National Star

Realising the aspirations of people with disabilities

Annual Report and Accounts 2023 – 2024

Year ended 31 August 2024

National Star is a working name of National Star Foundation which is registered in England and Wales, company number 00522846, charity number 220239. Registered office Ullenwood Manor, Ullenwood, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 9QU

Francis, age 21

Without National Star...

> “I would not have developed my independence skills and confidence.”
>
> **Francis**

Before starting at National Star in Hereford, a trip to the local shops was a huge challenge for Francis. His autism meant that he struggled with busy areas and unknown situations.

Two years on and Francis shops and cooks independently and manages his own medical needs. He has become a confident young adult who now feels in control of his anxiety.

‘The most important skill I have learned at college is independence as it proves, not just to me but to other people such as friends and family, that having special needs doesn’t mean I can’t look out for myself,’ says Francis.

One of Francis’ biggest achievements was travelling to London, for the first time, and making a speech at a House of Commons event on behalf of National Star in front of a large audience. An important part of Francis’ support has come from the emotional wellbeing team. They have helped him develop strategies to manage his anxiety. ‘I used to worry for days without telling anyone so that it became a big problem,’ says Francis. ‘Now that doesn’t happen. I can get things off my chest and that allows me to concentrate better.’

Francis also had speech and language therapy sessions to help him improve his communication skills. He has excelled at his work placements, including working with children with special needs at a local school. His ambition is to go on to mainstream further education to develop skills in retail and catering to get a job. He also hopes to move out of his family home into supported living.

‘National Star is a place where I feel I am understood. The wellbeing support has helped me build up my confidence, become more independent, have more faith and trust in others and to control and explain my emotions.’

Annual Report 2023 – 2024
Year ended 31 August 2024

Contents

Introduction

- 4 Who we are
- 6 Chief Executive's and Chair's statement
- 7 Our impact

Strategic Report

- 8 Financial review 2023 – 2024
- 11 Our learners' contribution

What we achieved

- 12 Education and therapy
- 14 Care services
- 16 Sharing our expertise
- 18 Safeguarding those in our care

How we achieved it

- 20 Our people
- 21 Income generation

Plans for the future

- 23 Maximising our impact

- 24 Principal risks and uncertainties
- 26 Environmental, social and governance
- 30 Statement of trustees' responsibilities

Independent auditors' report

- 31 Independent auditors' report

Financial statements

- 33 Consolidated statement of financial activities
- 34 Consolidated balance sheet
- 35 Charity balance sheet
- 36 Consolidated statement of cash flows
- 37 Notes to the Financial statements
- 55 Administrative and legal details

Amy, age 20

Without National Star...

"Amy would not have made such remarkable progress."

Jane
Amy's mum

Amy accesses the world through touch. Working with National Star's specialist teams, Amy, who is registered deaf and blind, has made incredible progress in her first year at National Star.

Amy has CHARGE syndrome, a rare genetic condition, that has impacted on all of her senses, including her hearing, sight, taste and smell. She has multiple medical needs and uses a wheelchair to safely move about. Not only has Amy quickly settled into college life, but she is beginning to show awareness of her peers, communicating more and walking around campus with support. A team of multi-sensory impairment specialists, including the college's specialist tutor in vision impairments, advises the multi-disciplinary teams on how to make Amy's world accessible to her. This involves textures to feel, contrasting colours, and spotlighting which enables her to understand her environment. Amy hears by vibrations through her skull. By using a speaker held close to her head or a resonance board, Amy can feel and distinguish sounds and is included in activities.

'Her progress has been remarkable and there has been a huge difference in her movement and communication. She has grown up and her confidence has grown,' says her mum Jane.

Who we are

National Star is a charitable provider of exceptional education, personal development, accommodation, care and support services for young people and adults with complex needs, disabilities and learning difficulties. Every year, we work with hundreds of young people and adults from across the UK.

The charity started in 1967 with just 10 learners at its base in Ullenwood, Cheltenham. Since then, we have grown with a campus at Ullenwood that provides day and residential education and additional day education provision in Wales, Worcester and Hereford. We have long–term accommodation in Cheltenham, Gloucester, Malvern and Hereford. We now support and care for young people with more complex medical needs than we have done in the past. We also provide a range of work–based learning programmes.

The constant thread is National Star's belief in realising the aspirations of people with disabilities.

Our values

As we work, we are led by our values:

Ambition

(Having goals)

We support students, colleagues and residents to be the best they can be. We aim for excellence in everything we do. We look for ways to improve society so people with disabilities can live full and active lives.

Collaboration

(Working together)

We work with others to achieve more for people. We develop strong partnerships to grow and be sustainable. We encourage everyone to be passionate and enthusiastic, sharing what they know to improve their own life and that of others.

Integrity

(Open and honest)

We are open, honest, accountable, and transparent. What we do is central to our belief that people with disabilities should be in control of their own lives.

Respect

(Listening and understanding each other)

We recognise and are grateful for everyone's contribution. We are compassionate and promote a community where everyone can feel welcome, and success is celebrated.

Sustainability

(Caring for the environment and National Star's long–term future)

We aim to reduce our environmental footprint. We will follow a strategy of growth to secure the future of the charity and our work with people with disabilities.

Our clear aim

Everything National Star achieves is through collaboration. Our multi–disciplinary teams work with students, residents and their families to empower young people to achieve their goals. Education and therapy teams work with their care and nursing colleagues to find innovative approaches that suit the individual. After all, no two people are alike.

National Star's leadership team, governors and trustees, and employees bring their individual expertise, experience and energy.

We work with people with disabilities and their supporters to challenge stereotypes, raise aspirations and change attitudes.

The charity is passionate about sharing best practice. We collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders from local authorities, influencers and key opinion leaders, regulatory organisations, such as Ofsted, Estyn and the Care Quality Commission, and national bodies.

We're a diverse group brought together with a common belief and vision.

Our aim

Our aim as a leadership team is to realise the vision and mission set out in our strategy.

Our vision

A world in which people with disabilities are able to realise their potential as equal and active citizens in control of their lives.

Our mission

To realise the aspirations of people with disabilities through personalised learning, transition, support and care and accommodation services.

Chief Executive's and Chair's Statement

Seeing the potential

At National Star we passionately believe that people with disabilities have a right to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives and that they have an important contribution to make to their community and our society.

That belief is what drives us to be a leader in the sector and to ensure the voices of learners, residents and families are heard.

We know that no one organisation can achieve change, it must be collaborative. In 2023 – 2024 we worked hard to build partnerships, to reach out to others who share our vision and to ignite change.

Our objectives of growth and development were at the forefront for 2023 – 2024, alongside our ongoing commitment to provide the best quality education, care and support for young adults with complex needs and learning difficulties.

It was a year of incredible beginnings and some farewells. We said goodbye to Paul Styles, who retired as Chair of Trustees. We would like to pay tribute to his decades of commitment to the charity. He has played a key role in the many past achievements and ensuring we are in a strong position as we move forward with our strategy.

In September 2023 we opened Bradbury House and Scott House, our new specialist residence at our campus in Ullenwood. This £6.2 million accommodation is purpose–built to meet the most complex needs of young people and reflects the commitment and generosity of our donors, from individuals and community organisations to businesses and charitable trusts and foundations.

It also demonstrates National Star's belief in the importance of a young person's right to choose the form of education that best meets their aspirations. There are 56 independent specialist providers in the UK which meet a variety of needs and provide 1,058 places in residential education. We provide 10% of these residential spaces. There is a high demand for places as it provides the experience of moving from home to college, like any young adult, regardless of disability.

The economic environment continues to add increasing pressure to the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) sector. With appropriate provision reducing as the call for these places, especially for young people with complex needs, continues to grow, it is creating more demand than the sector can easily meet.

Chief Executive, Lynette Barrett with a National Star student

Chair of Trustees, Nick Grinham with a National Star student

Maintaining levels of quality and care against a backdrop of rising costs and modest reserves has been a challenge, which has required careful efficient use of resources and securing increases in fee levels to maintain financial stability (see page 8).

It is the shared commitment of the entire National Star team that enables us to deliver such quality care and learning. The tremendous progress made and the aspirations described in this report are only possible because of the commitment and partnership of learners, residents, families and carers, employees, volunteers and the local communities. We have to be "all in" to make the biggest difference. The ethos of National Star has to be clear and shared by everyone.

The new year will bring new challenges including the impact to the charity of the increase in National Insurance contributions and increase in National Living Wage. We are committed to working with young people and families to ensure their voices are heard and their best interests are at the heart of all decisions made by government.

We believe young people with SEND should have the freedom to choose the support which best meets their needs and prepare them for their future. The current situation is making this increasingly challenging for them to do so.

We marked the end of the year with the 10th anniversary of Foundation House, our first long–term accommodation. We now have four long–term properties, but the demand continues to grow.

Next year promises to be exciting with the expansion of our education provision in Hereford and the launch of a new specialist service based at a mainstream college in Worcester.

For National Star, we, as CEO and Chair (as of September 2024), share a common vision and belief that people with disabilities have the right to lead meaningful lives.

There is so much more we need to do but we cannot achieve it without you. Help us ensure that all people with disabilities can be active citizens. The outcome will be a more inclusive society which will enrich all our lives.

Nick Grinham
Chair of Trustees

Lynette Barrett
Chief Executive

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Our impact

During the year National Star supported learners and residents to achieve their goals, develop their skills and lead fulfilling lives by providing 818,526 hours of service.

1,064,531
Hours of service provided by National Star for young adults with disabilities and learning difficulties.

590
People benefitted from National Star's education, therapy and care services and community outreach programmes.

Education and therapy

252 Young adults with disabilities and learning difficulties accessed education and personal development programmes in 2023 – 2024.

69,775 Hours of education delivered in the past year.

44,672 Hours of therapy provided by National Star's multi-disciplinary team.

575 Hours of specialist input (visual and hearing).

Care services

703,504 Hours of care provided across all services.

61,744 Hours of respite care.

183,909 Hours of care for long-term residents.

Financial review 2023 – 2024

National Star has continued to operate on a sound financial basis despite the pressures from reductions in statutory funding, changes in high needs funding systems, and a competitive fundraising environment.

While the provision of most of the charity's services are funded by fees, it does not adequately cover the full underlying operational costs of the charity's services. This has been exacerbated by rising inflationary and employee costs. The charity is highly reliant on other income generation activities, including fundraising, to maintain the charity's high level of services and facilities.

The trustees consider the key financial performance indicators for the sustainability of the charity to be the cash flow generated from operating activities and the operating surplus. These, together with the other movements in income and costs, are considered below:

- The charity's overall income at £43m represented £2.9m growth on the previous year, with fee activities income at £30.7m showing an increase of £3.8m (*2023: £26.9m*), reflecting the increased complexity and needs of learners' disabilities alongside fee increases due to inflation. This is the charity's principal funding source and comes from the ESFA and local authorities.
- Income relating to other projects and charitable activities increased to £9.7m (*2023: £9.5m*), representing the diversification of additional activities and provision as detailed in note 3.
- Donation and legacy income for the year decreased to £822k (*2023: £2.5m*) reflecting reduced amounts received from trusts, legacies and major donors, plus ongoing challenges for fundraising appeals.
- Total expenditure has risen compared with the previous year to £41.7m (*2023: £38.5m*) with the rise in expenditure due to the learners' more complex requirements, the need for greater staffing levels to support them resulting in increased employee costs and the increasing range in provision of services as well as inflationary pressures.
- The group has recorded a surplus (net income before investment gains) of £1.3m (*2023: £1.5m*) mainly reflecting the contribution from fundraising.
- The group has a positive cash flow generated from operating activities of £1.5m (*2023: negative £2.4m*) after capital expenditure of £1.8m (*2023: £6.4m*).
- The group's total value of net assets at the end of the year was £37.8m (*2023: £36.0m*) of which £30.5m (*2023: £31.1m*) was represented in tangible fixed assets.

The financial instruments, being the financial assets and financial liabilities of the charity, comprise cash and other items such as trade debtors, trade creditors, which arise directly from its operations. The main purpose of these financial instruments is to finance the operations of the charity. Their nature means that they are not subject to price risk or liquidity risk.

Investment policy

The charity held investments during the year in Schroder Unit Trusts Charity Equity Fund, CCLA Investment Management Ltd COIF Charities Investment Fund, and investment funds with St. James's Place Wealth Management. These investments are subject to price risk arising on the underlying investment portfolio. The trustees maintain a finance and investment committee to oversee its investment policy and monitor performance against relevant industry benchmarks including the ARC Balanced Asset Charity index, UK RPI and Deposit rates.

The investment policy objectives in furtherance of the charity's objectives include obtaining an optimum financial return on investments in accordance with the charity's investment powers and attitude to risk, maintaining a responsible approach to investments and protecting capital in real terms.

The charity's trustees have agreed a 'medium' attitude towards risk, with a target total return in the range of 5.5% to 7.8% growth per annum (5 year average).

The overall investment portfolio on a period–end value to value basis saw total gains of £492k, or 14.9% (*2023: gains of £150k, or 4.8%*).

Reserves policy

The trustees consider that reserves are needed to enable the charity to operate effectively and responsibly; representing the funds that might be needed to support expenditure in the event of reduced income or changes in circumstances. Accordingly, the charity maintains a reserves policy and the trustees monitor the finances of the organisation through regular management accounts.

The reserves policy accounts for anticipated future income and its volatility, the needs of current and future beneficiaries and the levels of known liabilities. Its reserves enable the charity to fund unexpected expenditure or shortfalls in income, to support working capital requirements, to mitigate for risks and to be able to take advantage of change and opportunities.

The reserves are represented by the organisation's net current assets (free of restricted or designated funds) plus investments and alternative investment assets. The reserves policy states that these should equate to a value of not less than £3.3m (c.7.9% of our annual expenditure in 2023 / 2024). The charity's restricted and designated funds are detailed in notes 14 to 16 and capital commitments are shown in note 19 of the Financial statements. Note 15 details unrestricted funds of £31.9m after allowing for £4.2m of designated funds towards ongoing capital development and planned property acquisitions, of which £29m is represented as fixed assets deployed to support the charity's activities.

Our commitment to be there and to provide support is the main driver to the charity's policy concerning its reserves. While part of the reserves is earmarked for developing our facilities and resources, the remainder is to ensure that we can fund unexpected costs or shortfalls in income. Taken into context that the charity's expenditure in 2023 – 2024 was £41.7m, the level of reserves is a small percentage – just 7.9% – of what the charity spends on delivering services, or just under one month's operating costs.

After adjustment for £380k fixed assets available to the charity and not deployed in charitable activity, the charity had a reserves assessment as of 31 August 2024 of £3,317,190 *(2023: £2,984,163)*. The trustees and directors consider that the overall level of available funds, taking account of the committed and designated funds identified and described above, together with ongoing capital development and capital commitments, is appropriate and in line with the charity's policy. The charity's trustees have commenced a review of the Reserves Policy in 2024, run in conjunction with its risk management, to consider the appropriate level of future reserves for the charity.

Subsidiary undertakings

Two subsidiary undertakings operated during the year. NSF Trading Limited (company number: 01168043) operated as the organisation's trading subsidiary for non–charitable purposes. NSF Design and Build Limited (company number 08628807) was established in 2013 and undertakes accommodation development projects on behalf of the charity. Both subsidiaries generated surpluses in the year after direct costs, administrative costs and audit fees (as detailed in notes 2a and 2b) which resulted in Gift Aiding a total of £66,547 (*2023: £210,816*) to the charity. Shareholdings are disclosed in note 10 to the Financial statements.

Related parties

The charity has related party transactions with its two wholly owned subsidiaries. Please see note 20 to the Financial statements for details.

Going concern statement

The trustees have reviewed the group and the charity's financial position, taking into account the satisfactory levels of reserves, amounts receivable, the annual plan and the financial plan, together with its systems of financial and risk management. We have prepared a number of scenarios that consider our position, sources of income, and planned expenditure. This includes ongoing understanding of the impact of inflationary and cost of living increases on operational costs and increased financial pressures faced by local authorities for SEND education and ongoing social care.

