach maximised public funds."

Jane Holmes, Director of Education Services, School Improvement Liverpool

Research and thought leadership

Alongside designing and delivering professional development, we work to close important gaps in the evidence on educational policy, effective teaching and learning, and professional development.

By generating and sharing research and insights, we strengthen our own programme design and aim to help practitioners and policymakers make well-informed decisions grounded in evidence.

In 2024/25, our priority has been to build knowledge – from conducting rigorous research and analysis, to sharing examples of good and promising practice, and offering new ways of thinking about the future of professional development.

This work is intended to help the sector better understand the challenges it faces and the practical approaches that can make a difference.

Our publications this year included:

The future of professional development: With the Institute for Public Policy Research, we set out the case for sustained investment in teacher expertise and a high quality professional development entitlement. We gathered ideas and feedback from school and system leaders, including trust leaders, school leaders, and organisations across the sector involved in the ‘golden thread’ reforms. The report called for:

- > A universal teacher development entitlement available to all teachers and school leaders nationally.
- > Funding targeted towards disadvantage, and towards the system priorities, for example early years and special educational needs and disabilities.
- > Clarity for schools and trusts on what they can access, over the long term and with clear funding, so they can plan how to best focus their local offer.
- > Supporting and sustaining an ecosystem made up of a variety of national, regional and specialist providers.



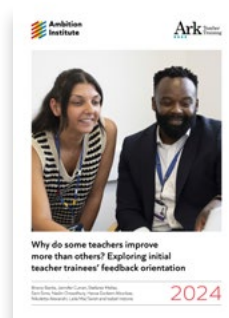
[Read more](#)

Pupil motivation and engagement: We published a research-based guide to help teachers and school leaders understand pupil engagement and why it is important in creating positive outcomes for pupils. The guide shares theory about how to motivate pupils and how meeting children’s underlying psychosocial needs can improve the quality of their motivation in powerful ways. It sets out 13 research-based insights on what works and why, to support teachers and leaders to turn the theory into practice.



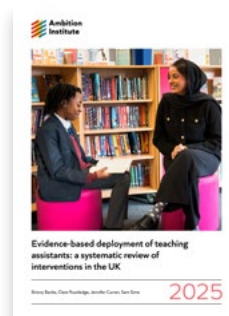
[Read more](#)

Feedback orientation: We examined whether novice teachers’ feedback orientation (that is, how much they value and accept feedback) could help us to understand why some novice teachers improve more than others. We found that feedback orientation may be affected by trainees’ feedback environment and can improve over time, but that it was not a reliable predictor of how much novice teachers improved.



[Read more](#)

Effective use of teaching assistants: We reviewed the interventions that teaching assistants can deliver, aiming to improve the impact this role can have on pupils’ academic outcomes by helping schools choose evidence-based interventions. We explored 21 interventions and found that eight showed a reliable and positive impact on pupil outcomes.



[Read more](#)

Expanding our work on SEND

We have significantly expanded our work supporting pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) this year. It is one of our strategic priorities and teachers, school leaders and our partners consistently say they want more support through professional development to help them support children with SEND more effectively than they are currently.

Why SEND?

There are children with additional needs in every classroom, and supporting children with SEND is part of every teacher and school leader's role. Around two in five children will be recorded to have some kind of special need at some point between reception and Year 11.

Children with SEND do less well at school, and this starts early. Fewer than one in four pupils with special educational needs achieve a 'good' level of development in their early years, compared to two-thirds of their peers without special educational needs. This can lead to challenges in later life. Around 35% of disabled young people are not in paid employment at age 25, compared to 18% of non-disabled young people.

Children from disadvantaged backgrounds are generally more likely to be identified with SEND. However, they are also less likely than other children to be able to access the right support than other children.

What we have done this year

Embedded SEND principles across our programmes Knowledge and practice on inclusive teaching and leadership are embedded across our national programmes, including Initial Teacher Training, Early Career Teachers, and National Professional Qualifications. Our national programmes reach thousands of trainees and teachers, supporting inclusive teaching and adaptive strategies across mainstream classrooms.

Dedicated NPQ for SENCOs

In 2024/25, more than 1,200 teachers and leaders participated in our NPQ for Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCO), an 18-month programme that develops leadership and inclusive practice in schools. Participants include existing and aspiring SENCOs, classroom teachers, subject leads, and school leaders from early years through to secondary phases.

Delivery of specialist SEND programmes

We have developed and piloted specialist programmes including Leading Trust Improvement: SEND; Adaptive Teaching; and Leading Professional Development for Teaching Assistants. These equip leaders and teachers to implement effective strategies, anticipate barriers to learning, and adapt teaching to meet diverse needs.

Research-informed practice

Our research underpins these programmes, including a systematic review of teaching assistant-led interventions. We are also working in partnership with specialist organisations to develop an Inclusive Teaching Framework to underpin our programmes and share knowledge with the sector. This will be published in 2026, and will cover five areas of pupil need: speech and language, sensory, motor, executive function, and social and emotional development.

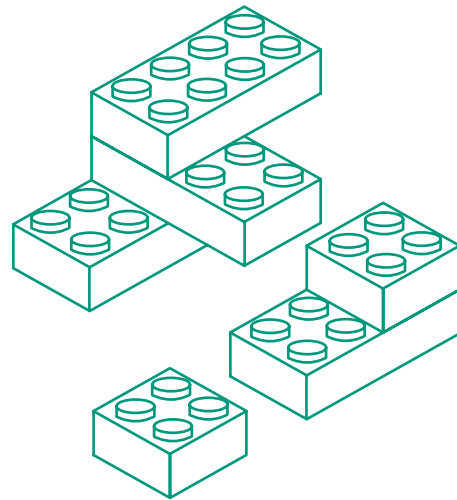
Sector-led initiatives and community of practice

Inclusion in Practice is a sector-led initiative that builds capacity for effective mainstream inclusion and shares evidence-informed SEND approaches through case studies, publications, and webinars. With our partners, we initiated a national call for evidence in April 2025, gathering examples from over 8,400 schools. This identified five principles of promising practice, from knowing children well to embedding inclusion as a shared strategic responsibility. Thousands of teachers and leaders have accessed these resources, in written form and through webinars.

Enhanced provision community of practice

During spring and summer 2025, we brought together school and trust leaders in a community of practice focused on enhanced provision. Participants visited each other's schools, shared practical experiences, and explored what effective provision looks like in different contexts. We will publish the findings and insights from this community in Spring 2026, to share its collective expertise more widely and to support school leaders to consider whether and how enhanced provision could work in their setting.

Across all our programmes, we combine evidence, expert guidance, and scalable professional development to ensure pupils with SEND receive high quality, inclusive education.



Our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in education

Strengthening equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the education workforce is crucial to achieving our mission to give every child the best start in life. That is why we continue to embed these principles into all areas of our work: in our programmes, in our work with partners and the wider sector, and within our organisational culture.

In our organisational equality, diversity and inclusion strategy we set out to:

1. Collaborate with partners to strengthen equality, diversity and inclusion in the teaching workforce and education sector, with an emphasis on race and ethnicity.
2. Recruit diverse cohorts to our programmes, and design and deliver an inclusive and equitable experience for all participants.
3. Foster an organisation culture of diversity, inclusion and belonging for our staff and stakeholders.

What we did in 2024/25:

- > Improved marketing and recruitment to our professional development programmes, to ensure people from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Our Initial Teacher Training cohort for 24/25 was more ethnically diverse than the national average and we consistently enrol a more ethnically diverse set of NPQ participants than the national NPQ averages and the overall workforce.
- > Increased representation of diverse characteristics in programme materials and improved programme accessibility through new policies and enhancements to our online learning platforms.
- > Implemented annual reporting to analyse participant cohorts in our national professional development programmes, compare them with national averages, and examine links between protected characteristics, disadvantage, and outcomes.
- > Played a leading role in bringing together school leaders, educators and EDI specialists for a series of cross-sector EDI roundtables, setting shared sector-wide commitments to help improve racial diversity within leadership progression in education.

- > Contributed to a range of sector events and initiatives focused on strengthening EDI, including the National Foundation for Educational Research's advisory group on racial equality in the education workforce and the annual joint public statement on EDI led by the National Association of Head Teachers union.
- > Launched new EDI training for all our staff and implemented an enhanced package of support and development for colleagues who lead our affinity networks, including a new sponsorship and mentoring offer.
- > Improved completion rates for staff diversity data and conducted our first ethnicity and disability pay gap analyses ahead of mandatory national reporting expectations, to help us identify areas for improvement.

EDI remains a key priority for us, at the very heart of our mission to tackle disadvantage in education.

In 2025/26, we will continue our work on all aspects of EDI, but will also focus particularly on strengthening racial equality, diversity and inclusion in the teaching workforce. We recognise that people from ethnic minority backgrounds are persistently underrepresented in the education workforce and face ongoing barriers to recruitment, retention and career progression.

Addressing racial inequality in the sector is not only a matter of fairness. It is critical for making sure we attract the best and widest range of talent into the education workforce, so that all pupils benefit from a skilled and diverse group of teachers and leaders.

Fundraising

We are very grateful to our funders for their continued support. In 2024/25, their backing enabled us to move forward with pilot programmes and research that test new approaches and generate practical insight. This support plays an important role in helping us explore new ideas and work towards an education system where every child can thrive.

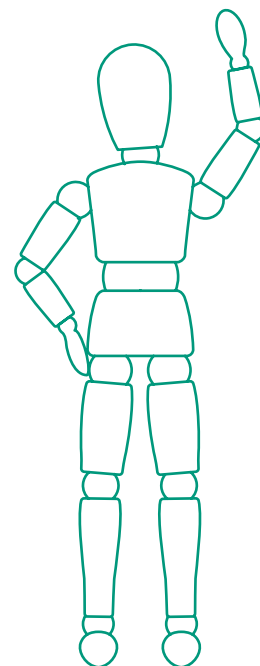
As a charity, we are registered with the Fundraising Regulator and adhere to the standards set out in its Code of Fundraising Practice. We have received no complaints.

Our fundraising focuses on corporate partnerships, trusts and foundations, and we do not raise funds from individuals. All fundraising activity is managed directly by our in-house team.

This year we developed a number of partnerships to support our work, including:

UBS: UBS supported our SEND work through three pilot programmes, focused on trust-wide improvement, adaptive teaching and developing teaching assistants to improve learning for pupils with SEND.

Education Endowment Foundation: This partnership developed a project to evaluate a nine-day working fortnight for teachers, to understand the impact on teacher retention. We worked in collaboration with IFF Research to evaluate a nine-day working fortnight in seven schools in Dixons Academies Trust. The initiative launched in September 2024.



Our people

Our impact as a charity depends on the skill, commitment and insight of our people. We bring together colleagues with experience in schools and early years settings, alongside those who have worked across the non-profit sector, government, local authorities and beyond. This breadth of perspective strengthens our work and keeps us closely connected to the realities of practice.

We are proud of the culture we continue to build – one that is inclusive, thoughtful and ambitious for both our mission and our people. Staff retention remains high, and between 50-60% of vacant roles are filled by internal candidates, reflecting the progression opportunities available across the organisation.

We invest in our staff's professional development, responding directly to feedback on what knowledge and skills people need to thrive in their roles. This year we have deepened cross-organisation expertise in early years and SEND; strengthened transferable skills such as communication, project and stakeholder management, and line management; and launched a new online learning platform to support ongoing development. We are also investing thoughtfully in AI tools to help colleagues work more efficiently – so they can focus more of their energy on the work that most benefits from their judgement, expertise and relationships.

We make space for open dialogue, listening carefully to colleagues and ensuring there is shared clarity about our strategy and priorities. Our policies are rooted in our values, particularly our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

We also recognise that our colleagues have responsibilities and interests beyond work. We support them to balance professional and personal priorities through enhanced parental leave, access to an employee assistance programme, life assurance and a hardship fund. Colleagues highly value our hybrid and flexible working approach, which gives them the autonomy to manage their time well while staying connected and collaborative.