These scenarios consider fee increases which do not cover inflationary costs, delayed fee payments and potential bad debts involving local authorities which issue Section 114 notices (being unable to meet their expenditure). Sensitivity around these assumptions has also been considered in our forecasting. Results of this cash flow and sensitivity analysis indicate that the cash reserves and available financing of the charity are adequate to meet the charity's obligations as they fall due.

As a result of its review, the trustees believe that the group and the charity is well placed to manage operational and financial risk successfully. Accordingly, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that it has sufficient resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and therefore continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the annual consolidated Financial statements.

Adam, age 29

Without National Star...

"Adam would never have the quality of life he has now."

Wendy
Adam's mum

Adam was one of the first young people to join National Star when we launched a day provision in Hereford in 2014.

The pilot project started with just six learners and was based at Hereford Academy. Now National Star owns 1 Ledbury Road which is the permanent home for seven adults with disabilities and 36 students accessing education, therapies and care at the Eveson Centre.

In just four years the number of young people attending National Star has grown by 50 per cent. The charity has launched a public appeal to expand facilities at the Eveson Centre to meet the growing need.

Adam, who has severe learning disabilities, autism and cerebral palsy, attended National Star for two years. When the college moved to Harrow Road in 2015 Adam settled in and flourished.

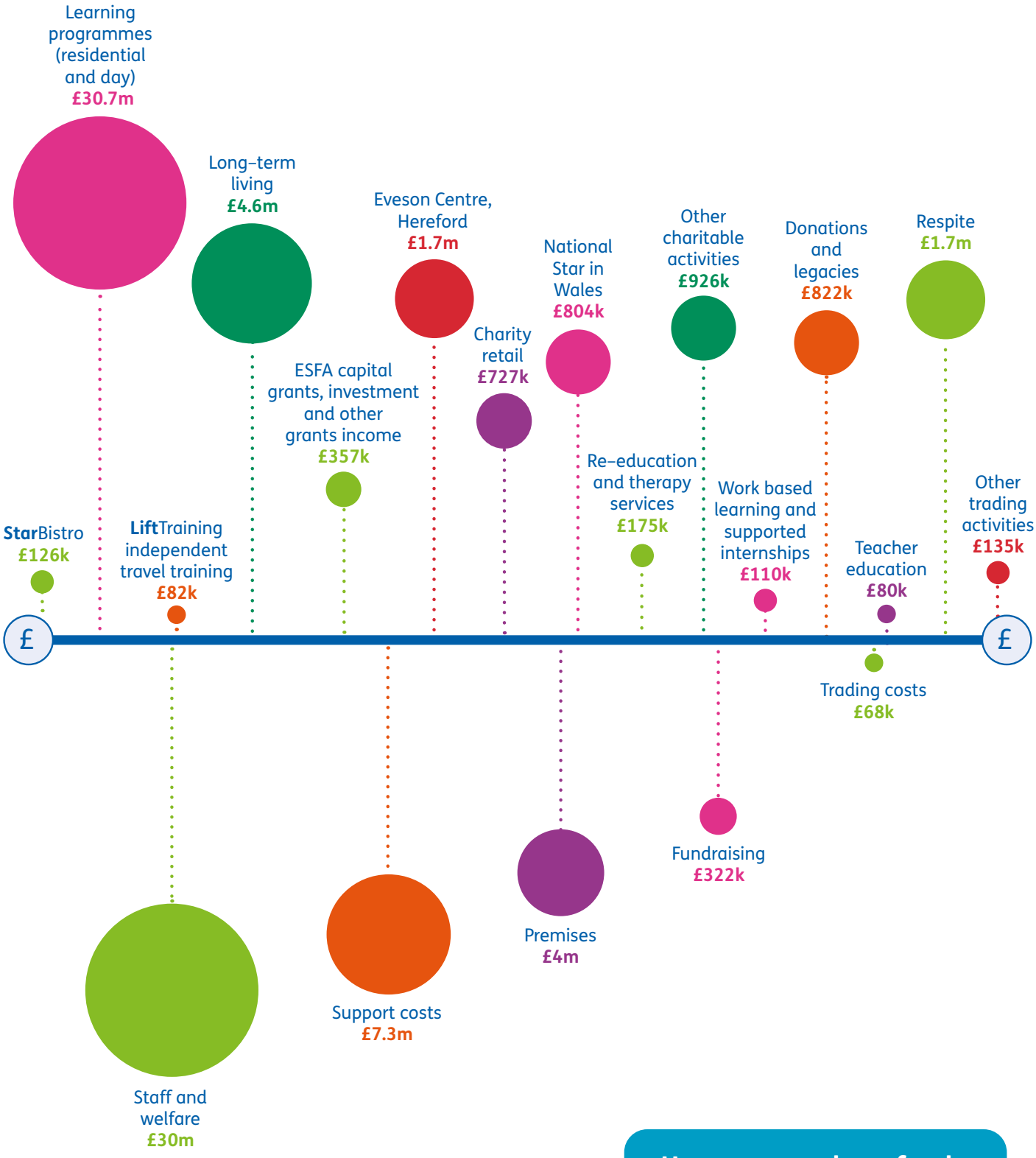
'National Star was so supportive to Adam and to us as a family,' says his mum Wendy. 'He loved college. It was the first time people treated Adam as an adult and he became so much more grown up and outgoing.'

Following college Adam moved home for a few years and is now settled into residential care in Hereford. He loves to be busy and on the move. Adam loves music and singing and enjoys attending weekly music sessions in Hereford.

'Moving Adam into his new home was the hardest thing I have ever done but it was the right thing for him,' says Wendy. 'National Star was an important part of his development to becoming an adult and the life he leads now.'

Financial review 2023 – 2024

How we raise our funds

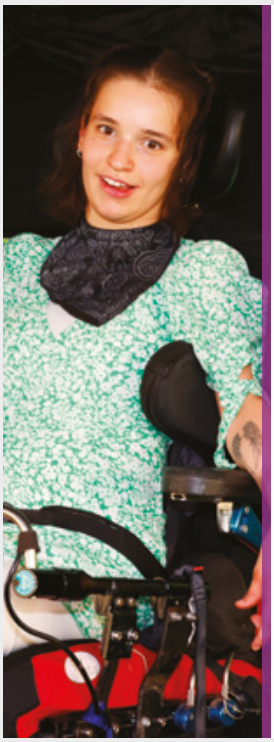


How we spend our funds

Our learners' contribution

Making a difference

Every year current and former National Star learners make a huge difference to their communities in many ways. These are just a few examples of young people who truly embody National Star's vision of being equal and active citizens.



Ella

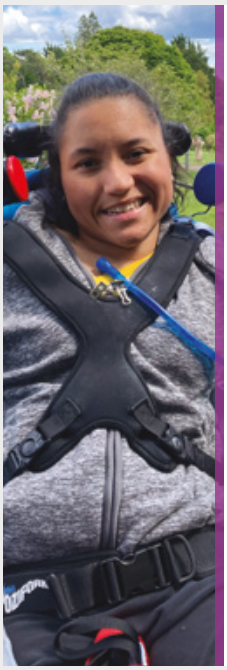
In her first year Ella has made a huge impact to college life and received National Star's Making a Difference award. She appeared on BBC Wales to raise awareness of communication devices. She was also part of the interview panel for National Star's Chair of Trustees, as well as leading on presentations during colleague recruitment days. She participated in the college Student Voice event where she had the opportunity to pose questions to members of the leadership team and has been elected to the Student Union for 2024 – 2025.

Georgie

Georgie won the Volunteers' Award at the Scottish Health Awards for helping others through entertainment and mentorship. The 28–year–old from NHS Tayside, who uses a communication device, brightens the days of hospital and care home patients with her radio request show in Perth. She has volunteered since leaving college in 2018. Every year she also helps around 200 medical students to understand people with complex needs and the best way to communicate and help those with communication aids. She mentors educational staff on inclusion and equality and how to cater for people with disabilities.

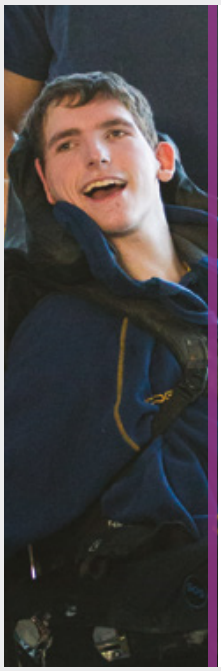
Chris, George and Sonny

The three students received the John Muir Award for their dedication and hard work with the Stroud Canal Restoration Project. To qualify for the award, each student needed to complete at least 25 hours' outdoor volunteering. Chris, George and Sonny collectively contributed more than 200 hours to the project.



Chelsea

Chelsea is passionate about improving standards of care for people with disabilities. She volunteered to work with Team Teach and National Star to create a series of training videos. Team Teach training supports positive behaviour cultures in education, child and adult services. The videos, which will be used worldwide, are the first ones Team Teach has created which include the thoughts and concerns of the young people at the centre of their care.



Jason

Jason, who uses an eye–gaze device to speak, is passionate about mentoring others who use different forms of technology to communicate. Since 2023 he has been a trustee of 1Voice – Communicating Together, a charity supporting AAC (augmentative and alternative communication) users.

'Jason's input has been invaluable, particularly advising the committee on website accessibility, contributing to event planning and collaborating with another trustee towards starting a regional group,' says Helen Dixon, Co–Chair, 1Voice. 'As 1Voice provides networking and social opportunities to AAC users, their families and supporters, it is vital our trustees include AAC users, professionals working with AAC users and family members.'

What we achieved

National Star provided 44,672 hours of therapy during the past 12 months

Education and therapy

National Star believes in the importance of providing a wide range of exceptional education and therapy services for young people with disabilities to enable them to become equal and engaged citizens.

Our aim

To deliver education and therapy services for young people with disabilities and medical needs, to enable them to access the most appropriate support in the right place, at the right time.

What we achieved

Every learning experience is unique at National Star to ensure it meets the needs and aspirations of the individual. Our multi-disciplinary approach means education, therapy, residential and nursing teams work together to support each learner.

The main education sites are Ullenwood and Greensteps in Cheltenham, Hereford, and Mamhilad in Wales, as well as partnerships with mainstream colleges and local authorities across England, providing work-based programmes into employment and independent travel training. During the year, 252 young adults benefitted from our education and personal development programmes.

National Star prepares young people for adulthood, whether that means securing paid work, contributing to society as a volunteer or being able to direct one's own care and plan and prepare balanced meals. There is a focus on supporting learners to develop their confidence and communication skills, and to become active citizens in their community. An example is our ski experience which saw 10 learners put their newly acquired skills into action on a week-long experience to Andorra.

We believe that residential learning is an important part of our education offering because of the life skills learners master, alongside greater independence and confidence. In 2023 – 2024 we supported 106 residential learners.

National Star's education centre in Hereford, the Eveson Centre, continued to grow, with 36 learners accessing day education and supported internships in 2023 – 2024. The Hereford team launched an innovative Forest School for young adults with disabilities which the charity hopes to roll out in other locations. To meet growing demand in Hereford, work on an extension to the Eveson Centre started in July 2024.

There were 13 learners at National Star's Welsh education centre in Mamhilad in 2023 – 2024. They received £5,000 from The Torfaen Food Partnership Food4Growth, part of the Torfaen Food Resilience Programme. The money will enable the learners to grow fruit and vegetables at their campus and work with other community organisations.

Our **Lift**Training programme helps people learn the skills to travel independently. During 2023 – 2024, we worked with 46 learners in East Sussex. Many local authorities have taken travel training in-house which has impacted on our **Lift**Training programme.

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Learner voice

Learner voice plays an integral part at National Star. Members of the Student Union (SU) give updates and presentations to governors and trustees. Current and former learners sit on the Advisory Board, as well as assisting at staff interviews.

In November 2023 and May 2024, the SU participated in the virtual Natspec Student Parliament which involved hundreds of students across the country. The Student Union has also influenced the development of National Star's social enterprise initiatives.

Learners now provide termly feedback on their college experiences. A range of activities have been adopted to ensure all learners can have their voices heard. This has led to an increased response rate and there will be further roll-out in 2024 – 2025.

The student representatives' groups were reviewed and enhanced with the introduction of Autism Reps to reflect the growing neurodiverse student community. Learning Reps and Residential Reps continue to drive the enhancement of the student experience within timetabled and extra-curricular life.

Community engagement

National Star employees and learners are passionate about breaking down barriers around disability. We do that in countless ways, including links and work placements with an extensive range of employers.

Our social enterprises provided real work opportunities for learners. Ullenwood day learners helped at the cafe at Tewkesbury Abbey. **Star**Bistro, based at Ullenwood, is open to the public and provided learners with work experience in the kitchen and front of house.

Learners created a range of crafts in the Art Factory project sessions, which were sold in the **Star**Shop at Ullenwood and at our charity shops. **Star**Print, another social enterprise, provided work experience with young people producing a range of mugs, canvasses and coasters for National Star and external customers.

We ran a range of adult community learning classes at Ullenwood, as well as community arts projects including Apt Dance, Ad-Apt Youth Dance and Apt Orche**Star**.

Learners also took part in a wide range of activities with the media and worked with National Star employees to share best practice with other organisations. See Sharing our Expertise, pages 16–17.

Therapy services

National Star offers diverse therapies tailored to enhance learners' lives at college and beyond. The teams offer physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and occupational therapy as well as aquatic therapy, music therapy, dramatherapy and emotional health and wellbeing services.

As a charity, it is important for us to share our facilities and expertise with the wider community and our service users. We do that through offering additional therapy services. Last year we provided more than 1,834 hours (*2023: 1,289*) of private therapy.

Ambitions

For the year ahead

- To establish a new pilot satellite education provision in Worcester, in partnership with the Heart of Worcestershire College and Worcestershire County Council.
- Develop further partnerships with mainstream further education colleges to create a wider reach.
- Introduce a simpler funding model for our services which reflects the flexibility of our multi-disciplinary approach and the high quality of our curriculum.
- Review and further improve high-quality education and therapy services across National Star, ensuring positive outcomes for learners and cost effectiveness.

What we achieved last year

- *Secured agreement for a new day education provision in Worcester and commenced work to be ready to launch in 2024 – 2025.*
- *Sustained exceptional learning, teaching and therapeutic input across all National Star sites.*
- *Commenced work on the extension project at Hereford with the aim of learners moving into the space for the summer term 2025.*
- *Launched a review of existing facilities at Ullenwood to inform future development priorities to enhance student resources.*

How we made a difference

96%
Of all learners who left in July 2024 received an accredited full award.

69,775
Hours of education delivered in the past year.

252
Young people accessed National Star's education and personal development programme.

575
Hours of specialist input (visual and hearing).

44,672
Hours of therapy provided by National Star's multi-disciplinary team.

Foundation House celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2024

Care services

National Star is committed to providing high-quality care for the young people and adults who depend on our services.

Their families also depend on our services as National Star provides care for residential learners as well as long-term accommodation and respite care.

Our aim

To provide a range of exceptional care services and long-term accommodation.

What we achieved

Residential learning

National Star provides residential specialist college places for young people with a range of disabilities and medical conditions. Our residential teams are experts at supporting learners, who are often leaving home for the first time in their lives.

The residential care and nursing teams work closely together and are part of our multi-disciplinary approach. This enables learning to continue beyond the classroom. It becomes an integral part of the college experience, embedded within their residential experience.

In 2023 – 2024, National Star had 106 residential learners based in accommodation at Ullenwood and Bradbury Gardens in Cheltenham. Many of those learners lived with us beyond term time, with National Star supporting them during breaks and holidays.

In September 2023, new residential learner accommodation was opened at Ullenwood. Scott House and Bradbury House were designed to enable National Star to meet the increasing complex needs of learners.

All the houses have large communal areas for socialising, studying and developing life skills. Learners play an active role in their residences, deciding on what extra-curricular activities they want to take part in and what they would like to make National Star feel like home. The residential care teams support the learners to access education sessions and are an important part of the multi-disciplinary team. They provide continuity and the important link to home, ensuring families and carers keep in touch with what is happening at college.

Long-term accommodation

There is an incredible unmet need for person-centred long-term accommodation. National Star developed long-term accommodation in response to former National Star learners struggling to find suitable homes. Young adults want to live with their peers and to continue their personal development.

We marked the 10th anniversary of our first long-term care provision. Foundation House in Gloucester opened in August 2014. Residents and employees planned a range of events throughout August and September to mark the milestone.

National Star is now home to 32 adults with disabilities. We have additional long-term accommodation at Matrixcare in Malvern, Bradbury Gardens in Cheltenham and Ledbury Road in Hereford. Foundation House is rated Outstanding by the Care Quality Commission and the other three are rated as Good.

In November 2023, Herefordshire Council graded Ledbury Road as a Level 1 provision (a provision with no concerns). The inspectors commented on the homeliness and individualisation of the home, and the very positive and kind interaction with the residents.

As with the college accommodation, employees in all long-term residences work hard to keep residents safe and ensure individuals can access meaningful activities to have happy and fulfilling lives. Residents have a say in activities and are involved in the planning.

With the challenges in the health and social care sector, the demand for our long-term accommodation services continues to grow. In 2024, we purchased the freehold of our provision in Malvern with the ambitions of providing more places for young adults in the future.

Respite services

The demand for National Star's respite services reflects the shortage of accessible care in the community. It also reflects the increase of residential learners who remain at National Star for up to 52 weeks a year. It is vital for us to ensure continuity for learners and additional support for families as well as provide desperately needed breaks for families of former learners. Last year we provided 61,744 hours of respite care *(2023: 50,911)*.

> "As a parent your biggest worry is who can you trust. If you can trust Daisy is being taken care of, emotionally and physically, then you can rest easy and have a break. Daisy gets her independence, and we get ours and that is so important for all of us."
>
> **Daisy's parents Sharon and Carl about National Star respite services**

How we made a difference

703,504 Hours of care provided.

32 Young people and adults live permanently in four National Star long-term residences.

61,744 Hours of respite care provided.

99% Of long-term residents who took part in a survey said they had no issues or were happy with the services they receive.

National Star provides a range of care services including long-term and respite

Ambitions

For the year ahead

- Expand our residential care provision in Malvern.
- Maximise capacity for respite in Gloucestershire.
- Explore opportunities to develop day services in Gloucestershire.
- Explore opportunities to create long-term accommodation in Wales.
- Work with other providers to ensure a wide range of accommodation options for learners leaving college.
- Focus on recruiting and retaining skilled and professional care staff within a competitive market.

What we achieved last year

- *Opened the new residence (Bradbury House and Scott House) at Ullenwood in September 2023.*
- *Purchased the site of our long-term accommodation in Malvern in January 2024.*
- *Improved retention of employees and achieved a major reduction in the vacancy rate for care staff. The attrition rate for the charity fell to 16%.*
- *Introduced a new care management system which provides better quality and more timely reporting of information in all aspects of each person's care.*

National Star is passionate about sharing its expertise and best practice

Sharing our expertise

As a centre of excellence, National Star is committed to sharing best practice and expertise across the UK.

Our aim

The charity is passionate about sharing best practice. National Star provides a range of professional development opportunities and training, consultancy and working collaboratively with other organisations, to develop capacity and improve quality of provision for people with disabilities.

What we achieved

In 2023 – 2024, National Star shared best practice through a range of opportunities and settings. Working in partnership with Team Teach, which provides behaviour support positive training within education and social care, we created a suite of innovative training videos.

Involving National Star employees and former students we produced a set of realistic and unscripted video scenarios and accompanying resources portraying less and more effective behaviour support practice. Included are interviews with the young people where they share their preferences, and offer valuable insights. The training materials will be used by other specialist schools, colleges, and care providers who support people with complex needs.

Learner voice is hugely important at National Star. The charity's Learner Voice Coordinator shared our best practice with other colleges in his seconded role as the Natspec (membership organisation for specialist providers) Learner Voice Coordinator.

Learners work with the National Star teams to share best practice. Students from the University of Wolverhampton, Worcestershire University, University of Gloucestershire and University Centre Weston have all benefitted from speaking to National Star learners about their experiences and challenges.

We provided a range of training in the UK for The Education and Training Foundation (ETF). In March 2024, National Star held its second Reverse Jobs Fair, in partnership with the ETF as part of their Universal SEND programme funded by the Department for Education.

National Star also offered teacher education with participants from a range of specialist and mainstream further education colleges, with 60 people completing their training with us. We delivered qualifications to: Hartpury College, Clarkson Evans, Sense College, Loughborough, Activate College, Liverpool and the Royal National College for the Blind, Hereford.

Technological expertise

National Star has a wealth of knowledge about adaptive and assistive technology and how to personalise technology to enable young people to be more independent.

In January 2024, four learners, supported by four National Star experts, presented on the main stage of the Bett Show, the largest teaching technology conference in the world. Their theme was how technology has impacted on their lives.

Our Assistive Technologist worked with speech and language therapists, to enable three learners to have their own individual, regional voice on their electronic communication devices. In June, National Star delivered a presentation as part of a STEM initiative by the National Centre for Computing Education called 'I belong'. We also worked with the Unicorn School, Oxfordshire, on how to use more cost-effective, accessible technology and with Shipley College, Yorkshire, on how to unleash the power of voice assistant technology and its impact on young people with SEND.

National leaders

As one of the national leaders in specialist post–16 education, National Star was active in contributing to national reviews and research projects. Learners were supported to contribute to the Disability Action Plan consultation in the autumn 2023.

National Star is committed to lobbying government and associated civil organisations to improve the quality and choice of provision for young adults and to ensure that, following education, they can lead meaningful and purposeful lives. National Star's Chief Executive Lynette Barrett is also Chair of Natspec (membership organisation for specialist providers), ensuring that National Star is at the forefront of national discussions on further education provision for young people with complex disabilities.

In February, National Star supported a launch of the new Natspec manifesto at the House of Commons. One of the keynote speakers was a student from National Star in Hereford (see Francis' story, page 2).

Ensuring that SEND remains at the forefront of the political agenda was especially important during 2023 – 2024. A large hustings event was held at Ullenwood where learners were able to discuss their concerns and aspirations with 13 General Election candidates from across Gloucestershire. A similar event was staged at National Star in Hereford.

We are passionate about enabling learners to have a voice in the media. In February 2024, National Star hosted a special BBC 5 Live Drive programme at Ullenwood. It was guest edited by two learners and involved other learners and families. It focused on the barriers young people face leaving education and received a huge response from listeners.

National Star has been working with charity the Together Trust on a large national research project to highlight the challenges young people face when they finish education. The findings will be launched in 2024 – 2025.

National Star is committed to working collaboratively with other charities and organisations to improve support and services in the sector. In the past year we have worked with Leonard Cheshire, Sheiling College, the Seashell Trust and Fairfield College to name but a few.

How we made a difference

Took a leading role in raising awareness of the issues facing young people with disabilities and their families.

Shone a light on the talent and achievements of young people with disabilities through a wide variety of media opportunities and research projects.

Strengthened relationships with mainstream further education colleges so that we can support more young people with SEND.

Ambitions

For the year ahead

- Work with the Education and Training Foundation, Sector Leaders Steering Group, to drive professionalism in further education and skills through effective and inspiring leadership.
- Launch a report on a national research project, developed in partnership with the Together Trust, to drive change for life after education.
- Further develop a training and consultancy service to share National Star expertise.
- Work with the Education and Training Foundation's Universal SEND Services Programme to deliver events and networking activities to support people with SEND into employment and support businesses to make this happen.
- Contribute to government consultations and enable learners and their families to be involved with all proposals that will personally impact on them.

What we achieved last year

- *Created a suite of training videos in partnership with international trainers Team Teach to promote best practice.*
- *Launched a national research project in partnership with the Together Trust on what happens to young people with SEND after they leave education.*
- *Supported four learners to present on the main stage of Bett UK 2024, the world's largest EdTech event.*
- *National Star delivered a presentation as part of a STEM initiative by the National Centre for Computing Education called 'I belong'.*
- *Staged a General Election hustings which involved 13 candidates talking to learners about their concerns.*
- *Provided valuable data and insight to national reviews including the Disability Action Plan.*

> "Working collaboratively to create training videos helps us to showcase the incredible work of National Star and use this expertise to develop practice across other sectors and services."

Jonathan Newport, Global Director and Chief Learning Officer at Team Teach

Chair of Governors' Statement

Safeguarding those in our care

National Star's approach to safeguarding is straightforward – it is everyone's responsibility to ensure the safety of the vulnerable young people and adults using our services.

The charity promotes an open-door policy for any employee, learner or resident who has concerns about safeguarding. The number of reported incidents demonstrates how learners and employees feel safe to express concerns and the strong culture within National Star. National Star's safeguarding team collate information on all referrals, regardless of whether they meet the internal or external safeguarding threshold. We do this so that employees do not feel they need to decide about whether something is a safeguarding concern or not.

Most of the investigations carried out by National Star's safeguarding team are low level concerns which often only require employee management supervision and / or refresher training. In the past year there were 425 potential incidents, the same number as 2022 – 2023, with 22 (*2023: 21*) referred to other external agencies such as Gloucestershire Safeguarding, the home area local authority and the Care Quality Commission. Of those, four were referrals related to incidents occurring while the person was not in the care of National Star.

Safeguarding is high on the charity's agenda, ensuring employees have a good understanding and there are regular discussions at team meetings. This starts when they join the charity and continues through their career with us. In the 2023 – 2024 employee survey, 92% (*2023: 91%*) of employees felt safeguarding arrangements are effective. The level of reported potential incidents reflects the improved employee awareness.

Nikki Richardson, Chair of Governors, with a National Star student

Our safeguarding team works closely with colleagues, learners and families to ensure appropriate training and delivery on the Prevent agenda, Fundamental British Values and Safe, Healthy Relationships. This is woven throughout learners' education through differentiated teaching and learning opportunities, both in the classroom and beyond.

National Star has strong relationships with Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children and Adults' teams. We continue to meet the high standards required from Gloucestershire's Safeguarding Board's annual audit.

National Star works with learners individually to help them to stay safe, both on and offline, out of the classroom. In the 2023 – 2024 Student Perception of College survey, 90% of learners who completed the survey felt safe at college all or most of the time during the year.

National Star developed an app for learners to enable them to better understand safeguarding and offer an easy way to contact the safeguarding team with any concerns. This includes the addition of a QR code that links learners straight to the National Star safeguarding site. Learners and residents can view up-to-date and relevant safeguarding information and contact the safeguarding team.

We also piloted a new role, called a Specialist Facilitator, which is someone within residence who supports the improvement of standards of care, culture and peer mentoring. The intention was to further embed high quality practice and reduce the number of low-level concerns. The pilot has been so successful that the position will be rolled out within all residences over the next year.

During an Ofsted inspection in January 2023, inspectors found National Star's arrangements for safeguarding effective. In their report they stated that National Star's designated safeguarding lead and their deputies 'implement comprehensive safeguarding policies to keep students and apprentices safe, including an appropriate safe recruitment process to ensure that staff are suitable to work with young people and vulnerable adults'.

The safety of our learners and residents will remain our highest priority and we will constantly review and look to ways to improve our arrangements to keep individuals safe.

Nikki Richardson
Chair of Governors

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Without National Star...

“I could never be as independent as I am.”

Xenon

Xenon moved into Foundation House, National Star's first long-term living provision, when it opened in 2014. It has been his home since, and employees have supported Xenon to achieve volunteer placements and further develop his independence.

The pandemic impacted a great deal on Xenon's mental wellbeing and his self-confidence. Now a special project is enabling Xenon to regain that control of his life and to flourish.

Xenon's keyworker at Foundation House, David, wanted to explore how smart technology could improve Xenon's life and the others he lived with. 'I wanted to be able to do more things for myself, such as opening and shutting a blind, without needing to ask for help,' said Xenon.

With David's support, Xenon, by using simple switches and voice command, manages his own emails, controls his TV, lights and blinds and shops online.

That technology success has also aided Xenon's wellbeing. He is getting less anxious about going out. 'Before it was stressful going into town, now I get to know my routes and plan and I feel more confident,' says Xenon.

'Xenon's willingness to try the new technology has made him a role model for others here at Foundation House,' says David. 'They have seen what Xenon can do on his own and how he was willing to try the smart technology and that has inspired them to want to increase their own independence.'

How we achieved it

National Star's greatest asset is the employees and their breadth of skill and expertise

Our people

National Star employees are the charity's most valuable asset, and the reason National Star is able to provide high-quality services. Recruiting and retaining those highly skilled, talented and committed employees is critical to the survival and growth of the charity.

The shortage of skilled workers in the care and health sector continued to impact the charity in 2023 – 2024. National Star undertook pay reviews for specific roles and offered a range of rewards and benefits to support existing employees and help recruit new ones. We started to see a reduction in attrition through a number of engagement initiatives and a longer-term attraction and retention strategy.

The charity's professional development and training team provided more than 14,728 hours of training through face-to-face sessions and eLearning. There are currently 91 people working on a range of apprenticeships, degrees and management qualifications. In 2024, National Star's in-house training team were named Training Team of the Year in the C2S South West Business Awards. The charity has 1,259 employees (as of 31 August 2024), many of whom work part-time or term-time. They are representative of, and drawn from, the surrounding local communities, with 7.5% declaring a disability and 15.9% declared as ethnic minorities, which was in line with the charity's Equality and Diversity targets. The gender split is 74% female and 26% male. We operate an Equal Opportunities policy and are a disability confident employer in respect of all employees and prospective employees.

The charity maintains fair employment practices in the recruitment, selection, retention and training of all employees. All employees are subject to necessary Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, full reference checks following the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidelines and safeguarding training. The charity has done much work to enhance its Equality and Diversity and has also appointed a Wellbeing Advisor. All employees are represented through the Link Group, an employee consultation group working with and for colleagues across the organisation. The charity's whistleblowing policy and procedures also encourage employees to raise any concerns they may have.

Directors engage with employees through the governance structure. The Board of Governors has delegated oversight responsibility for the operational aspects of National Star's activities.

Inspection outcomes by local authorities, Ofsted, Estyn and the Care Quality Commission confirm that the processes and people are in place to maintain a very high standard of provision.

National Star has an open policy in seeking and encouraging employee views. Feedback, positive and negative, from the annual employee survey and other forms of communications helps National Star to build on its good working environment.

In 2024, the team at National Star in Wales were shortlisted in the Special Educational Needs category in the South Wales School and Education Awards 2024.

Ambitions

For the year ahead

- Review and improve the People strategy so that National Star continues to attract, retain and motivate the right talent.
- Implement a new resource management system.
- Continuously review how we listen to employees and get feedback.
- Ensure we have the right employees in the right place at the right time providing the right service.

What we achieved last year

- *Appointed a wellbeing lead and further strengthened the physical and mental wellbeing offer for employees.*
- *Reviewed processes and how technology can be made more user friendly and time efficient.*
- *Reviewed how we listen to employees and get feedback.*
- *Introduced Colleague Recognition Awards.*
- *Launched a colleague buddying and mentoring process.*
- *Values and behaviour – new values created and embedded in interviewing and performance management.*

Corporate fundraising and community support enable the charity to provide specialist equipment and facilities.

Income generation

The fundraising and charity retail teams raised vital funds this year to support the charity and increase awareness of what we do.

In June 2024, the fundraising team launched a public appeal as part of our Building a Brighter Future campaign. The appeal will help fund the expansion of the Eveson Centre, our education and therapy centre in Hereford. Construction started in July 2024 and will be completed in Spring 2025. By 31 August 2024, more than £470,000 in cash and pledges had been secured.