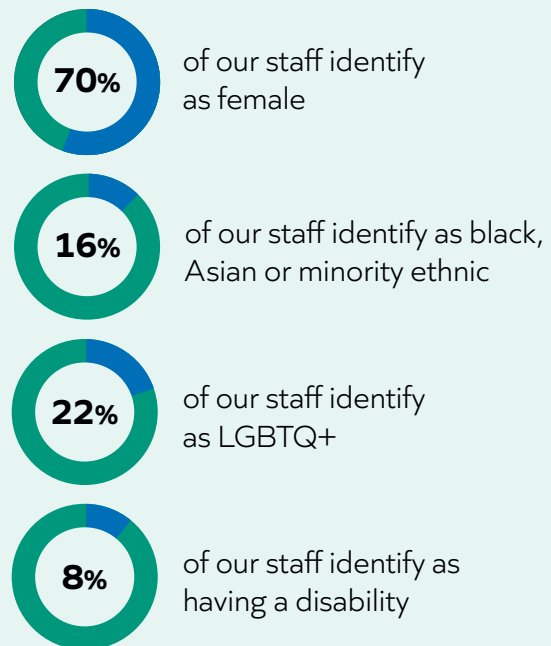
We have proactive staff-led affinity networks that support colleagues to meet and share experiences and help shape the organisation's work to further equality, diversity and inclusion.

These networks are:

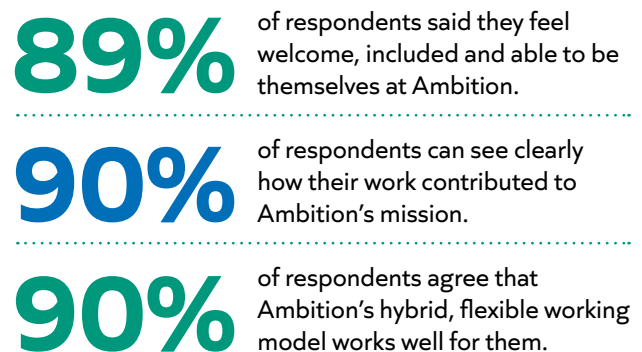
- > LGBTQ+ Network
- > Disability and Neurodiversity Network
- > Mental Health and Wellbeing Network
- > Parents' Network
- > Race Equality Network
- > Women's Network

Our overall headcount remained relatively consistent with the previous year, from 340 in September 2024 to 333 in August 2025.

We are pleased to reflect a diverse range of backgrounds in our staff body:



Through our regular staff surveys in 2024/25:



Financial performance

Our finances

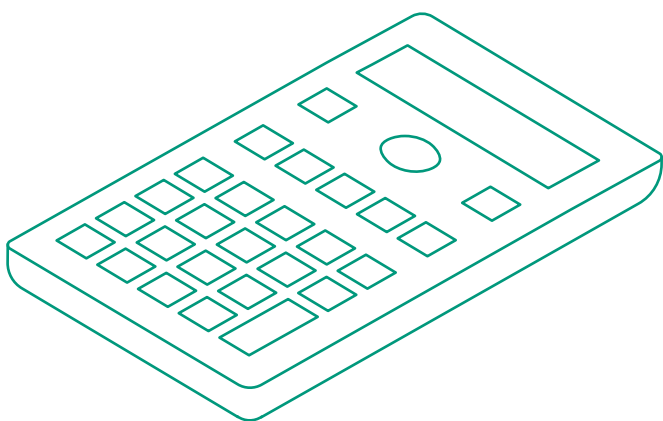
For the financial year ending 31 August 2025, we achieved a turnover of £33.1 million, up from £32.0 million in 2024.

This year marked a significant period of investment for Ambition Institute. We launched delivery of our Initial Teacher Training programme, opening new pathways for more people to become great teachers. Alongside this, we continued to deliver our high quality Early Career Teachers and National Professional Qualification programmes, supporting teachers already in the sector to develop their skills.

We invested in designing, developing and piloting new products, including direct commissions for our partners and programmes that will eventually be scaled to reach a wider audience. As a result, our programme design and delivery costs increased by £1.4 million.

As a result, our total expenditure rose from £32.1 million in 2023/24 to £33.5 million in 2024/25. We closed the financial year with a deficit of £448,000, reflecting our commitment to growth and future impact.

In September 2024 we began the first year of delivering Initial Teacher Training through the subsidiary company Ambition Teacher Training. For the financial year ending 31 August 2025, turnover was £4.5 million (2024: £nil) and direct costs of delivering the programme were £4.7 million (2024: £nil), with £35,000 (2024: £nil) of administrative expenses, resulting in an overall loss of £209,000. The expectation is that this programme will achieve break-even or better in future years.



Our designated reserves were £4.6 million, a slight decrease from £4.7 million in 2023/24. These reserves reflect the net value of the charity's fixed assets, which are essential for our day-to-day activities and are not available for meeting our immediate financial needs. They also include a long-term loan made to Absolute Return for Kids, which is excluded from the calculation of general reserves due to its long-term nature. Repayment of this loan, at £0.5 million per year, will begin in 2025/26 and continue until the loan is fully repaid.

Our general reserves decreased slightly to £4.0 million, down from £4.2 million in 2023/24. These reserves provide a safeguard against financial risks such as working capital needs, programme recruitment, loss of income, and staff turnover. Our policy is to maintain three months' expenditure in reserves, with a target of £5.6 million. As of 31 August 2025, our general reserves were equivalent to 2.1 months of expenditure, excluding payments to delivery partners. We review this target annually to maintain adequate general reserves.

The reserves are in line with expectation as we are in an investment stage in our financial cycle where we have invested in building our expertise in special educational needs and early years. This will enable us to maximise our impact across the education sector in years to come.

Restricted reserves stood at £78,000 as of 31 August 2025, down from £195,000 at 31 August 2024. This fund represents unspent fundraising income, which we plan to use in 2025/26 in accordance with donors' wishes.

Future activities

We expect to generate surpluses in future years when we have launched more programmes and secured additional contracts as a result of our investment in this financial year.

Risk management

We take a rigorous and proactive approach to managing our risks, responding to major risk drivers throughout the year. Our leadership and governance structures provide a clear framework for monitoring and reporting risks. The Board of Trustees retains overall responsibility for our risk register and its oversight. Both the Board and its three committees regularly reviewed different areas of risk during the year.

Risk management is also embedded in our daily operations. We have established structures and designated roles to support risk reporting and mitigation. We evaluate the likelihood and impact of risks, put mitigations in place, and take necessary actions to manage or reduce risks. While the Board focuses on strategic risks, our operational teams actively manage risks within their functions.

The Board reviews our risk appetite annually, setting out the risk approach and tolerance level. We have six categories that reflect the core elements of our work.