We opened another charity shop in Cirencester, bringing our total to five, and saw retail sales increase to £727,449 (*2023: £503,935*). More people joined as shop volunteers with the number of volunteer hours growing by 60% during the financial year.

Whilst most of the charity's services are largely funded through statutory sources, we are dependent on our fundraising and other income generation activities to help fund our specialist facilities and to enhance the resources and experiences for those who depend on what we provide.

Fundraising

The generosity of supporters is vital, and this past year National Star raised £712,260 in voluntary income. Donations come from a range of trusts, foundations and supporters. Two direct mail appeals were successfully launched to our donors, four events were held, and we continued to promote our legacy programme.

Trusts and foundations

Gifts from trusts and foundations made up 38% of the charity's total voluntary income for the year. Twenty-three trusts and foundations supported the charity, with 12 trusts providing funds for our capital appeal for the Eveson Centre, while 17 others (including unrestricted) supported several projects and equipment needs.

Major gifts

Major gifts comprised of 24% of the charity's total voluntary income for the year. Through the kindness of major donors, we have been able to purchase the sensory equipment for the aquatic therapy pool and to partly fund an Innowalk Pro, a piece of vital equipment designed to improve the fitness of people with disabilities, as well as using donations for future development projects.

Events, corporate partners and community support

Events, corporate fundraising and community support raised 15% of the charity's total voluntary income for the year. Events staged by the charity included the Sunrise Walk, a fire walk, a golf day and a Wingwalk. We ran two campaigns which focused on individual challenges.

Support from the community came from an extensive range of groups, businesses, schools and individuals doing a variety of different activities, for which we are incredibly grateful.

In 2023 – 2024 a partnership with Cheltenham College raised more than £20,000. The money funded 11 Mollii Suits, a high-tech body suit designed to reduce spasticity to make movement easier and safer, and five drum kits, the remainder will going towards funding other equipment.

Corporate partners provided invaluable support. Our corporate supporters included Coombes: Everitt, Bevan Chartered Surveyors, Advanced Removals, Take Five Healthcare, Hoburne, Wagada, Cheltenham Beer Week, Outside Clinic, EDF and HCR.

Individual giving including Gifts in Wills

Gifts from individuals, in the form of donations, Gifts in Wills, gifts in memory of a loved one and taking part in the National Star Lottery generated 21% of total voluntary income. Gifts in Wills, however big or small, make a huge difference to the work we do.

The Kathryn Rudd Opportunity Fund was launched. When Kathryn Rudd, a former Principal sadly died, it was her wish to leave a legacy to National Star, to celebrate and support young people with complex disabilities. To date the fund has raised over £41,000 and has part-funded an Innowalk Pro. The fund will continue to help to fund life-changing specialist equipment.

Through regular communications, such as mailing appeals, twice-yearly **Star**News, and an annual supporter Thank You event, donors see the incredible difference their support has made whilst appreciating the charity's continued need to raise funds to support the much-needed specialist equipment and facilities.

Charity retail

Charity retail continues to expand and plays a critical role in generating income for National Star. These shops generated sales of £727,449 *(2023: £503,935)* including £33,302 *(2023: £26,603)* of Gift Aid from Gift Aided sales. Gift aid raised 2% of the charity's total voluntary income. Our 99 volunteers donated more than 16,500 hours to our shops. One of the most popular ranges in the shops are the learner-made crafts from Art Factory and printed products from **Star**Print. Both are social enterprises run by National Star.

Social enterprises

The charity is passionate about sharing its accessible facilities where it can. Last year it hosted 187 external bookings to other user groups. Gloucestershire charity Allsorts also regularly accessed our pool at Ullenwood.

The focus of **Star**Glamping, **Star**Golf and **Star**Bistro is to provide meaningful work experience and learning outcomes for the learners. **Star**Bistro and its strong link with the community was recognised by receiving a 'highly commended' in the restaurant category of the Cotswold Slow Travel Awards 2024. The British Asparagus Festival was launched in collaboration with **Star**Bistro in April 2024.

StarGolf continued to work with Cotswold Hills Golf Club with the Ladies in Golf Partnership, which enables players to become members at **Star**Golf while on Cotswold Hills' waiting list. In the past year, 4,370 rounds of golf were played. This was a decrease from the year before as the course was shut for 56 days due to bad weather and flooding. Learners support the club by welcoming golfers and helping with general course tidying. Learners are involved in setting up the glamping pods for visitors and dealing with queries. There were 292 nights booked in the pods over the past year. Details about **Star**Bistro can be found in the Education and Therapy section on pages 12–13.

Ambitions

For the year ahead

- Continue phased opening of further charity shops.
- Upgrade the supporter database to further support the work we do.
- Strengthen the levels of legacy and regular giving fundraising activity.
- Maintain high levels of donor stewardship and individual donor support.
- Continually review our fundraising activities.
- Continue to hold face-to-face supporters and fundraising events.
- Develop a fundraising plan for future phases of Building a Brighter Future for additional learner accommodation at Ullenwood.
- Complete the appeal for the expansion of the Eveson Centre, our education and therapy centre in Hereford.

What we achieved last year

- *Opened our fourth shop in Gloucestershire bringing our total to five.*
- *Successfully held a supporter event and four fundraising events.*
- *Launched a capital appeal to extend the facilities of the Eveson Centre in Hereford.*
- *Commenced a review of future development priorities for our Building a Brighter Future programme.*

Thank you for your support

National Star is grateful to all the people and organisations that have supported the charity. Together we have made a huge difference to the lives of young people with complex disabilities. The challenge is to meet the growing demand for National Star's specialist support. By raising awareness of the impact of our work, by working closely with supporters and by engaging new ones, National Star will strive to meet that demand.

Fundraising practices

We have high standards about the way our fundraising is undertaken, and how we communicate with supporters and the public as set out in our Supporter Promise. Fundraising activities are carried out in accordance with the Code of Fundraising Practice, and we comply with the law as it applies to charities and fundraising. We are members of the Fundraising Regulator's voluntary regulation scheme and display the Fundraising Regulator badge on all our fundraising materials.

To ensure volunteers and third parties uphold these standards when undertaking fundraising on our behalf, we make sure they have the information and tools needed to be compliant. Our complaints process is clear and easily accessible. Complaints received are recorded and investigated in line with the charity's complaints policy. In 2023 – 2024 we received no complaints about our fundraising activities carried out by the charity or someone on behalf of the charity.

We had a Commercial Participation Agreement with the Cheltenham Beer Week Committee from 9 September 2023 to 18 September 2023. All profits from the sale of the promotional beer were donated to National Star and another local charity.

Our fundraisers are aware of the need to be sensitive and careful when engaging with vulnerable people, and our approach reflects this. We never put pressure on anyone to make a gift, and if people do not want to give or wish to stop giving, we respect their decision. We do not engage in doorstep fundraising and we don't use services of external call centres or sales canvassing companies to support our fundraising activities. We never sell or pass on supporter details to other organisations.

We make it as easy as possible for people to contact us to opt-out of receiving communications from us, or to change the method of communication, including working with the Fundraising Preference Service.

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

Plans for the future

National Star's success – and future growth – depends on the quality of our employees and facilities

Maximising our impact

National Star is passionate that young people with disabilities have a right to high-quality provision. While we support hundreds of young people and their families every year, there are more who would benefit from our support.

Our success, and future growth, depends on the quality of our services. That can only be achieved by continuing to invest in our employees, infrastructure and facilities, and evolving our services to reflect the changing needs of the people we work with and the wider sector.

Our five-year strategy (up to 2028) focusses on our five priorities:

1. Education and therapy

Our aim

To deliver and grow our education and therapy services so more young people with disabilities and medical needs can access the most appropriate support in the right place, at the right time.

How will we do this?

- Review the curriculum and delivery model to further develop the multi-disciplinary education experience and learner outcomes.
- Introduce a simpler funding model which reflects flexibility of delivery which underpins a high-quality curriculum.
- Expand our education and therapy facilities in Hereford.
- Start the next phase of creating further specialist environments at Ullenwood.

2. Care services

Our aim

To grow our long-term accommodation, respite and care services.

How will we do this?

- Expand residential care provision at National Star's long-term accommodation in Malvern.
- Maximise capacity for respite and develop day services in Gloucestershire.
- Deliver long-term accommodation and / or respite in Wales.
- Work with other providers to increase the housing and care opportunities when transitioning from college.

3. People

Our aim

To sustain and grow a highly skilled workforce and to share specialist expertise.

How will we do this?

- Continuous improvement that attracts, retains and motivates the right talent.
- Further development of sector leading training programmes.
- Expand National Star's external training and consultancy offer.

4. Fundraising

Our aim

To grow and strengthen our fundraising to enhance the resources and experiences for those who depend on our services.

How will we do this?

- Expand the network of charity retail outlets and their net income contribution.
- Grow our fundraising community and donor base.
- Strengthen the levels of legacy and regular giving fundraising activity.
- Maintain high levels of donor stewardship and individual donor support.
- Develop the Capital Fundraising programme to contribute to the Building a Brighter Future development phases.

5. Technology

Our aim

To optimise the use of technology for students, residents and employees.

How will we do this?

- Add modern service integrations to ensure single source of information and data management.
- Further develop robust data classification and retention.
- Develop management information via dashboards and automated reporting across the organisation.
- Expand centralised Key Performance Indicators management.
- Increase students and residents' use of technology to facilitate learning and independence.

To read more about National Star's strategy, visit **www.nationalstar.org/growthstrategy**

Principal risks and uncertainties

National Star's Board of Trustees is responsible for ensuring that effective and adequate risk management and internal control systems are in place to identify and manage the key risks to the charity.

Risk management process

The Board of Directors and Trustees are responsible for overseeing the risk management process. This process involves a consistent approach to identifying, assessing and mitigating the risks facing our charity to ensure they do not exceed the level of risk we are willing to accept. It is designed to manage, rather than eliminate, risks to our charitable objectives and to provide reasonable assurance against material risks.

The processes in place regarding risk management include:

- A comprehensive risk management framework that considers the key strategic risks and their inherent level of risk, together with the relevant internal controls and assurances, as well as sources of external assurance sources. This enables the current level of residual risk to be assessed and actions to be established to achieve a desired target level of risk. The risks are regularly reviewed by the leadership team, other risk 'owners' and the Head of Risk and Compliance and are documented in a risk register.
- The Risk and Assurance Committee review the framework and receives regular reports from the Head of Risk and Compliance and the Chief Executive on the effectiveness of controls.

Managing key strategic risks

Throughout the year, National Star identified the following as areas of key organisational risk and several mitigating actions were developed and implemented:

- Maintain sufficient and appropriate employee levels: To mitigate the risk of losing valuable employees and to support them during this period of high costs of living, the leadership team and trustees agreed to award a cost-of-living increase above the rate of inflation and implement exceptional payments, other incentives and pay increases. These combined actions, along with greater opportunities for additional training and career development have enabled the charity to improve employee recruitment and retention. Recruitment marketing continues to be a priority.
- Sustain high quality student programmes and appropriate recruitment of learners: There was an overall formal review of curriculum across all four key education pathways to ensure content and delivery met the needs of learners and was cost effective. An action plan was developed and the first phase of the new changes to the curriculum and how it is delivered will be rolled out in September 2024. Development of a new employee tracker system driven by learner need was introduced to enable managers to ensure the right support was being provided in the right place and at the right time.
- Sustain standards of medical and personal care and the ability to meet therapy needs: There is a weekly review of mandatory employee training, regular compliance visits and quarterly performance management. A new leading edge care management system was introduced which provides timely care management, reporting and compliance. Medical error reporting was reviewed, and a new dashboard will be developed to enable more robust trend monitoring.
- Ensure acceptable safeguarding standards: To mitigate risk of unacceptable safeguarding standards, the organisation ensures learner / resident voice is at the centre of all activities and is monitored through regular surveys and interviews. Safeguarding is embedded into the curriculum. Safeguarding training data is reviewed quarterly, and training is audited for quality. A new role of National Lead for Quality and Safeguarding has been introduced to bring quality and safety together and a Head of Safeguarding has been appointed with a handover period from the former Safeguarding Lead.
- Ensure security of core IT against breaches and failure: There was an ongoing assessment of resilience and performance of technology and its security and a review of ongoing safeguards and controls to ensure our IT systems and information is protected from breaches. Mandatory data protection training for employees was maintained and monitored. Further projects and new systems are assessed to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- Ensure accommodation and facilities are fit for purpose: The organisation recognises the need for accommodation and facilities to be appropriate for the changing cohort of learners and their complex disabilities. To mitigate that risk there was a rolling survey programme for condition of buildings and suitability for current and future cohorts. The findings informed planned maintenance and improvement programmes, including capital projects.
- Ensure sufficient funding to deliver services: The organisation recognised the importance of maintaining a range of income streams across service delivery and charitable fundraising to mitigate risk. It endeavours to manage finances responsibly and ensure effectiveness and efficiency. The organisation also focussed on securing appropriate increases in fees where required and to maintain good working relationships with funders.

Our risk profile going forward

The uncertainties of public funding and policy direction of a new government and increased cyber security threats are among the key potential risks to be managed and mitigated by the charity. These are detailed below and include:

- The potential impact on our income from the financial instability of local authorities and available public funding to match inflationary cost increases in existing learner placements in the short-term and to fund future placements in the long-term.
- The integrity of our information security with the increased risk of cyber attacks. The charity deals with high levels of very personal data and the impact of a cyber attack could pose a serious risk to the charity.
- The historical and cumulative effects from high inflationary periods and wage cost increases have left some placements within long-term accommodation at under-funded levels. It has been challenging to negotiate with local authorities to increase fees to meet this under-funding.
- The potential impact on our operational costs as a result of the government proposal to increase employer contributions to National Insurance and the increase in the National Living Wage for 2025.
- The impact on our capital development programme and maintaining the quality of facilities, due to the pressures on fundraising and other income generation activities, affected by the economic climate and pressures on future funding levels.

Without National Star...

> “Lucy would not have dreamed of leaving home and becoming independent.”

David and Lesley
Lucy’s parents

When Lucy started at National Star, she could not manage any busy environment, going to a supermarket or a coffee shop was too distressing. Her transition to secondary school was traumatic with Lucy often refusing to even go into the building.

Her parents David and Lesley never imagined that Lucy, who has cerebral palsy and autism, would ever leave home. National Star has transformed Lucy’s life. She has gone from needing one-to-one support to going to classes on her own. She moved from Lake House, a residence designed for students who prefer quiet spaces and always need support, into one of the on-campus independence flats. She decided for herself that she didn’t want to return home, but to live independently.

Lucy, who uses a wheelchair she calls ‘Daisy’, has settled into specialist supported living in her home county of Devon. She can manage her own medical care, do her own shopping, meet her mum for coffee and spend more time in the community. Lucy even has her own YouTube channel.

‘Lucy has this amazing exuberance and joy of living, but the conditions must be right for her to thrive. National Star provided that perfect environment for her,’ say her parents.

With the support of her core team, including emotional wellbeing services, Lucy developed strategies to manage her anxiety. This has enabled her to be more in control of her emotions and manage new and busy environments.

‘It has been the biggest change,’ say David and Lesley. ‘She is now able to recognise when she is getting anxious and angry and regulate her behaviour. She can express her concerns and take positive action before a situation becomes too much for her.

‘National Star has made Lucy. She has realised that she can be independent and is doing so much more for herself. We are so incredibly proud of her and what she achieved at National Star.’

Environmental, social and governance

Structure and management

In accordance with the Memorandum and Articles of Association (as incorporated 20 August 1953 and last amended 9 February 2023), the members of the company are those persons who are appointed and hold office as the charity's trustees and directors of the company.

New trustees / directors are considered based on their skills and relevant experience alongside the balance of existing skills and experience amongst the board, and regular training is provided.

A specialist consultant was appointed to lead the recruitment process for a new chair of trustees, to succeed Paul Styles upon his retirement from the Board in 2024. The process including initial selection and interviews, a stakeholder day where candidates met students, employees, governors and trustees, and a final panel interview. Nick Grinham became Chair Designate in July 2024 and became Chair on 1 September 2024.

The charity indemnifies its directors and officers against the consequences of any neglect or default on their part through an indemnity insurance policy. The trustees have given consideration of guidance provided in the Governance Code and undertaken a review of governance structures and members.

Committees of the Board

Twelve trustees served on the main board during the year, all volunteers from a range of professional backgrounds and sectors. The board was chaired by Paul Styles until April 2024 when Margaret Sheather was appointed Interim Chair (April – August 2024) before Nick Grinham took over the role on 1 September 2024. Three further trustees and two governors retired during the period.

Trustees are not remunerated for their role, though they are entitled to be paid out-of-pocket expenses (see note 8 to the Financial statements). The trustees are also the company directors. The board delegates certain powers in connection with the charity's governance and administration through its committee structure. This delegation is controlled by requiring the committees to report back regularly to the board, ensuring that all decisions made under delegated powers are ratified by the full board. A number of board members serve on the committees within the governance structure in order to provide expertise, scrutiny and governance oversight of each committee.

All committees operate under agreed terms of reference, provide meeting minutes and report to the board on key areas of work undertaken. Other working project groups are adhoc as required.

The board meets quarterly. Trustees, governors and committee members also receive regular operational updates from the Chief Executive. All trustees and governors have an open invitation to other governance meetings.

Board of Governors

The Board of Governors has delegated oversight responsibility for the operational aspects of National Star programmes and activities, including safeguarding, quality and achievements. Two students sit on the board as student governors.

The Board of Governors meets quarterly and operates within terms of reference agreed by the Board of Trustees.

Finance and Investment Committee

The Finance and Investment Committee meets quarterly and is responsible for the oversight of the charity's financial affairs. The committee has a duty to keep a watching brief and provide advice, where appropriate, on potential and actual financial opportunities and threats, liaising with the Risk and Assurance Committee as appropriate.

Risk and Assurance Committee

The Risk and Assurance Committee meets quarterly and is responsible for reviewing the charity's risk assessment, risk management and internal control systems and processes. It may investigate any areas of concern or perceived risk. It acts as the corporate recipient of any information in line with the whistleblowing policy and to ensure that appropriate action is taken.

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board is made up of student governors, an adult learner representative, Student Union President, former learners and members of the community, and acts as a consultative and representative group of the charity's beneficiaries to help inform the charity's plans and as part of its stakeholder engagement.

Nominations and Remuneration Committee

This committee includes representatives of trustees and governors and is responsible for the recruitment and succession planning of trustees and governors as well as reviewing and recommending senior staff remuneration.

Chief Executive

Day-to-day management of the charity is delegated to the Chief Executive, supported by the Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Operations Officer / Principal, Chief People Officer and a leadership team. Following the resignation of the Chief Operations Officer (COO) / Principal on 31st October 2024, the Director of Learning Programmes took on the Principal's duties. The COO post will be left unfilled while a review of the role and the structure of the senior leadership team is undertaken. The board set the pay for key management personnel (as detailed in note 8) by relation to industry standards and organisations of a similar size and activity.

Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have complied with the requirements and duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit; 'Charities and Public Benefit' and that the extensive charitable purposes and provision of the charity, particularly in the areas of education and disability services (as detailed in pages 12–17), are for the public benefit.

Subsidiary undertakings

Two subsidiary undertakings operated during the year. NSF Trading Limited (company number 01168043) operated as the organisation's trading subsidiary for non-charitable purpose trading. NSF Design and Build Limited (company number 08628807) undertakes accommodation and facilities development projects on behalf of the charity. Both subsidiaries generated surpluses in the year after direct costs, administrative costs and audit fees (as detailed in notes 2a and 2b to the Financial statements) which resulted in Gift Aiding a total of £66,547 *(2023: £210,816)* to the charity. Shareholdings are disclosed in note 10 to the Financial statements.

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Trustees (Directors)

Name of Trustees / Directors	Risk and Assurance Committee	Finance and Investment Committee	Governor	Advisory Board	Nominations and Remuneration Committee
Nick Grinham (Appointed Chair of Trustees Sept 2024) Chair Designate (July 2024)					●
Frances Allcock (Chair of the Nominations and Remuneration Committee)					●
Peter Barefoot		●			
Liz Cadman (Chair of the Risk and Assurance Committee) (Retired August 2024)	●				
Brian Chatfield (Retired April 2024)		●			
Chris Hallam (Chair of the Finance and Investment Committee)		●			
Robert Haymon-Collins			●	●	
Chas Howes		●			
Jane Matheson (Deputy Chair of Governors) (Interim Chair of Finance and Investment)	●		●		
Nikki Richardson (Chair of Governors)			●		●
Matt Shayle	●				
Margaret Sheather (Interim Chair of Trustees April 2024 – August 2024)					●
Paul Styles (Chair) (Retired April 2024)					●
Steve Wynne (January – April 2024)					

Other Governors, Advisory Board and Committee Members

Name of other Governors, Advisory Board and Committee Members	Governor	Parent Governor	Student Governor	Staff Governor	Advisory Board	Risk and Assurance Committee
Kim Anderson		●				
Elliot Caswell					●	
Mike Cooke					●	
Lyn Dance	●					
Lisa Devine (from January 2024)				●		
Andrew Evans (Chair of Advisory Board)	●				●	
Jason Felce					●	
Margaret Goldie	●					
Chris Harber	●					●
Sue Hawkins (Until October 2023)				●		
Andrea Lewis (Governor until July 2024. Remains on the Advisory Board)	●				●	
Chris Ratcliffe (Retired January 2024)	●					
Jack Reeve			●		●	
Andrea Riga					●	
Laith Ritchie (Retired July 2024)			●		●	
Lara Rowlands	●					
Jak Ryding (from September 2024)			●		●	
Francesca Vismara				●		

Trustees' duty to promote the success of the Charity (Section 172 statement)

Trustees as directors of the company have a duty to promote its success and, in doing so, are required by section 172(1) of the Companies Act 2006 to have regard to various specific factors, including:

- The likely consequences of decisions in the long-term.
- The interests of employees.
- The need to foster relationships with third party stakeholders.
- The impact of the organisation's operations on the community and the environment.
- The desirability of the organisation maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct.
- Maintaining a reputation for high standards of conduct.

Day-to-day management is delegated to the Chief Executive and the leadership team, who are required to act in furtherance of the charity's purpose and organisational strategy and to ensure that activities are carried out in compliance with policies approved by the board. The trustees and governors review strategies to assess progress and to identify areas of focus for the following year and beyond. Policies are reviewed periodically by the board or on its behalf by board committees.

The board receives regular updates on the organisation's performance and progress with its strategic objectives of the charity. The board and its committees keep under review the charity's principal risks and its risk appetite, considering emerging risks and regularly reviewing changes in the charity's risk profile and responses. By ensuring that management act in accordance with the strategy and in compliance with specific policies, the board and its committees obtain assurance that in promoting the success of the charity, due regard is given to the factors set out in Section 172.

The leadership team regularly report to the board and its committees on key stakeholder relations and engagement activities, current issues and relevant feedback received from interaction with stakeholders.

The likely consequences of any decision in the long term

The charity's strategy is based on its ambition to deliver and further develop high-quality, relevant education, care and support services for people with disabilities. Trustees and management continued to review the long-term strategic plan and areas of potential development of the charity's learning, education and care services. The trustees' consideration of all aspects of the future direction of the charity's work is informed by the feedback received from engagement with stakeholders.

The desirability of the charity maintaining a reputation for high standards of business conduct

Trustees have responsibility for setting the charity's culture, values and standards, and ensuring that its obligations to its stakeholders are met. The charity has in place a range of policies and processes that promote corporate responsibility and ethical behaviour. Areas covered include fundraising (National Star's fundraising practices are discussed on page 22), safeguarding, equal opportunities and whistleblowing. All these policies are reviewed periodically and updated as necessary by the board or the relevant committee and are subject to periodic review of compliance.

The board and its committees regularly review guidance from the Charity Commission and other regulatory authorities and take on board any recommendations regarding good practice. The charity's core activities support vulnerable young adults and maintaining very high safeguarding processes is central to its operations.

It is essential that public trust in the charity is maintained and not damaged because of accepting donations from inappropriate sources. The board has approved a policy that enables trustees to refuse a donation which may be considered unethical.

Engaging with stakeholders

Through regular engagement with key stakeholders, trustees, governors and the leadership team maintain an understanding of stakeholders' needs that informs how the charity defines its organisational objectives, policies and strategy. The board's decision–making process considers the impact of potential decisions on relevant stakeholders, and the board obtains assurance that proper consideration is given by its committees to stakeholder interests through regular reports from each committee.

Service users

These are the young people and adults who use the charity's services and their families. Learner voice is very important to National Star. There is an active elected Student Union which was consulted over the year about a range of issues. Members provide updates to the Board of Governors and are involved in staff employee and training. Feedback from learners and service users informs organisational improvements. Learners and parent governors have a voice on the Board of Governors and parents, learners and former learners are involved with the Advisory Board. The care and education teams continuously review learners' progress and residents' support to ensure they, and their families and carers, are kept informed and that the service users have an active say in their lives. Learners also work with governors and trustees on their strategy day. Regular virtual Family and Carer Forums are held throughout the year.

Local authorities and other funding bodies

National Star's core income comes from fees paid by local authorities, the NHS and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The charity works closely with these bodies to ensure it is meeting the needs of the young people in its care. The charity also works closely with local authorities to provide local provision.

SEND education and care communities

National Star is committed to sharing best practice and its expertise. It consults and works closely with a range of professional bodies and specialist organisations to develop resources and share knowledge in the UK. National Star continued to work with The Education Training Foundation to support the development of high–quality programmes and practice across the further education sector. The charity contributes to the Natspec (the membership association for organisations which offers specialist further education and training for learners with learning difficulties and / or disabilities) practitioner network.

Key opinion leaders and other influencers

National Star works closely with key opinion leaders and influencers – both Parliamentarians and national bodies. For example, we work closely with the Department for Education, NHS England, NHS Wales, Public Health England, Ofsted, VODG, Estyn, Association of Colleges, Natspec and the Care Quality Commission to help shape and inform policy to secure the best outcomes for young people with complex disabilities and learning difficulties. We strive to work in partnership with other SEND bodies in pursuing shared policy outcomes.

Supporters

National Star consults its supporters about its fundraising activities in several ways. The charity engages with supporters on a regular basis through tailored communications to specific audiences. This includes face–to–face visits, telephone and virtual conversations, and written communications. Several supporters are invited to share in celebratory events at National Star, providing them with the opportunity to meet beneficiaries and their families. National Star employees visit many community groups and organisations to talk about the charity's work and its fundraising needs.

Employees

The leadership team, with the support of the trustees, provide employees with information on matters of concern to them through various channels of communications, including National Star's intranet, the employee consultation group (LINK) and regular updates from the Chief Executive, the Chair of Trustees, the Chair of Governors and other senior managers. There are a range of regular staff communications to ensure all employees are kept informed. An annual colleague survey was carried out in June 2024, which resulted in actions led by the leadership team. The trustees and the Board of Governors are kept informed about employee relations and regularly review employee feedback and employment policies.

Supporting the Environment

Sustainability and supporting the environment are important to National Star. Everyone, from learners to employees, are encouraged to play a part in addressing climate change.

During 2023 – 2024, National Star moved closer to its sustainability goals by installing solar panels on the new Ullenwood residence, Scott and Bradbury House and the Ullenwood View residence.

The amount of energy generated by these new solar installations will be closely monitored before we give the green light to plans for additional solar panels being installed on the Anderson building in 2024 – 2025.

Investment continues to be made in upgrading our lighting to low energy LED alternatives across the National Star estate.

Additional electric vehicle charge points were installed for colleagues and visitors and the National Star colleague minibus service, which picks up staff from across Cheltenham and Gloucester, is also helping to reduce our Scope 2 emissions.

There are many green spaces at National Star, from the fields and orchard at Ullenwood, Wessington Court Farm at Hereford, to allotments, green roofs on residential buildings and the gardens at long-term residences in Malvern, Cheltenham, Hereford and Gloucester. All are vital parts of a wider ecological network in the communities where we live, learn and work.

National Star's new Biodiversity Action Plan outlines the charity's intentions for how we plan to improve biodiversity on our estate. It includes a set of objectives to help us to deliver and protect biodiversity at all National Star sites and contribute to local, regional and national biodiversity targets.

We were one of only three further education colleges nationally to secure Gold Hedgehog Friendly Campus status in 2023 – 2024. Students participated in auditing the number of hedgehogs living at Ullenwood and discovered that the hedgehog population across campus is thriving.

This report is provided in accordance with The Companies (Directors' Report) and Limited Liability Partnerships (Energy and Carbon Report) Regulations 2018, which came into force from 1st April 2019. As a large charitable company, National Star is required to provide the following information for the Group in relation to its UK energy use, associated greenhouse gas emissions, intensity ratio and energy efficiency actions.

Methodology

Our reporting methodology was based on the UK Government's Environmental Reporting Guidelines, 2019. Our calculations were based on the UK Government GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting (2024). All emissions calculations are derived from activity data representing the Group, including its subsidiary undertakings. Parameters include those emissions for which National Star has operational control. The reporting period is 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024.

Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting

Type of Emission	Scope	Activity	Unit	2023/24 Quantity	2023/24 kWh Energy	2023/24 tCO2e	2023/24 % of total	2022/23 Quantity	2022/23 kWh Energy	2022/23 tCO2e	2022/23 % of total
Direct	1	Services – Biomass	kWh	2,500,900	2,500,900	28	4%	2,530,000	2,530,000	27	3%
		Services – Gas	kWh	533,665	533,665	98	13%	753,639	753,639	139	17%
		Services – Oil	litres	28,447	336,836	90	12%	28,158	333,414	89	11%
		Services – LPG	litres	9,212	66,874	14	2%	8,867	64,370	14	2%
		Owned Vehicles	litres – diesel	62,363	655,460	157	21%	61,279	643,886	154	19%
		Owned Vehicles	litres – petrol	975	9,165	2	0%	837	7,920	2	0%
Energy Indirect	2	Services – Electricity	kWh	1,593,278	1,593,278	330	43%	1,728,909	1,728,909	358	44%
Other Indirect	3	Personal Vehicles	miles	153,611	185,657	43	6%	143,434	165,805	38	5%
Total Gross Emissions (tCO2e)						**762**				**821**	
Total Energy Consumed (kWh)					**5,881,836**				**6,227,943**		

Intensity Metric Ratio:	2023/24	2022/23
Number of Employees (FTEs)	902	904
Tonnes of CO2e Per Employee	0.84	0.91

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees (who are directors of National Star Foundation for the purpose of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report (including the Strategic Report) and the Financial statements in accordance with applicable law and generally accepted accounting practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare Financial statements for each financial year. Under company law, the trustees must not approve the Financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the situation of the charity and the group and of the incoming resources, including the income and expenditure of the charity and the group for that period.

In preparing these Financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities as revised in 2019.
- Make reasonable and prudent judgements and estimates.
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards, comprising FRS102, 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 group and charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show the charity's transactions, 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 and the provisions of the charity's constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and the group and for taking reasonable steps to prevent and detect fraud, and other irregularities.

In so far as each of the trustees of the charity at the date of approval of this report is aware, there is no relevant audit information needed by the charity's auditor in connection with preparing the audit report of which the charity's auditor is unaware. Each trustee has taken all of the necessary steps in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

The trustees confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit and report on the charity's objectives and achievements on pages 12 to 17. The reference and administrative details on page 55 form part of the Trustees' Report.