These are:

- > **Programme quality and impact** – We are committed to demonstrating our impact, ensuring that every child can excel through outstanding teaching and educational leadership. The Education and Impact Committee oversees these risks.
- > **Reputation** – We carefully consider who we work with to sustain our reputation in the sector, as well as demonstrating our own impact to the wider professional development community. The Education and Impact Committee oversees these risks.
- > **Partnerships** – Effective collaboration with partners is key to our successful work in schools and the wider sector. The Education and Impact Committee oversees these risks.
- > **Our people** – We need to attract, retain, develop and support diverse and high quality staff to achieve our mission. The People Committee oversees these risks.
- > **Financial** – We continually monitor our income and expenditure, and control costs through careful management. The Finance and Risk Committee oversees these risks.
- > **Operational** – We address various risks related to compliance and operational capabilities, including adherence to legislation such as GDPR, protection against fraud, and health and safety measures. The Finance and Risk Committee oversees these risks.

We considered these six risk categories against a series of risk drivers, monitoring and responding to the results. The risk drivers most prominently affecting our risks are:

Policy uncertainty and sector change – The government’s long-term plans for education policy and funding were still being developed in 2024/25, with key reforms and announcements delayed until early 2026. This uncertainty has made it harder for schools and trusts to plan ahead, and it can affect the timing of new opportunities for organisations like Ambition Institute. For example, delays to government decisions have meant some anticipated opportunities have been postponed. To adapt, we have delivered additional pilot programmes and direct commissions, helping to offset some of the impact on our income. We have also taken steps to manage our costs carefully.

School budgets and teaching workloads – Schools face ongoing challenges with teacher workload and budget constraints. These pressures make it harder for schools to invest in professional development, and can limit participation in our programmes. Staff shortages and heavy workloads particularly affect children from disadvantaged backgrounds and risk widening the disadvantage gap. We design and deliver professional development to meet participants’ needs and provide clear value for schools, helping teachers and school leaders to keep getting better.

Funding and rising costs – As a charity, we depend on external funding to deliver our mission, including major government contracts. We continue to champion the importance of professional development for teachers and school leaders serving disadvantaged pupils, advocating for this to remain a long-term government priority. However, inflation and increased business expenses remain a challenge for charities and individuals alike. We monitor closely how these pressures affect us, our staff, and the wider education sector, and we take steps to manage our expenditure responsibly.

Exploring new opportunities – As part of our long-term strategy, we are strengthening our expertise in SEND and early years education. Entering new areas brings both opportunities and risks, especially where there are already established providers. We are approaching this work with care, focusing on opportunities that align closely with our strengths, being careful not to overextend our resources, and monitoring our progress to support sustainable growth.

Governance and management

Ambition Institute is a charitable company led by our Board of Trustees, who serve as directors under company law. Our main governing document is our Memorandum and Articles of Association, last amended in November 2016. This document sets out how directors and Trustees are appointed and how stakeholder and Trustee meetings are conducted. Details of related party transactions are provided in note 16 of our financial statements.

Ambition Institute's Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for the decisions and actions of the charity and has strategic oversight of the organisation and issues for which they are legally responsible. Day-to-day management is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer and the executive committee, who are held to account for the management of the organisation by the Board.

Ambition Institute has one subsidiary, Ambition Teacher Training, that started trading on 1 September 2024 and oversees our Initial Teacher Training programme.

In 2024/25, the Board of Trustees operated through three sub-committees, each of which reports up on their area of responsibility:

- > **Education and Impact Committee** – Oversees the integrity and quality of our programmes and impact, by holding the executive accountable for key aspects of programme design and delivery and our work with partners.
- > **Finance and Risk Committee** – Oversees our financial and operational effectiveness by holding the executive accountable for our in-year financial performance and long-term financial sustainability. Additionally, it monitors the integrity of the risk process, including risk appetite, risk management and risk culture.
- > **People Committee** – Oversees the organisation's effectiveness in people management by holding the executive accountable for our culture and people matters. Additionally, it makes recommendations to the Board on people remuneration and oversees the recruitment of Trustees.

The Board conducts regular reviews of its own performance through one-to-one meetings with the Chair and Trustees. This process identifies key strengths in current practices, areas for improvement, and the skills and expertise needed for recruiting additional Trustees.

How we provide public benefit

Our mission is to help teachers and school leaders serving children from disadvantaged backgrounds to keep getting better. We provide training and professional development based on the most rigorous research and evidence about what really works. Together, we are shaping the future of education to give every child the best start in life.

Our charitable objectives are to advance education for the public benefit, particularly by promoting and encouraging high standards in teaching, pedagogy and education leadership. Our executive committee and Trustees have due regard for the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising our duties. They also ensure that we deliver our charitable objects through the programmes we provide.

Executive Committee (2024/25)

Hilary Spencer

Chief Executive Officer

Natalie Dixon

Executive Director of ECF and NPQs (Executive Director of Programmes from December 2025)

Tom Glover

Chief Financial Officer (to July 2025)

Marie Hamer

Executive Director of Strategy and Impact

Stephen Jones

Executive Director of Partnerships

Yalinie Vigneswaran

Executive Director of ITT and Targeted Programmes (to November 2025)

All members of the Executive Committee are deemed key management personnel.

Trustees give their time freely and no Trustee received remuneration in the year. The Board of Trustees approved the remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer as recommended by the People Committee.

Trustees' statement of responsibilities

The Trustees 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 period, which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charity and the excess of income over expenditure for that period.

In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- > Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- > 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.
- > Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue its activities.
- > 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 to the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and 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 charity's auditor is unaware.
- > They have 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 charity's auditor is aware of the information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s418 of the Companies Act 2006.

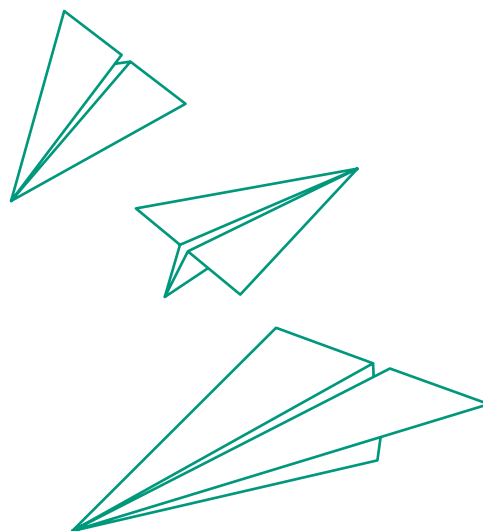
The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Charity information

Company registration number 07984030

Registered charity number 1146924

Ambition Teacher Training company number 15354580



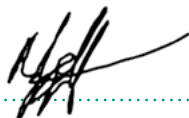
The Board of Trustees

The members, who are also Trustees, have the right to appoint fellow Trustees, and these appointments are indicated in brackets in the list below.