By order of the Board of Trustees, the Annual Report (incorporating the Strategic Report) has been approved by the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:

Nick Grinham
Chair of Trustees
4 February 2025

Will, age 22

Without National Star...

"William would not have become so confident and independent."

Anthony and Ros
Will's parents

Will has gone from a being a very quiet young man who struggled to voice his concerns to being the centre of student life at National Star in Hereford.

Not only has Will completed his Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award at National Star, he became one of the charity's first students to take part in the DofE Young Leaders' programme. He supported other students completing their awards and helped plan activities.

With National Star's support Will was also able to complete a course at Hereford College of Arts and his work was included in an exhibition.

Will has improved his communication skills and has the confidence to voice his concerns by working with the emotional wellbeing specialists, speech and language therapist and learning team. It has been at National Star's Forest School where Will has flourished. Will has developed his independence, sense of responsibility and ability to work with others.

'Will's confidence has grown during his time at college,' said his parents Anthony and Ros. 'National Star has given him the opportunity to try different things and because of that he is more inquisitive and willing to try new experiences.'

Will works as a volunteer at National Star's charity shop in Hereford and hopes to take further courses at Hereford College of Arts.

Independent auditors' report

Opinion

We have audited the Financial statements of National Star Foundation ('the charitable company') and its subsidiaries ('the group') for the year ended 31 August 2024 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, Consolidated Balance Sheet, Charity Balance Sheet, Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the Financial statements, including significant accounting policies. 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 the charitable company's affairs as at 31 August 2024 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; and
- 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 group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the Financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the Financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the Financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's or the group'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 contained within the annual report. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the Financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the Financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the Financial statements themselves. 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 our audit

- The information given in the Trustees' Report, which includes the Directors' Report and the Strategic Report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the Financial statements are prepared is consistent with the Financial statements; and
- The Strategic Report and the Directors' Report included within the Trustees' Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and charitable company and their environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Strategic Report or the Directors' Report included within the Trustees' 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 and proper accounting records have not been kept; or
- The Financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement set out on page 30, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the Financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of Financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the Financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a of as

Independent auditors' report

going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the Financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the Financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these Financial statements.

Details of the extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud and non–compliance with laws and regulations are set out below.

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.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non–compliance with laws and regulations. We identified and assessed the risks of material misstatement of the Financial statements from irregularities, whether due to fraud or error, and discussed these between our audit team members. We then designed and performed audit procedures responsive to those risks, including obtaining audit evidence sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory frameworks within which the charitable company and group operates, focusing on those laws and regulations that have a direct effect on the determination of material amounts and disclosures in the Financial statements. The laws and regulations we considered in this context were the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, together with the Charities SORP (FRS 102). We assessed the required compliance with these laws and regulations as part of our audit procedures on the related financial statement items.

In addition, we considered provisions of other laws and regulations that do not have a direct effect on the Financial statements but compliance with which might be fundamental to the charitable company's and the group's ability to operate or to avoid a material penalty. We also considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the charitable company and the group for fraud. The laws and regulations we considered in this context for the operations were CQC Regulations for service providers and managers, Ofsted, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), taxation legislation and employment legislation.

Auditing standards limit the required audit procedures to identify non–compliance with these laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

We identified the greatest risk of material impact on the Financial statements from irregularities, including fraud, to be the override of controls by management. Our audit procedures to respond to these risks included enquiries of management and the Finance & Investment Committee about their own identification and assessment of the risks of irregularities, sample testing on the posting of journals, reviewing accounting estimates for biases, reviewing regulatory correspondence with the Charity Commission and Ofsted, and reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the Financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non–compliance with laws and regulations (irregularities) is from the events and transactions reflected in the Financial statements, the less likely the inherently limited procedures required by auditing standards would identify it. In addition, as with any audit, there remained a higher risk of non–detection of irregularities, as these may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal controls. We are not responsible for preventing non–compliance and cannot be expected to detect non–compliance with all laws and regulations.

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.

Tara Westcott
Partner, Social Purpose and Non Profits
For and on behalf of
Crowe U.K. LLP
Statutory Auditor
4th Floor
St James House
St James' Square
Cheltenham
GL50 3PR

Date: 20 February 2025

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National Star Foundation
Consolidated statement of financial activities

(Incorporating an income and expenditure account for the year ended 31 August 2024)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds 2024 £	*Total funds 2023 £*
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	4/14	347,754	474,104	821,858	*2,484,433*
Charitable activities					
Student fees		30,708,548	–	30,708,548	*26,949,888*
Other charitable activities	3	9,702,284	–	9,702,284	*9,453,774*
ESFA capital grants		156,094	–	156,094	*189,011*
Teachers' Pension Grant		201,317	–	201,317	*146,613*
Adult Social Care Infection Control Grant		–	–	–	*1,033*
Other trading activities					
Trading turnover – NSF Trading Limited	2a	134,610	–	134,610	*149,803*
Investments		275,073	–	275,073	*139,799*
Other					
Other income	5	1,044,500	–	1,044,500	*543,525*
Total income		**42,570,180**	**474,104**	**43,044,284**	*40,057,879*
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	6	321,768	–	321,768	*324,784*
Charitable activities	6/14	40,984,252	340,541	41,324,793	*38,126,601*
Other expenditure					
NSF Trading Limited	2a	59,145	–	59,145	*67,628*
NSF Design and Build Limited	2b	8,431	–	8,431	*10,929*
Total expenditure		**41,373,596**	**340,541**	**41,714,137**	*38,529,942*
Net income before gains on investments		1,196,584	133,563	1,330,147	*1,527,937*
Net gains on investments	10	492,027	–	492,027	*149,834*
Net income		1,688,611	133,563	1,822,174	*1,677,771*
Transfer between funds	14	232,416	(232,416)	–	–
Net movement in funds		1,921,027	(98,853)	1,822,174	*1,677,771*
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds at 1 September 2023	14/15/16	33,687,761	2,271,037	35,958,798	*34,281,027*
Total funds At 31 August 2024	14/15/16	**35,608,788**	**2,172,184**	**37,780,972**	*35,958,798*

The notes on pages 37 to 54 form part of these Financial statements.

National Star Foundation Consolidated balance sheet

As at 31 August 2024
Company Number: 00522846

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9a	**30,548,073**	*31,080,058*
Investments	10	**3,789,616**	*3,297,589*
		34,337,689	*34,377,647*
Current assets			
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	11	**2,322,737**	*1,758,691*
Cash at bank and in hand		**6,524,786**	*5,063,139*
		8,847,523	*6,821,830*
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	**(5,404,240)**	*(5,240,679)*
Net current assets		**3,443,283**	*1,581,151*
Total net assets		**37,780,972**	*35,958,798*
The funds of the group			
Restricted funds	14	**2,172,184**	*2,271,037*
Unrestricted funds	15	**35,608,788**	*33,687,761*
Total group funds		**37,780,972**	*35,958,798*

The charity net income in the year was £1,829,453 (*2023: £1,827,021*) before group consolidation.

These Financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 4 February 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Nick Grinham
Director

The notes on pages 37 to 54 form part of these Financial statements.

National Star Foundation
Charity balance sheet

As at 31 August 2024

Company Number: 00522846

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9b	31,010,619	31,535,325
Investments	10	3,789,717	3,297,690
		34,800,336	34,833,015
Current assets			
Debtors: amounts falling due within one year	11	2,408,050	1,885,346
Cash at bank and in hand		6,321,472	4,764,977
		8,729,522	6,650,323
Liabilities			
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(5,286,340)	(5,069,273)
Net current assets		3,443,182	1,581,050
Total net assets		38,243,518	36,414,065
The funds of the charity			
Restricted funds	14	2,172,184	2,271,037
Unrestricted funds	15	36,071,334	34,143,028
Total charity funds		38,243,518	36,414,065

These Financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 4 February 2025 and signed on its behalf by:

Nick Grinham
Director

The notes on pages 37 to 54 form part of these Financial statements.

National Star Foundation
Consolidated statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 August 2024

Reconciliation of net income to net cash inflow from operating activities	2024 £	2023 £
Net income for the reporting period	**1,822,174**	*1,677,771*
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	**1,591,988**	*1,598,141*
Interest from investments	**(275,073)**	*(139,799)*
Gains on investments	**(492,027)**	*(149,834)*
Profit on sale of fixed assets	**(275,362)**	*(270)*
(Increase) / Decrease in debtors	**(564,046)**	*1,200,038*
Increase / (Decrease) in creditors	**163,561**	*(352,158)*
Net cash provided by operating activities	**1,971,215**	*3,833,889*
Cash flows from financing activities		
Repayment of borrowings	**–**	*(13,629)*
Net cash used in financing activities	**–**	*(13,629)*
Cash flows from investing activities		
Interest from investments	**275,073**	*139,799*
Proceeds from the sale of property, plant and equipment	**978,506**	*270*
Purchase of property plant and equipment	**(1,763,147)**	*(6,367,018)*
Net cash used in investing activities	**(509,568)**	*(6,226,949)*
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period	**1,461,647**	*(2,406,689)*
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period	**5,063,139**	*7,469,828*
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	**6,524,786**	*5,063,139*
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents		
Cash in hand	**6,524,786**	*5,063,139*
Notice deposits (less than 3 months)	**–**	*–*
	6,524,786	*5,063,139*

The notes on pages 37 to 54 form part of these Financial statements.

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National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

1. Accounting policies

a) Charity information

National Star Foundation is a registered charity (charity number: 220239) and was incorporated as a private company limited by guarantee in England and Wales (company number: 00522846) on 20 August 1953. The address of its registered office is Ullenwood Manor, Ullenwood, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 9QU. This is also the registered address of NSF Trading Limited and NSF Design and Build Limited.

b) Accounting convention

The consolidated Financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by the revaluation of investments.

The consolidated Financial statements 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 UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

National Star Foundation meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

c) Going concern

The group and charity has cash resources and has no requirement for external funding. The trustees have reviewed the position carefully with a view to ensuring the ongoing provision of care for the students and residents as well as employment of staff. The charity currently holds significant cash balances supplemented, if needed, by an overdraft facility. Demand for places remains strong for the academic year 2024 – 2025. Conservative cash flow modelling with sensitivity analysis indicates that the cash reserves of the charity are adequate to meet the charity's obligations as they fall due. Accordingly, the trustees believe that financial resources are sufficient to ensure the charity will continue as a going concern for the foreseeable future, being at least 12 months from the date of approval of the Financial statements and have therefore prepared the Financial statements on a going concern basis.

d) Consolidated Financial statements

These Financial statements consolidate the charity and its subsidiary undertakings NSF Design and Build Limited and NSF Trading Limited to 31 August 2024, all inter group sales and profits have been eliminated on consolidation.

Net income of £1,829,453 (*2023: £1,827,021*) was attributable to the charity for the year. The charity has also taken advantage of the exemption available to a qualifying entity in FRS 102 from the requirement to present a charity only Statement of Cash Flows and certain disclosures about the charity's Financial instruments within the consolidated financial statements.

No separate Statement of Financial Activities ("SOFA") has been prepared for the charity alone as permitted by Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006.

e) Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the Financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors. The aims of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the Financial statements.

f) Income

All income is included in the SOFA when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

1. Accounting policies (continued)

Donations and gifts represent amounts receivable during the year, together with any associated tax refund and do not include the value of any pledges secured for future donations.

Fees are accounted for in the SOFA in the year in which the service is provided.

Grants (including government grants) are included in the Financial statements on an entitlement basis. The balance of income received for a specific purpose but not expended in the year is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance Sheet. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

Where income is received in advance of the charity having entitlement to the fund the income is deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution.

All capital grants received are recognised in the SOFA and credited to a separate restricted fund where there are restrictions on the future use of the fund. Any depreciation charged on that element of the cost of assets funded by grants is charged to restricted funds.

g) Expenditure

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. Expenditure on raising funds include all fundraising, financing and trading costs of the subsidiaries.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. Overheads and other costs not directly attributable to particular functional activity categories are apportioned over the relevant categories on the basis of management estimates of the amount attributable to that activity in the year on a basis consistent with use of the resources. The irrecoverable element of VAT is included with the item of expense to which it relates.

Governance costs are included within support costs and include strategic planning costs for the charity's future development, external audit and all costs of complying with constitutional and statutory requirements, such as costs of Board and Committee meetings and for preparing statutory Financial statements and satisfying public accountability.

h) Pension costs

The charity contributes to the Teachers' Pension Scheme at the advised rates. As it is not possible to separately identify the assets and liabilities of the Teachers' Pension Scheme, it is accounted for as if it were a defined contribution scheme. The charity's contributions to the scheme are charged in the financial statements as they accrue.

With regard to non–teaching employees, contributions are made to the charity's defined contribution pension scheme. All contributions are charged to the SOFA as they become payable in accordance with the rules of the schemes.

i) Tangible fixed assets

All expenditure above £500 for ICT and £1,000 for all other assets for the acquisition, enhancement, production and installation of fixed assets and all fixed assets received by way of donation are capitalised. Tangible fixed assets are stated in the Balance Sheet at cost less depreciation and impairment, or at estimated value at date of donation less depreciation in respect of donated assets.

Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost or valuation less estimated residual value of tangible assets over their estimated useful lives at the following rates:

Freehold land	Not depreciated
Freehold buildings	2% – 10%
Leasehold property improvements	20% (or over the lease term)
Fixtures and equipment	10% – 20%
ICT	10% – 25%
Motor vehicles	10% – 25%

Assets in the course of construction are included at cost. Depreciation on these assets is not charged until they are brought into use.

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

1. Accounting policies (continued)

j) Investments

Investments are stated at market value at the Balance Sheet date. All gains and losses relating to investments are accounted for in the SOFA. Investments in subsidiaries are held at cost.

k) Debtors

Short-term debtors are initially measured at the settlement price, less any impairment. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts.

l) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions with a short maturity of three months or less.

m) Creditors

Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Short term creditors are initially measured at the settlement amount.

n) Financial instruments

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

o) Operating leases

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged to the SOFA on a straight line basis over the lease term.

p) Taxation

National Star Foundation is a registered charity, and as such is entitled to tax exemptions on all its income and gains, properly applied for its charitable purposes.

q) Judgements in applying accounting policies and key sources of estimation uncertainty

Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The items in the Financial statements where these estimates and judgements have been made include the following:

i) Useful economic lives of tangible assets

The annual depreciation charges for the tangible assets are sensitive to changes in the estimated useful economic lives and residual values of the assets. The useful economic lives and residual values are re-assessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on economic utilisation and the physical condition of the assets. See note 9 for the carrying amount of the tangible assets and note 1i for the useful lives for each class of asset.

ii) Useful economic lives of intangible assets

Intangible assets are stated at their historical cost and amortised on a straight-line basis over their expected useful economic lives. The useful economic lives and residual values are reassessed annually. They are amended when necessary to reflect current estimates, based on economic utilisation associated with the specific asset. Intangible assets are derecognised on disposal or when no future economic benefits are expected from their use. Intangible assets include software purchased from third parties and related software implementation costs. See note 9 for the cost amount of intangible assets.

iii) Impairment of debtors

The Group makes an estimate of the recoverable value of trade and other debtors. When assessing impairment of trade and other debtors, management considers factors including the current credit rating of the debtor, the ageing profile of debtors and historical experience. See note 11 for the net carrying amount of the debtors and associated impairment provision.

iv) Income provision

The charity has a provision for some elements of income in relation to learners and service users who left through the year or were absent for part of the year. When assessing the level of provision required, the charity has considered levels of fee income, services provided, availability of placement and pattern of attendance, as well as relevant funding guidance.