The following Trustees served on the Board of Trustees during the year and up to the approval date of this report:

Richard Jefferson (Chair)
Celia Berenguer (resigned 25 January 2025)
Rebecca Boomer-Clark (resigned 5 September 2025)
John Camp (appointed 30 September 2024)
Sam Freedman
James Fulton (resigned 29 September 2024)
Ian Hale (resigned 29 September 2024)
Cecilia Harvey
Jo Heard-Jones
Joanne Heaton (appointed 30 September 2024)
Paresh Modi (appointed 30 September 2024)
Sarah Mullholland (appointed 26 January 2025)
Rachna Patel (resigned 17 July 2025)
Natalie Perera (appointed 26 January 2025 and resigned 3 December 2025)
Jon Temple
Summer Turner (appointed 3 December 2025)

The annual report was approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by Richard Jefferson:



5th May 2026

Date

Chief Executive Officer

Hilary Spencer

Company Secretary

Tom Glover (resigned 4 July 2025)

Natalie Whyte (appointed 4 July 2025)

Registered Office

2 Bridge Wharf, 156 Caledonian Road,
London, N1 9UU

Bankers

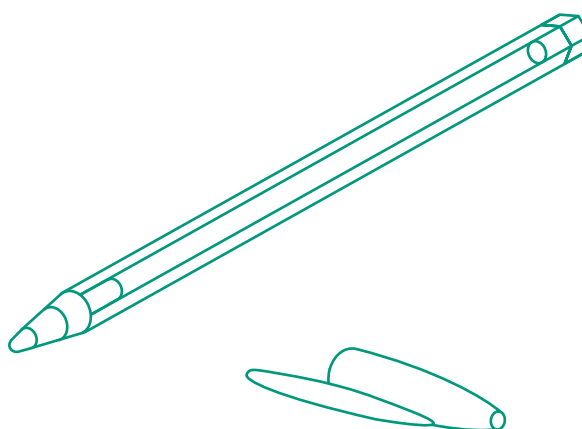
Lloyds Bank plc, 95 George Street, Croydon,
Surrey, CR9 2NS

Solicitors

Bevan Brittan LLP, Kings Orchard, 1 Queens Street,
Bristol, BS2 0HQ

Independent Auditors

Buzzacott Audit LLP, 130 Wood Street,
London, EC2V 6DL



Independent auditors' report

Annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Ambition Institute (the 'charitable parent company') and its subsidiary (the 'group') for the year ended 31 August 2025 which comprise the group statement of financial activities, the group and charitable parent company balance sheets and the group 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 group's and of the charitable parent company's affairs as at 31 August 2025 and of the group's income and expenditure for the year then ended.
- > Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.
- > Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the 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 group and charitable parent 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 and financial statements, 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 and includes the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.
- > The trustees' report, which is also the directors' report for the purposes of company law and includes the strategic report, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and the charitable parent company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' report including the strategic report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- > Adequate accounting records have not been kept by the charitable parent company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- > The charitable parent company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- > Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- > We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors 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 group's and the charitable parent 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 group or the charitable parent 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:

- > 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 charity 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 their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011) and those that relate to data protection (General Data Protection Regulation) and safeguarding legislation.

We assessed the susceptibility of the charity'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.
- > 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.
- > Tested journal entries to identify unusual transactions.
- > Assessed whether judgements and assumptions made in determining the accounting estimates 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.
- > 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. 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.

Buzzacott Audit LLP

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

Date: 6 May 2026

Consolidated statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account). For the year ended 31 August 2025

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total funds 2025 £	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Income from:							
Charitable activities	2	32,353,725	430,280	32,784,005	31,362,963	300,311	31,663,274
Investment income		237,810	-	237,810	242,284	-	242,284
Other income	3	67,581	-	67,581	48,851	-	48,851
Total income		32,659,116	430,280	33,089,396	31,654,098	300,311	31,954,409
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities - Ambition Institute programmes	4	32,990,090	547,291	33,537,381	31,549,292	594,553	32,143,845
Net income/ (expenditure) and net movements in funds	13	(330,974)	(117,011)	(447,985)	104,806	(294,242)	(189,436)
Balances brought forward at 1 September	13	8,926,682	195,303	9,121,985	8,821,876	489,545	9,311,421
Balances carried forward at 31 August		8,595,708	78,292	8,674,000	8,926,682	195,303	9,121,985

The trading subsidiary, Ambition Teacher Training, commenced trading on 1 September 2024 so has been consolidated from that date. The result for the year ended 31 August 2025 for the parent charity was a deficit of £238,647 (2024: deficit of £189,436)

There are no recognised gains and losses other than those shown above. All of the charity's activities are derived from continuing operations.

Balance sheets as at 31 August 2025

	Notes	2025 Group £	2025 Charity £	2024 Charity £
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	8	1,015,954	1,015,954	1,180,271
Investments	9	3,500,000	3,500,000	3,500,000
		<u>4,515,954</u>	<u>4,515,954</u>	<u>4,680,271</u>
Current assets				
Debtors	10	3,916,192	4,122,886	5,614,852
Short term deposit		500,000	500,000	-
Cash at bank and in hand		6,708,383	6,164,800	5,577,887
		<u>11,124,575</u>	<u>10,787,686</u>	<u>11,192,739</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(6,966,529)	(6,420,302)	(6,751,025)
		<u>4,158,046</u>	<u>4,367,384</u>	<u>4,441,714</u>
Net current assets		8,674,000	8,883,338	9,121,985
Net assets		8,674,000	8,883,338	9,121,985
Unrestricted funds				
General	13	3,979,754	4,189,092	4,246,411
Designated	13	4,515,954	4,515,954	4,680,271
Premises	13	100,000	100,000	-
Restricted funds	14	78,292	78,292	195,303
		<u>8,674,000</u>	<u>8,883,338</u>	<u>9,121,985</u>

The trading subsidiary, Ambition Teacher Training, commenced trading on 1 September 2024 so has been consolidated from that date.

The notes on pages 34-48 form part of the Financial Statements.

These Financial Statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Rich Jefferson, Chair of the Trustee Board

5th May 2026

Date

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 August 2025

	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Cash flow from operating activities				
Net expenditure as per the statement of financial activities	(447,985)		(189,436)	
Adjustments for:				
Depreciation	199,105		230,565	
Interest income	(237,810)		(242,284)	
Net decrease in debtors	1,698,660		470,256	
Net increase/(decrease) in creditors	215,504		(811,312)	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities		1,427,474		(542,211)
Cash flows from investing activities				
Interest received	237,810		242,284	
Purchase of short term deposits	(500,000)		-	
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	(34,788)		(103,704)	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
Cash (used in) / provided by investing activities		(296,978)		138,580
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		1,130,496		(403,631)
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>

Analysis of cash and cash equivalents and changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2024 £	Cash flows £	At 31 August 2025 £
Cash at bank	5,577,887	1,130,496	6,708,383
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	<u>5,577,887</u>	<u>1,130,496</u>	<u>6,708,383</u>

1 Accounting policies

The following accounting policies have been used consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the financial statements.

1.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policies below or the notes to these financial statements.

The financial statements show the consolidated statements of the charity and its subsidiary, and have been prepared in accordance with 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 United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP FRS 102) and the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011.

The accounts have been consolidated from 1 September 2024 when the subsidiary company began trading.

Ambition Institute meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The financial statements are presented in sterling and are rounded to the nearest pound.

1.2 Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgement

Preparation of the financial statements requires the Trustees and management to make significant judgements and estimates. The items in the financial statements where these judgements and estimates have been made include:

- > The estimates of the useful economic lives of tangible fixed assets used to determine the annual depreciation charge;
- > The provision required for any bad or doubtful debts which has been determined following an assessment of the likelihood of recovery on long-standing debts; and
- > The estimates and judgements used in determining the value of any contractual or programme related income which may need to be deferred.

1.3 Assessment of going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate and have identified no material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The Trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements.

1.4 Fund accounting

Unrestricted general funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the charitable objectives of Ambition Institute. Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the Trustees for particular purposes. Restricted funds comprise funds received with restrictions imposed by the funder or the donor.

1.5 Income

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income can be measured reliably.

Income from grants and donations which are not linked to performance related conditions or where there are no explicit or implied terms that require the funds to be spent in a future period are recognised in the period in which the charity has received notification of the award and where the value of the award can be measured reliably.

Grant income which is subject to performance related conditions is recognised to the extent of delivery under the contract, and provision is made where the delivery is below the level expected from the contract, and it is probable that the funds may need to be returned.

Fee income from the delivery of programmes is recognised as income evenly over the duration of the length of the programme.

Donated services and facilities are included at the value to the charity to the extent that this can be quantified and recognised when receivable. It has not been possible to quantify and value some donated services received during the year, such as facilities provided free of charge by schools; however, these amounts are not material to the financial statements.

1.6 Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is inclusive of any irrecoverable VAT.

Costs of charitable activities are all expenditure directly relating to the objects of the charity.

Support costs represent indirect expenditure incurred in delivering the charity's objectives and are allocated across the following categories of expenditure on charitable activities at the same ratio as the direct costs:

- > Programme design and delivery
- > Programme marketing and recruitment
- > Systems and programme management

Governance costs are all costs attributable to the management of the charity's assets, organisation, administration and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements.

1.7 Operating leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1.8 Pension

The charity has a defined contribution pension scheme for all eligible members of staff. Pension costs charged in the statement of financial activities represent the contributions payable by the charity in the year.

1.9 Fixed assets

Assets with a cost in excess of £5,000 intended to be of ongoing use to the charity in carrying out its activities are capitalised as fixed assets, depreciated as follows:

Leasehold property

25 years on a straight-line basis

Leasehold property improvement

10 years on a straight-line basis

Furniture, fixtures and fittings

4 years on a straight-line basis

IT equipment

3.5 years on a straight-line basis

1.10 Investments

Investments are in respect of amounts loaned to third parties. The balance is carried on the balance sheet at the value expected to be repaid. It has not been discounted on the basis that there is no fixed repayment profile.

1.11 Debtors

Debtors are recognised at their settlement amount, less any provision for non-recoverability. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid.

1.12 Creditors

Creditors are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are recognised at the amount the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt. They have been discounted to the present value of the future cash payment where such discounting is material.

1.13 Financial instruments

The charity only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the Trust and their measurement basis are as follows:

Financial assets

Accrued income, other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost.

Cash at bank

Classified as a basic financial instrument and is measured at face value.

Financial liabilities

Accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost.

Short term deposits

Defined as any deposit with a notice period of more than three months but not more than a year at the date of inception. These are classified as basic financial instruments and are measured at face value.

1.14 Tax

The charity is exempt from income and corporation tax on income and gains to the extent that they are applied for its charitable objects.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

2 Income from charitable activities

2024/25	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds 2025	Total funds 2024
	£	£	£	£
Department for Education	25,905,468	-	25,905,468	29,578,925
School fees	6,063,379	-	6,063,379	1,624,288
Donations and/or voluntary funds	100	430,280	430,380	300,311
Assessment fees	238,425	-	238,425	159,750
Direct Commissions	146,353	-	146,353	-
	<u>32,353,725</u>	<u>430,280</u>	<u>32,784,005</u>	<u>31,663,274</u>

2023/24	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds 2024
	£	£	£
<i>Department for Education</i>	29,578,925	-	29,578,925
<i>School fees</i>	1,624,288	-	1,624,288
<i>Donations and/or voluntary funds</i>	-	300,311	300,311
<i>Assessment fees</i>	159,750	-	159,750
	<u>31,362,963</u>	<u>300,311</u>	<u>31,663,274</u>

3 Income from other sources

	2025	2024
	£	£
Department for Education grant	-	15,000
Consultancy/research	46,870	30,206
Apprenticeship fees	-	2,500
Facilitation fees	19,242	-
Other	1,469	1,145
	<u>67,581</u>	<u>48,851</u>