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

2. Results of subsidiaries

a) NSF Trading Limited

The charity owns 100% of NSF Trading Limited (company registration number: 01168043), which predominantly lets out the National Star Foundation facilities and undertakes the charity's trading activities. It has a signed ordinary resolution to Gift Aid its taxable profits to the charity. Its trading results, extracted from its audited financial statements, were:

	2024 £	2023 £
Turnover	**134,610**	*149,803*
Cost of sales	**(55,414)**	*(62,358)*
Gross profit	**79,196**	*87,445*
Other income	**–**	*–*
Administrative expenses	**(13,614)**	*(16,833)*
Operating profit	**65,582**	*70,612*
Taxation	**–**	*–*
Profit after taxation	**(65,582)**	*70,612*
Retained earnings at start of period	**–**	*–*
Gift Aid donation to National Star Foundation	**(65,582)**	*(70,612)*
Retained earnings at end of period	**–**	*–*
Reserves		
Profit and loss reserves	**–**	*–*
Share capital	**100**	*100*
Shareholder's funds	**100**	*100*

The trading company made a Gift Aid donation of £65,582 (*2023: £70,612*) to the charity within nine months of the year end, with the result that it has a £nil annual corporation tax liability.

b) NSF Design and Build Limited

The charity owns 100% of NSF Design and Build Limited (company registration number: 08628807), which was set up to manage capital projects on behalf of National Star Foundation. It has a signed ordinary resolution to Gift Aid its taxable profits to the charity. Its trading results, extracted from its audited Financial statements, were:

	2024 £	2023 £
Turnover	**322,611**	*5,188,907*
Cost of sales	**(313,215)**	*(5,037,774)*
Gross profit	**9,396**	*151,133*
Administrative expenses	**(8,431)**	*(10,929)*
Operating profit	**965**	*140,204*
Taxation	**–**	*–*
Profit after taxation	**965**	*140,204*
Retained earnings at start of period	**–**	*–*
Gift Aid donation to National Star Foundation	**(965)**	*(140,204)*
Retained earnings at end of period	**–**	*–*
Reserves		
Profit and loss reserves	**–**	*–*
Share capital	**1**	*1*
Shareholder's funds	**1**	*1*

The trading company made a Gift Aid donation of £965 (*2023: £140,204*) to the charity within nine months of the year end, with the result that it has a £nil annual corporation tax liability.

3. Other charitable activities

Other Charitable Activities income of £9,702,284 (*2023: £9,453,774*) arises from a range of activities undertaken during the year including:

	2024 £	2023 £
Foundation House	**1,738,034**	*1,571,394*
Eveson Centre, Hereford	**1,662,734**	*1,982,217*
Hereford long-term residence	**1,247,370**	*1,091,568*
LiftTraining	**82,125**	*249,032*
Respite Provision	**1,734,979**	*1,411,330*
StarBistro	**126,359**	*117,859*
Steps into Work	**109,934**	*212,884*
Bradbury Gardens long-term residence	**1,143,426**	*1,039,919*
Mamhilad (Wales)	**803,986**	*649,370*
Matrixcare (Malvern)	**480,730**	*430,652*
Teacher Education	**80,255**	*126,963*
Re-education / Therapy Services	**175,388**	*108,272*

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

4. Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	*2023 Total funds £*
Donations	257,225	474,104	731,329	*2,278,450*
Legacies	68,598	–	68,598	*193,890*
Other voluntary income	21,931	–	21,931	*12,093*
	347,754	**474,104**	**821,858**	*2,484,433*

In addition, the charity received a Government ESFA Building Conditions Grant of £156,094 (*2023: £189,011*), a Teachers' Pension grant of £201,317 (*2023: £146,613*), and no Adult Social Care Infection Control Grant (*2023: £1,033*). There were no unfulfilled conditions or other contingencies attached to these grants.

£2,113,220 of income from donations in the prior year related to restricted funds *(2023: £818,844)*. All other income from donations and legacies in the prior year related to unrestricted funds.

5. Other income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total funds £	*2023 Total funds £*
StarShop and student shops	40,499	–	40,499	*33,160*
Transport	236	–	236	*220*
Profit on sale of fixed assets	275,362	–	275,362	*270*
Charity retail	727,449	–	727,449	*503,935*
Other income	954	–	954	*5,940*
	1,044,500	**–**	**1,044,500**	*543,525*

All other income in the prior year related to unrestricted funds.

6. Analysis of expenditure

	Staff costs £	Other costs £	Depreciation £	Total 2024 £	*Total 2023 £*
Charitable activities					
Teaching and welfare	27,519,308	1,320,230	1,157,181	29,996,719	*27,813,937*
Premises	894,235	2,985,797	155,686	4,035,718	*3,631,197*
Support costs	4,710,138	2,303,097	279,121	7,292,356	*6,681,467*
	33,123,681	**6,609,124**	**1,591,988**	**41,324,793**	*38,126,601*
Raising funds					
Other	156,620	165,148	–	321,768	*324,784*
Trading costs	41,552	26,024	–	67,576	*78,557*
	33,321,853	**6,800,296**	**1,591,988**	**41,714,137**	*38,529,942*

Included within support costs are the following governance costs:

	2024 £	*2023 £*
Auditor's remuneration (gross)		
– Audit	41,400	*29,415*
– Non audit	6,318	*7,423*
Trustees' / directors' meeting costs	3,272	*2,134*
	50,990	*38,972*

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

7. Net income

	2024 £	2023 £
Net income is stated after charging / (crediting) the following:		
Depreciation	**1,591,988**	*1,598,141*
Auditor's remuneration (net) – audit	**34,500**	*24,512*
– non audit	**5,265**	*6,186*
Profit on sale of fixed assets	**(275,362)**	*(270)*
Bank loan interest	**–**	*117*
Operating lease payments – land and buildings	**236,630**	*212,780*
– other	**77,825**	*58,068*

8. Employee costs and key management personnel remuneration

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	**29,799,551**	*27,770,611*
Social security costs	**2,329,252**	*2,054,106*
Other pension costs	**1,193,050**	*1,080,732*
	33,321,853	*30,905,449*

Included in the above are agency and subcontractor costs of £2,189,516 (*2023: £3,062,257*) in relation to National Star Foundation & NSF Trading Limited.

During the year, the trustees received £nil (*2023: £nil*) remuneration and no retirement benefits were accruing. No trustee received reimbursed expenses during the year (*2023: £nil*).

The average headcount of employees was:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Charitable activities	**1,222**	**1,213**
Cost of generating funds – fundraising office	**4**	**4**
	1,226	**1,217**

After taking account of part–time employees the annual full–time equivalent number was 902 (*2023: 904*).

During the year, the charity made redundancy / termination payments of £10,299 (*2023: £13,021*).

The number of employees who received annual equivalent emoluments (including benefits in kind of between £86 and £2,164 per person) in excess of £60,000 during the period were in the following bands:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
£60,000 – £69,999	**1**	*4*
£70,000 – £79,999	**6**	*4*
£80,000 – £89,999	**1**	*1*
£90,000 – £99,999	**1**	*–*
£110,000 – £119,999	**–**	*1*
£120,000 – £129,999	**1**	*1*
£130,000 – £139,999	**1**	*–*

Four of the above employees participated in the Teachers' Pension Scheme. During the year ended 31 August 2024 employer contributions for these staff members amounted to £78,904 (*2023: £65,845*). The other seven employees participated in the defined contribution pension scheme – total employer contributions for these staff members amounted to £58,823 (*2023: £50,649*).

The remuneration of key management personnel for the group was:

	2024 £	2023 £
Total key management personnel remuneration	**536,069**	*471,180*

Key management personnel are defined as the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Operations Officer / Principal and Chief People Officer. The remuneration figure includes gross salary, employer's National Insurance, employer's pension and benefits in kind.

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

9a. Tangible fixed assets – group

	Freehold land and buildings £	Assets under construction £	Leasehold property improvements £	Motor vehicles £	Fixtures and equipment £	Total £
Cost						
At 1 September 2023	*36,583,438*	*6,370,174*	*328,965*	*1,136,381*	*3,708,938*	*48,127,896*
Additions	**808,634**	**305,462**	**30,070**	**61,940**	**557,041**	**1,763,147**
Disposals	**(1,382,446)**	**–**	**(2,490)**	**–**	**(50,488)**	**(1,435,424)**
Transfers	**6,048,768**	**(6,370,174)**	**–**	**–**	**321,406**	**–**
At 31 August 2024	**42,058,394**	**305,462**	**356,545**	**1,198,321**	**4,536,897**	**48,455,619**
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2023	*13,370,139*	*–*	*202,461*	*790,178*	*2,685,060*	*17,047,838*
Disposals	**(682,453)**	**–**	**(2,490)**	**–**	**(47,337)**	**(732,280)**
Charge for the period	**1,071,979**	**–**	**32,745**	**78,905**	**408,359**	**1,591,988**
At 31 August 2024	**13,759,665**	**–**	**232,716**	**869,083**	**3,046,082**	**17,907,546**
Net Book Value						
At 31 August 2024	**28,298,729**	**305,462**	**123,829**	**329,238**	**1,490,815**	**30,548,073**
At 31 August 2023	*23,213,299*	*6,370,174*	*126,504*	*346,203*	*1,023,878*	*31,080,058*

Included in the above within Fixtures and Equipment at cost is £315,652 (*2023: £292,647*) of Intangible software assets with depreciation charged on these assets during the year of £18,761 (*2023: £11,907*).

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

9b. Tangible fixed assets – charity

	Freehold land and buildings £	Assets under construction £	Leasehold property improvements £	Motor vehicles £	Fixtures and equipment £	Total £
Cost						
At 1 September 2023	*37,036,790*	*6,370,174*	*328,965*	*1,136,381*	*3,710,853*	*48,583,163*
Additions	**815,913**	**305,462**	**30,070**	**61,940**	**557,041**	**1,770,426**
Disposals	**(1,382,446)**	**–**	**(2,490)**	**–**	**(50,488)**	**(1,435,424)**
Transfers	**6,048,768**	**(6,370,174)**	**–**	**–**	**321,406**	**–**
At 31 August 2024	**42,519,025**	**305,462**	**356,545**	**1,198,321**	**4,538,812**	**48,918,165**
Depreciation						
At 1 September 2023	*13,370,139*	*–*	*202,461*	*790,178*	*2,685,060*	*17,047,838*
Disposals	**(682,453)**	**–**	**(2,490)**	**–**	**(47,337)**	**(732,280)**
Charge for the period	**1,071,979**	**–**	**32,745**	**78,905**	**408,359**	**1,591,988**
At 31 August 2024	**13,759,665**	**–**	**232,716**	**869,083**	**3,046,082**	**17,907,546**
Net Book Value						
At 31 August 2024	**28,759,360**	**305,462**	**123,829**	**329,238**	**1,492,730**	**31,010,619**
At 31 August 2023	*23,666,651*	*6,370,174*	*126,504*	*346,203*	*1,025,793*	*31,535,325*

Included in the above within Fixtures and Equipment at cost is £315,652 (*2023: £292,647*) of Intangible software assets with depreciation charged on these assets during the year of £18,761 (*2023: £11,907*).

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

10. Investments – group and charity

Cost or valuation	Charity listed investments £	Charity investment in subsidiary £	Charity total £
At 1 September 2023	*3,297,589*	*101*	*3,297,690*
Additions	–	–	–
Disposals	–	–	–
Gains on investments	**492,027**	–	**492,027**
Net Book Value			
At 31 August 2024	**3,789,616**	**101**	**3,789,717**

The historical cost of listed investments at 31 August 2024 was £1,817,250 (*2023: £1,817,250*).

At 31 August 2024 the investments comprise accumulation units in CCLA COIF Charities Investment Fund of £1,191,720 (*2023: £1,071,441*), Schroder Charity Equity Value Fund of £1,389,444 (*2023: £1,157,870*), and St. James's Place Wealth Management split into three separate investment funds; Diversified Bond £435,380 (*2023: £390,950*), Global Equity £288,822 (*2023: £243,544*) and Strategic Income £484,250 (*2023: £433,784*).

Such investments are primarily held to provide a return where monies are not required immediately for the charity's activities and form part of the charity's reserves policy.

Shares in Subsidiary

The charity holds 101 ordinary shares of £1 each representing 100% of the allocated share capital of NSF Trading Limited (100 shares) and NSF Design and Build Limited (1 share), both entities are incorporated in England and Wales. The value of the investments is the cost of £101.

11. Debtors – amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2024 £	*2023 £*	**2024 £**	*2023 £*
Trade debtors	**1,459,511**	*1,189,358*	**1,457,651**	*1,138,236*
VAT	**24,476**	*34,740*	**8,451**	*6,549*
Amount owed by subsidiary undertaking	–	–	**105,172**	*206,973*
Prepayments and accrued income	**798,378**	*499,388*	**796,404**	*498,383*
Other debtors	**40,372**	*35,205*	**40,372**	*35,205*
	2,322,737	*1,758,691*	**2,408,050**	*1,885,346*

Trade debtors are stated after impairment provision totalling £15,621 (*2023: £30,898*).

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

12. Creditors – Amounts falling due within one year

	Group		Charity	
	2024 £	*2023 £*	2024 £	*2023 £*
Trade creditors	**1,478,144**	*1,607,272*	**1,374,766**	*1,540,747*
Taxes and social security costs	**585,595**	*532,667*	**585,595**	*532,667*
Amount owed to subsidiary undertaking	**–**	*–*	**156,815**	*–*
Accruals	**1,074,990**	*929,075*	**912,435**	*837,041*
Deferred income	**1,429,518**	*1,481,951*	**1,420,794**	*1,470,228*
Pension	**200,134**	*169,716*	**200,134**	*169,716*
Other creditors	**635,859**	*519,998*	**635,801**	*518,876*
	5,404,240	*5,240,679*	**5,286,340**	*5,069,273*

Deferred income	2024 £
Deferred income at 1 September 2023	**1,481,951**
Resources deferred in the year	**1,429,518**
Amounts released from previous years	**(1,481,951)**
Deferred income at 31 August 2024	**1,429,518**

The value of deferred income relates to income that has been received during the year that relates to future periods, such as ESFA element 1&2 funding, respite funding and LIFT income.

Creditors – amounts falling due after one year

£nil *(2023: £nil)*.

As part of the organisation's response to its risk management processes, the organisation continues to hold an overdraft facility with HSBC to support any cash flow pressures that may result from a disruption to services and to mitigate risk. The facility of £2.5m is secured against the organisation's assets by way of a Debenture and was not used in the reporting period.

13. Share capital

The charity does not have a share capital as it is limited by guarantee. Each of the members is a guarantor to the extent of £1 in the event of the charity being wound up whilst they are members, or within one year of them ceasing to be members in respect of debts and liabilities contracted before they ceased to be a member.

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

14. Restricted funds

2024	*Balance at 1 September 2023 £*	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
Therapies Centre Star Appeal Development (Schroder Foundation – £50,000 September 2009)	*35,917*	–	(1,000)	–	34,917
Star Appeal / Development (The Henry Smith Charity – £125,000 May 2008 / £125,000 May 2011)	*182,083*	–	(5,000)	–	177,083
Elizabeth House Residential Accommodation Project (Big Lottery Fund – £300,000 January 2000)	*158,500*	–	(158,500)	–	–
Cleeve Bungalow Residential Accommodation Project (Big Lottery Fund – £250,000 July 2006)	*159,583*	–	(5,000)	–	154,583
Education and Skills Funding Agency – Building Improvement Fund Capital Grant – Pittville Project (£2,209,746 2014–2015). The restriction ends in 2025.	*1,661,525*	–	(59,191)	–	1,602,334
Committed Funds – various restricted gifts	*68,429*	250,491	(111,850)	(103,803)	103,267
Ledbury Road Hereford – various other restricted gifts	*5,000*	223,000	–	(128,000)	100,000
Development fund	–	613	–	(613)	–
	2,271,037	474,104	(340,541)	(232,416)	2,172,184

A number of the restricted funds detailed above relate to fundraised capital projects where the specified funder has required that the fund is separately noted and recorded. Where a donation has been given and the asset is required to be held for a number of years, the fund has remained restricted and the appropriate depreciation has been charged against it. The nature of the funding is identified in the schedule details above.