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

4 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Direct costs £	Allocated support costs (note 5) £	Total costs 2025 £	Total costs 2024 £
2024/25				
Programme design and delivery	22,901,813	2,262,159	25,163,972	23,109,840
Programme marketing and recruitment	3,400,787	335,918	3,736,705	4,039,774
Systems and programme management	4,219,879	416,825	4,636,704	4,994,231
	<u>30,522,479</u>	<u>3,014,902</u>	<u>33,537,381</u>	<u>32,143,845</u>
2023/24				
Programme design and delivery	21,272,164	1,837,676	23,109,840	
Programme marketing and recruitment	3,718,534	321,240	4,039,774	
Systems and programme management	4,597,094	397,137	4,994,231	
	<u>29,587,792</u>	<u>2,556,053</u>	<u>32,143,845</u>	

5 Support costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Staff costs	2,659,797	2,194,904
Payroll administration	19,436	20,521
Insurance	96,591	57,998
Depreciation	199,105	230,565
Governance costs (note 6)	39,973	52,065
	<u>3,014,902</u>	<u>2,556,053</u>

Support costs represent indirect expenditure incurred in delivering the charity's objectives and are allocated across the various categories of expenditure on charitable activities at the same ratio as the direct costs.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

7 Employee remuneration (continued)

The average monthly number employed by the charity during the year was:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Full time	282	288
Part time	53	55
	<u>335</u>	<u>343</u>

The number of employees who received remuneration in excess of £60,000 p.a. during the year was:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
£60,000 - £70,000	17	18
£70,001 - £80,000	9	9
£80,001 - £90,000	5	3
£90,001 - £100,000	2	4
£100,001 - £110,000	2	3
£110,001 - £120,000	4	2
£150,001 - £160,000	1	1
£160,001 - £170,000	1	-
	<u>41</u>	<u>40</u>

The key management personnel of the group and the charity consist of Trustees of the charity and the senior leadership team. The Trustees did not receive any remuneration during the current year (2024: nil). The total emoluments paid to the senior leadership team in the year were £956,330 (2024: £866,393)

£173 of expenses were reimbursed to three Trustees in the year (2024: £nil).

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

8 Tangible fixed assets

Group and charity	Leasehold property £	Leasehold property improvement £	Office furniture and IT equipment £	Total £
Cost				
At 1 September 2024	850,000	618,270	841,321	2,309,591
Additions	-	-	34,788	34,788
At 31 August 2025	<u>850,000</u>	<u>618,270</u>	<u>876,109</u>	<u>2,344,379</u>
Accumulated depreciation				
At 1 September 2024	355,463	143,979	629,878	1,129,320
Charge for the year	34,000	61,827	103,278	199,105
At 31 August 2025	<u>389,463</u>	<u>205,806</u>	<u>733,156</u>	<u>1,328,425</u>
Net book value				
At 31 August 2025	<u>460,537</u>	<u>412,464</u>	<u>142,953</u>	<u>1,015,954</u>
At 31 August 2024	<u>494,537</u>	<u>474,291</u>	<u>211,443</u>	<u>1,180,271</u>

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

9 Fixed asset investments

Group and charity	2025 £	2024 £
Long term loan (see note below)	3,500,000	3,500,000

During the year ended 31 August 2017, the charity provided a long-term loan of £5.5 million to Absolute Return for Kids (Ark) for securing leasehold office space in their EdCity new build development. In the financial year 2019/20, £2.0 million of the loan was repaid to the charity. The terms of the agreement states that Ark agrees to pay interest to Ambition Institute at a rate of 0.25% above the Bank of England Base Rate. Ark may repay any portion of the loan at any time. Ambition Institute may recover any part of the loan after providing no less than 3 months' notice. In the year ended 31 August 2025, £nil (2024: £nil) of the loan was repaid to the charity.

Investment in subsidiary

Ambition Institute has one subsidiary entity, Ambition Teacher Training which was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 15 December 2023 and commenced trading on 1 September 2024. Ambition Teacher Training is 100% controlled by Ambition Institute and its activities are to provide Initial Teacher Training for people who are aspiring to become teachers. Ambition Teacher Training generated income of £4.5 million for the year ended 31 August 2025 (2024: £nil) and its deficit for that year was £0.2 million (2024: £nil). At 31 August 2025 the company had net liabilities of £0.2 million (2024: £nil).

10 Debtors

	2025 Group £	2025 Charity £	2024 Charity £
Trade debtors	2,811,014	3,286,620	4,907,841
Prepayments	723,603	721,678	510,962
Accrued income	380,658	105,032	196,049
Other debtors	917	9,556	-
	3,916,192	4,122,886	5,614,852

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

11 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 Group £	2025 Charity £	2024 Charity £
Trade creditors	571,094	488,020	1,060,193
Tax and social security	1,802,265	1,802,265	1,518,561
Deferred income (note 12)	995,126	994,441	662,815
Accruals	3,337,148	2,946,180	3,289,140
Other creditors (see below)	260,896	189,396	220,316
	<u>6,966,529</u>	<u>6,420,302</u>	<u>6,751,025</u>

Other creditors is mainly the balance for the defined contributions pension scheme that the charity operates. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. Included in other creditors above is a balance of £183,647 (2024: £172,808) owing to The Pension Trust and Scottish Widows Pension scheme.

12 Deferred income

	2025 Group £	2025 Charity £	2024 Charity £
Balance brought forward at 1 September	662,815	662,815	974,545
Total income received during the year to be deferred	(2,755,579)	(2,755,579)	(1,578,749)
Amounts released during the year	3,087,890	3,087,205	1,267,019
Balance carried forward at 31 August	<u>995,126</u>	<u>994,441</u>	<u>662,815</u>

Deferred income carried forward comprises the income received for programmes that relates to the following period.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

13 Unrestricted funds

Group	General funds £	Designated funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Balance brought forward	4,246,411	4,680,271	8,926,682	8,821,876
Net movement in funds	(166,657)	(164,317)	(330,974)	104,806
Transfer between funds	(100,000)	100,000	-	-
Balance carried forward	<u>3,979,754</u>	<u>4,615,954</u>	<u>8,595,708</u>	<u>8,926,682</u>

Funds totalling £4,615,954 have been designated by the Trustees. This represents fixed assets as at 31 August 2025, funds loaned to Ark for their EdCity new build development (see note 9) and premises funds of £100,000.