Where the funder's restrictions have been fulfilled and no further restrictions apply, the funds have been transferred to unrestricted funds as shown in the note.

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

14. Restricted funds (continued)

Comparative disclosure for year ended 31 August 2023	*Balance at 1 September 2022 £*	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 August 2023 £
Therapies Centre Star Appeal Development (Schroder Foundation – £50,000 September 2009)	*36,917*	–	**(1,000)**	–	**35,917**
Star Appeal / Development (The Henry Smith Charity – £125,000 May 2008 / £125,000 May 2011)	*187,083*	–	**(5,000)**	–	**182,083**
Elizabeth House Residential Accommodation Project (Big Lottery Fund – £300,000 January 2000)	*164,500*	–	**(6,000)**	–	**158,500**
Cleeve Bungalow Residential Accommodation Project (Big Lottery Fund – £250,000 July 2006)	*164,583*	–	**(5,000)**	–	**159,583**
Education and Skills Funding Agency – Building Improvement Fund Capital Grant – Pittville Project (£2,209,746 2014–2015). The restriction ends in 2025.	*1,717,929*	–	**(56,404)**	–	**1,661,525**
Committed Funds – various restricted gifts	*63,013*	**149,409**	**(119,729)**	**(24,264)**	**68,429**
Ledbury Road Hereford – various restricted gifts	*5,000*	–	–	–	**5,000**
Development fund	*73,643*	**1,963,812**	**(817)**	**(2,036,638)**	**–**
	2,412,668	**2,113,221**	**(193,950)**	**(2,060,902)**	**2,271,037**

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

15. Unrestricted funds

2024	*Balance at 1 September 2023 £*	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers and investment gains £	Balance at 31 August 2024 £
General unrestricted funds	*31,941,881*	**42,435,570**	**(41,306,020)**	**(1,192,537)**	**31,878,893**
Designated Funds – future development	*2,201,147*	**–**	**–**	**1,991,294**	**4,192,441**
Charity	*34,143,028*	**42,435,570**	**(41,306,020)**	**798,756**	**36,071,334**
Non–charitable trading funds	–	**134,610**	**(67,576)**	**(67,034)**	**–**
Consolidation adjustments	*(455,267)*	**–**	**–**	**(7,279)**	**(462,546)**
Group	*33,687,761*	**42,570,180**	**(41,373,596)**	**724,443**	**35,608,788**

Designated funds

At the year end the trustees have designated funds of £4,192,441 (*2023: £2,705,228*) representing £2,705,228 for future development at Ullenwood, £399,034 balance of designated funds for the development at Eveson Centre Hereford, £1,080,000 for the purchase of two properties adjoining the Ullenwood estate and a balance of £8,179 on the designated funds for 369 Worcester Road, Malvern).

Comparative disclosure for year ended 31 August 2023	*Balance at 1 September 2022 £*	*Income 2023 £*	*Expenditure 2023 £*	*Transfers and investment gains 2023 £*	*Balance at 31 August 2023 £*
General unrestricted funds	*27,245,178*	**37,794,855**	**(38,257,435)**	**5,159,283**	**31,941,881**
Designated Funds – future development	*4,929,198*	**–**	**–**	**(2,728,051)**	**2,201,147**
Charity	*32,174,376*	**37,794,855**	**(38,257,435)**	**2,431,232**	**34,143,028**
Non–charitable trading funds	–	**149,803**	**(78,557)**	**(71,246)**	**–**
Consolidation adjustments	*(306,017)*	**–**	**–**	**(149,250)**	**(455,267)**
Group	*31,868,359*	**37,944,658**	**(38,335,992)**	**2,210,736**	**33,687,761**

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

16. Analysis of net assets between funds of the group and charity

2024	Fixed Assets £	Investments £	Net Current Assets / Liabilities £	Long Term Liabilities £	Fund Balance £
Restricted funds	1,968,917	–	203,267	–	2,172,184
Designated funds	–	–	4,192,441	–	4,192,441
Unrestricted funds	29,041,702	3,789,717	(952,526)	–	31,878,893
Charity	31,010,619	3,789,717	3,443,182	–	38,243,518
Subsidiary's Reserves – NSF Trading Limited	–	(100)	100	–	–
Subsidiary's Reserves – NSF Design & Build Limited	–	(1)	1	–	–
Consolidation	(462,546)	–	–	–	(462,546)
Group	30,548,073	3,789,616	3,443,283	–	37,780,972

Comparative disclosure for year ended 31 August 2023	*Fixed assets £*	*Investments £*	*Net current assets / liabilities £*	*Long term liabilities £*	*Fund balances £*
Restricted funds	*2,197,607*	–	*73,430*	–	*2,271,037*
Designated funds	–	–	*2,201,147*	–	*2,201,147*
Unrestricted funds	*29,337,718*	*3,297,690*	*(693,527)*	–	*31,941,881*
Charity	*31,535,325*	*3,297,690*	*1,581,050*	–	*36,414,065*
Subsidiary's Reserves – NSF Trading Limited	–	*(100)*	*100*	–	–
Subsidiary's Reserves – NSF Design and Build Limited	–	*(1)*	*1*	–	–
Consolidation	*(455,267)*	–	–	–	*(455,267)*
Group	*31,080,058*	*3,297,589*	*1,581,151*	–	*35,958,798*

17. Other financial commitments

At 31 August 2024 the group had future minimum lease payments under non–cancellable operating leases as follows:

Commitment expiring:	Property £	Other £	2024 Total £	*2023 Total £*
Within one year	202,253	30,000	232,253	*209,687*
One to five years inclusive	362,895	7,605	370,500	*297,175*
	565,148	37,605	602,753	*506,862*

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National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

18. Pension commitments

Defined contribution:

The charity operates defined contribution schemes for its non–teaching employees. The assets are held separately from those of the charity in independently administered funds, and the amount charged to the SOFA was £597,650 (*2023: £589,884*).

Defined benefit:

The charity participates in the Teachers' Pension Scheme ("the TPS") for its teaching staff. The pension charge for the year includes contributions payable to the TPS of £595,400 (*2023: £490,848*) and at the year–end £76,101 (*2023: £62,038*) was accrued in respect of contributions to this scheme.

The TPS is an unfunded multi–employer defined benefits pension scheme governed by the Teachers' Pensions Regulations 2010 (as amended) and the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations 2014 (as amended). Members contribute on a "pay as you go" basis with contributions from members and the employer being credited to the Exchequer. Retirement and other pension benefits are paid by public funds provided by Parliament.

The employer contribution rate is set by the Secretary of State following scheme valuations undertaken by the Government Actuary's Department. The most recent actuarial valuation of the TPS was prepared as at 31 March 2020 and the Valuation Report was published in October 2023.

Following the McCloud judgement, the remedy proposed that when benefits become payable, eligible members can select to receive them from either the reformed or legacy schemes for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022. The actuaries have assumed that members are likely to choose the option that provides them with the greater benefits, and in preparing the 2020 valuation have valued the 'greater value' benefits for groups of relevant members.

The valuation confirmed that the employer contribution rate for the TPS would increase from 23.6% to 28.6% from 1 April 2024. Employers are also required to pay a scheme administration levy of 0.08% giving a total employer contribution rate of 28.68%.

19. Capital commitments

At 31 August 2024 the group had capital commitments as follows:

	2024 £	*2023 £*
Authorised and contracted for – Eveson Centre, Hereford development	**644,113**	–
Authorised and contracted for – Dayforce HR system project	**153,900**	–
Authorised but not contracted for – Purchase of Property: West Lodge	**620,000**	–
Authorised but not contracted for – Purchase of Property: 1 Ullenwood Farm Cottages	**450,000**	–

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

20. Related party transactions

As stated in Note 1 to the Financial statements, the charity has two wholly owned subsidiary companies – NSF Trading Limited and NSF Design and Build Limited.

During the year a management charge was made by National Star Foundation to NSF Trading Limited of £9,884 (*2023: £11,563*). At the end of the year Gift Aid of £65,582 (*2023: £70,612*) was payable by NSF Trading Limited to National Star Foundation. The total year–end balance owed to National Star Foundation was £105,172 (*2023: £106,169*).

During the year income was received by NSF Design and Build Limited from National Star Foundation of £322,611 (*2023: £5,188,908*), this related to recharged building costs plus fees. At the year–end Gift Aid of £965 (*2023: £140,204*) was payable by NSF Design and Build Limited to National Star Foundation. The total year–end balance owed by National Star Foundation was £156,815 (*2023: £108,804 owed to National Star Foundation*).

In January 2024 the charity purchased the Freehold interest of 369 Worcester Road, Malvern at a value of £550,000, where it operates long–term residential care provision. The property had previously been occupied under a leasehold agreement. The Chair of Trustees, Paul Styles (to April 2024) declared a related party interest in this transaction, as the property landlord and owner was a family relation. Mr Styles withdrew from all discussions and decisions in relation to the property acquisition.

During the year the charity's Chief Executive Officer, Lynette Barrett, served on the board of Natspec (the membership association for organisations which offers specialist further education and training for learners with learning difficulties and / or disabilities aged 16 to 25) as its chair, and also served on the board of The Education & Training Foundation (in her capacity as Chair of Natspec). National Star is a member organisation of Natspec and also provides services on behalf of The Education & Training Foundation.

21. Agency arrangements

The charity acts as an agent in distributing 16–19 year olds bursary funds from the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Payments received from the ESFA and subsequent disbursements are excluded from the SOFA as the charity does not have control over the charitable application of funds.

Summary of Bursary Account	**2024 £**	*2023 £*
At 1 September 2023	**42,339**	*33,489*
Income from ESFA	**32,097**	*31,629*
Bursary payments	**(16,616)**	*(22,779)*
At 31 August 2024	**57,820**	*42,339*

22. Financial instruments – group

	2024 £	*2023 £*
Financial assets		
Financial assets measured at fair value	**3,789,616**	*3,297,589*

Financial assets measured at fair value consist of investments.

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

23. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 September 2023 £	Cash–flows £	New operating leases £	Other non–cash changes £	At 31 August 2024 £
Cash	5,063,139	1,461,647	–	–	6,524,786
Cash equivalents	–	–	–	–	–
Overdrafts	–	–	–	–	–
	5,063,139	**1,461,647**	**–**	**–**	**6,524,786**
Loans falling due within one year	–	–	–	–	–
Loans falling due after more than one year	–	–	–	–	–
Operating lease obligations	(506,862)	52,856	(148,748)	–	(602,754)
Total	**4,556,277**	**1,514,503**	**(148,748)**	**–**	**5,922,032**

24. Post balance sheet events

Subsequent to the year ending 31 August 2024, the charity purchased West Lodge, Ullenwood for £620,000 on 12 November 2024 and purchased 1 Ullenwood Farm Cottages for £450,000 on 17 December 2024.

National Star Foundation
Notes to the Financial statements

For the year ended 31 August 2024

25. Consolidated statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 August 2023

Income from:	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted funds £	Total Funds 2023 £	*Total Funds 2022 £*
Donations and legacies	4/14	371,212	2,113,221	2,484,433	*2,407,933*
Charitable activities					
Student fees		26,949,888	–	26,949,888	*24,456,997*
Other charitable activities	3	9,453,774	–	9,453,774	*8,271,064*
ESFA capital grants		189,011	–	189,011	*137,902*
Teachers' Pension grant		146,613	–	146,613	*128,277*
Adult Social Care Infection Control Grant		1,033	–	1,033	*127,293*
Workforce Recruitment and Retention Grant		–	–	–	*414,066*
Other trading activities					
Trading turnover – NSF Trading Limited	2a	149,803	–	149,803	*150,729*
Investments		139,799	–	139,799	*25,861*
Other					
Other income	5	543,525	–	543,525	*285,416*
Total income		**37,944,658**	**2,113,221**	**40,057,879**	*36,405,538*
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	6	324,784	–	324,784	*321,648*
Charitable activities	6/14	37,932,651	193,950	38,126,601	*35,806,821*
Other expenditure:					
NSF Trading Limited	2a	67,628	–	67,628	*58,162*
NSF Design and Build Limited	2b	10,929	–	10,929	*3,797*
Total expenditure		**38,335,992**	**193,950**	**38,529,942**	*36,190,428*
Net (expenditure) / income before (losses) / gains on investments		(391,334)	1,919,271	1,527,937	*215,110*
Net gains / (losses) on investments	10	149,834	–	149,834	*(131,459)*
Net income		(241,500)	1,919,271	1,677,771	*83,651*
Transfer between funds	14	2,060,902	(2,060,902)	–	*–*
Net movement in funds		1,819,402	(141,631)	1,677,771	*83,651*
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds at 1 September 2022	14/15/16	31,868,359	2,412,668	34,281,027	*34,197,376*
Total funds at 31 August 2023	14/15/16	**33,687,761**	**2,271,037**	**35,958,798**	*34,281,027*

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Administrative and legal details

National Star Foundation (formerly the National Star Centre for Disabled Youth) is a company ('the Company') limited by guarantee and a registered charity ('the Charity'). National Star Foundation is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association (as Incorporated 20 August 1953 and last amended 9 February 2023). It operates a wide range of activities and programmes in pursuance of its charitable purposes, the largest of which is the operation of National Star College ('the College'). It uses National Star as a working name and operates two subsidiary companies; NSF Trading Limited (company number 01168043) and NSF Design and Build Limited (company number 08628807), which form the group ('the Group').

Company number
00522846 in England and Wales

Charity number
220239

Registered office
Ullenwood Manor, Ullenwood, Cheltenham, GL53 9QU.

Auditors
Crowe U.K. LLP, 4th Floor, St James House, St James' Square, Cheltenham, GL50 3PR.

Bankers
HSBC Bank, 2 The Promenade, Cheltenham, GL50 1LR.

Solicitors
Veale Wasbrough Vizards, Narrow Quay House, Narrow Quay, Bristol.

Investment managers
CCLA Investment Management Ltd, Cazenove Capital and St. James's Place Wealth Management.

Jack, age 22

Without National Star...

"I would never have got a paid job."

Jack

Work-based learning student Jack has turned his love of transport into a paid job.

For the past two years, National Star's job coaches have set up various work placements for Jack which combined his passion for transport and his attention to detail.

He completed a range of placements that included being part of the housekeeping team at the Double Tree Hilton Hotel in Cheltenham.

When he started a placement with the transport team at National Star, Jack realised he had found his vocation. He showed such flair and enthusiasm for the job that he applied and was successful in securing a permanent role.

Jack also won the annual Work Skills Award at National Star.

Work-based Learning Manager Nicola Noah said: 'Jack has worked very hard at all his placements. He is a very different person to the shy, young man who joined National Star two years ago. We are so full of pride for all that he has achieved.'

'It's amazing to have a paid job. It's the thing that I love,' says Jack. 'National Star helped me to learn about being on time and teamwork.'

We're building a better future

We passionately believe that young people with disabilities have a right to live meaningful and fulfilling lives.

Not only does the individual and their families benefit but so do all of us. Having a more inclusive society makes our communities better places to live.

In June 2024, we launched a public appeal to help fund the expansion of the Eveson Centre, our education and therapy centre in Hereford.

Since our opening in 2020, the number of learners attending the Eveson Centre had grown by 50%. We were running out of room.

By 31 August 2024, more than £470,000 in cash and pledges had been secured, reflecting the commitment and generosity of our donors, our partners and the National Star team.

Construction is due to be completed in Spring 2025. It will mean that we can support more young people in Hereford.

'National Star is amazing because they give me so many opportunities,' says Heather, a learner at Hereford.

Ullenwood, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 9QU
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National Star
Realising the aspirations of people with disabilities

www.nationalstar.org

National Star is a working name of National Star Foundation which is registered in England and Wales, company number 00522846, charity number 220239. Registered office Ullenwood Manor, Ullenwood, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL53 9QU