Charity	General funds £	Designated funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Balance brought forward	4,246,411	4,680,271	8,926,682	8,821,876
Net movement in funds	42,681	(164,317)	(121,636)	104,806
Transfer between funds	(100,000)	100,000	-	-
Balance carried forward	<u>4,189,092</u>	<u>4,615,954</u>	<u>8,805,046</u>	<u>8,926,682</u>

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

14 Restricted funds

Group and Charity	<i>Balance as at</i>	Income	Expenditure	<i>Balance as at</i>
	<i>1 September</i>			<i>31 August</i>
	<i>2024</i>			<i>2025</i>
	£	£	£	£
Mathematics	29,916	60,016	(29,916)	60,016
Recruitment and retention	8,164	140,264	(130,152)	18,276
Regional	132,358	-	(132,358)	-
Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	-	230,000	(230,000)	-
Other	24,865	-	(24,865)	-
Restricted funds	<u>195,303</u>	<u>430,280</u>	<u>(547,291)</u>	<u>78,292</u>

Group and Charity	<i>Balance as at</i>	Income	Expenditure	<i>Balance as at</i>
	<i>1 September</i>			<i>31 August</i>
	<i>2023</i>			<i>2024</i>
	£	£	£	£
Mathematics	277,742	29,916	(277,742)	29,916
Recruitment and retention	-	30,395	(22,231)	8,164
Regional	209,803	120,000	(197,445)	132,358
Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)	-	70,000	(70,000)	-
Other	2,000	50,000	(27,135)	24,865
Restricted funds	<u>489,545</u>	<u>300,311</u>	<u>(594,553)</u>	<u>195,303</u>

The purpose of the above funds is as follows:

- > **Mathematics** – The development of programmes with a focus on mathematics.
- > **Recruitment and Retention** – Research and work targeted at finding ways to improve teacher recruitment and retention.
- > **Regional** – Programme support with a focus on a particular region of England.
- > **Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)** – The development of programmes with a focus on SEND.
- > **Other** – Small gifts and donations for specific programmes.

We are deeply grateful to our funders for their support in improving outcomes for disadvantaged children. Their generosity significantly advanced our pilot programmes and research, crucial in creating an education system in which every child can thrive.

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

15 Analysis of net assets by funds

2024/25 Group	Tangible fixed assets £	Investments £	Net current assets £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Restricted funds:					
Restricted	-	-	78,292	78,292	195,303
Unrestricted funds:					
General	-	-	4,079,754	4,079,754	4,680,271
Designated	1,015,954	3,500,000	-	4,515,954	4,807,132
	<u>1,015,954</u>	<u>3,500,000</u>	<u>4,158,046</u>	<u>8,674,000</u>	<u>9,121,985</u>
	<u><u>1,015,954</u></u>	<u><u>3,500,000</u></u>	<u><u>4,158,046</u></u>	<u><u>8,674,000</u></u>	<u><u>9,121,985</u></u>
2023/24 Group	Tangible fixed assets £	Investments £	Net current assets £	Total 2024 £	
Restricted funds:					
Restricted	-	-	195,303	195,303	
Unrestricted funds:					
General	-	-	4,246,411	4,246,411	
Designated	1,180,271	3,500,000	-	4,680,271	
	<u>1,180,271</u>	<u>3,500,000</u>	<u>4,441,714</u>	<u>9,121,985</u>	
	<u><u>1,180,271</u></u>	<u><u>3,500,000</u></u>	<u><u>4,441,714</u></u>	<u><u>9,121,985</u></u>	

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

15 Analysis of net assets by funds (continued)

2024/25 Charity	Tangible fixed assets £	Investments £	Net current assets £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Restricted funds:					
Restricted	-	-	78,292	78,292	195,303
Unrestricted funds:					
General			4,289,092	4,289,092	4,246,411
Designated	1,015,954	3,500,000	-	4,515,954	4,680,271
	<u>1,015,954</u>	<u>3,500,000</u>	<u>4,367,384</u>	<u>8,883,338</u>	<u>9,121,985</u>
	<u><u>1,015,954</u></u>	<u><u>3,500,000</u></u>	<u><u>4,367,384</u></u>	<u><u>8,883,338</u></u>	<u><u>9,121,985</u></u>
2023/24 Charity	Tangible fixed assets £	Investments £	Net current assets £	Total 2024 £	
Restricted funds:					
Restricted	-	-	195,303	195,303	
Unrestricted funds:					
General	-	-	4,246,411	4,246,411	
Designated	1,180,271	3,500,000	-	4,680,271	
	<u>1,180,271</u>	<u>3,500,000</u>	<u>4,441,714</u>	<u>9,121,985</u>	
	<u><u>1,180,271</u></u>	<u><u>3,500,000</u></u>	<u><u>4,441,714</u></u>	<u><u>9,121,985</u></u>	

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025

16 Related party transactions

£173 of expenses were reimbursed to three Trustees in the year (2024: £nil).

Certain Trustees are also involved with organisations that are customers of Ambition Institute. All such transactions are conducted strictly at arm's length and on normal commercial terms in both the current and comparative period. There were no other related party transactions or balances to report for the year ended 31 August 2025. Senior leaders and their connected party relationships are listed below.

Name	Connected party
Natalie Perera	Lift Schools
Richard Jefferson	The Athelstan Trust
Joanne Heaton	Northern Lights Teaching School Hub
Joanne Heard-Jones	Shaw Education Trust
John Camp	Endeavour Partnership Trust
Summer Turner	Broad Horizon Education Trust
Sam Freedman	Ark
Hilary Spencer	Ormiston Academies Trust

During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with subsidiary entities:

	Costs recharged by Ambition Institute	
	2025 £	2024 £
Ambition Teacher Training	1,482,433	-

The balance due to Ambition Institute at 31 August 2025 was £482,433 (2024: £nil)

17 Lease commitments

At 31 August, Ambition Institute was committed to making the following payments under non-cancellable operating leases:

	Land and buildings		Other	
	2025 £	2024 £	2025 £	2024 £
Less than 1 year	101,126	147,348	2,254	2,254
2-5 years	31,000	132,136	9,016	9,016
	132,126	279,484	11,270	11,270

The decrease in the operating lease commitments in 2024/25 is due to the lease coming to an end on one of our three offices. Total payment under operating leases in 2024/25 were £149,602 (2023/24: £149,602)





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 020 3846 5828



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