



Olive Academies



Olive Academies Trust
Annual Report
2024/25

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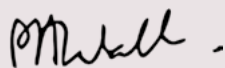
Welcome from our Chair of Trustees and CEO

2024-25 has been a year of strategic growth and strengthened influence for Olive Academies. Thanks to the continued commitment of staff across our academies and within the trust's Central Executive Team, we have built on secure foundations while sharpening our focus on inclusion, system leadership and sustainable improvement.

Across our academies, we have continued to prioritise the quality of education, ensuring that curriculum development, therapeutic support and personal development remain closely aligned to the needs of our pupils. Alongside this, we have focused on strengthening leadership capacity, embedding consistent systems and investing in environments that promote pride, engagement and high expectations. These efforts are reflected not only in improved attendance and engagement, but in outcomes that continue to compare strongly within the alternative provision sector.

Partnership remains central to our approach. Over the past year, we have deepened collaboration with local authorities, mainstream schools and multi-academy trusts, supporting the development of inclusive practice beyond our own academies. At the same time, our national engagement has grown significantly. Through advisory work with Ofsted, membership of the Department for Education's Expert Advisory Group on Inclusion and leadership within the REACh consortium, the trust is contributing directly to the development and implementation of reforms to the SEND and alternative provision system. This work reflects the credibility of our practice and our determination to ensure that policy is informed by frontline experience.

We are proud of the progress made this year, both within our academies and across the wider system. We remain grateful to our staff, academy advisory board members, trustees, members, partners, volunteers, pupils and families, whose collective commitment enables Olive Academies to provide high-quality alternative provision and to play a leading role in shaping a more inclusive education system for the future.



Phil Whall, Chair of Trustees



Mark Vickers MBE, CEO



About Olive Academies

Originating in London and the East of England, Olive Academies is a pioneering multi-academy trust, specialising in alternative provision.

We provide a high-quality, personalised approach to learning across a varied curriculum to successfully overcome barriers within education, re-engaging pupils for whom traditional teaching methods haven't worked. Developed and refined since 2013, our proven approach successfully supports 7 to 16-year-olds, who are unable to attend mainstream schools, to reach their full potential.

Through our bespoke outreach programmes, we're able to extend our reach to even more in-need children. Taking our dynamic model and tailoring it to local needs, we work with mainstream schools, sharing best-practice to prevent exclusions and improve outcomes for marginalised children and young people, and their families.

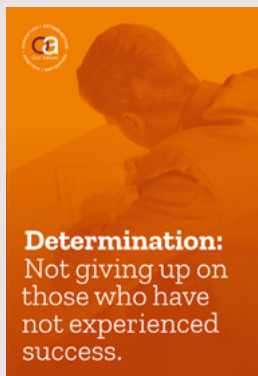
Our approach

At Olive Academies, we believe that every child and young person has the ability and the right to learn and achieve. Our pupils are individuals and our broad curriculum model provides us the flexibility necessary to help each individual reach their full potential. We remove barriers to learning by providing creative, nurturing and inspiring learning opportunities with a focus on personal development and emotional support. By helping pupils to grow in confidence, build resilience, develop social skills and improve their mental health and overall wellbeing, they are better placed to successfully engage with learning and succeed in education, work and life.

This approach is reflected in our values and strategic priorities, which guide and underpin everything we do at Olive Academies.

Our core values

Our core values of reflection, conviction, ambition and determination are reflected in all that we do to support our pupils.



Our strategic priorities

In 2024/25 our trustees and leaders agreed the following strategic objectives for the next phase of the trust's growth and improvement journey.

- Continue to develop OA academies to be **centres of excellence** where young people receive the best possible education.
- Continue to ensure **resources are effectively deployed** to support our academies to be centres of excellence and provide value for money.
- Continue to develop structures to allow the trust to **actively pursue new opportunities**, be that expanding current provision, working with new partners or exploring new provision in targeted areas.

Our impact

Supported

363

pupils across
our academies...



... and a further

245

pupils in
mainstream
schools through
our outreach offer



... and **481** schools through our
commissioning work

Exceeded national averages
for GCSE achievement in the AP sector



English
& Maths

41%

above national
average



English

47%

above national
average



Maths

38%

above national
average



Science

41%

above national
average



67.2%

attendance



10.2%

above the national average
for attendance in AP*

*National attendance data is from 2023-24 as 2024-25 was not available at the time of going to print.

We **collaborated** with
19 organisations,
enhancing support for pupils



We **partnered** with
22 organisations to help
deliver a broad curriculum

We **supported**
41 other schools through our outreach
offer, ensuring high quality inclusive practice



Operating in

7

local authority
areas and
supporting
another 38 LAs*

£100,000

funding secured
via charitable grants



*Through the Reaching Excellence and Ambition for all Children (REACH) consortium.

Successes and highlights:

OA - Cambridge



Above average outcomes

Our Year 11 academic outcomes were significantly above the national average for the alternative provision sector with 65% of students achieving 4 or more GCSEs.

Academy leadership

The Head of Academy, appointed in September 2023, has had a significant impact on the development of the academy, delivering improvements for pupils.

Curriculum development

We have continued to develop our outdoor education and PSHE curriculum offering pupils access to even more activities that provide practical opportunities for problem-solving and risk-taking as well as developing their confidence, resilience and vital life skills. We have also enhanced the range of accreditations we offer. Alongside GCSE maths, English and science, we have introduced a number of BTEC courses in subjects that support pupils' career aspirations, so they can gain the relevant skills that will equip them for their next steps in education or employment.

Close links with schools

Our close links with local secondary schools has continued to strengthen with the number of commissioned places available increasing from 35 to 52.

Growth

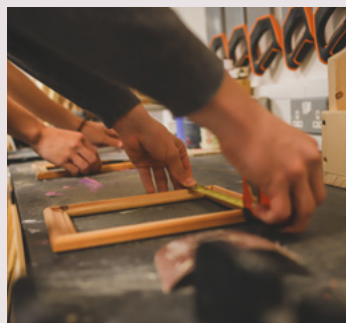
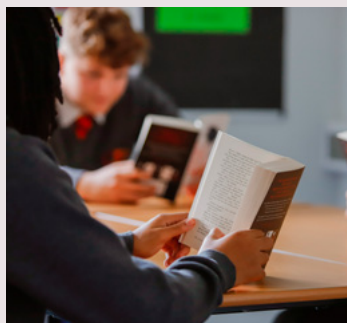
We significantly increased the number of pupils on roll to 52, further demonstrating our links with local schools and our standing in the community. We also grew our reach through the development of our AP outreach, supporting pupils from local primary schools to engage in creative activities in support of positive behaviour and attitudes towards learning.

Safeguarding Award

Following a highly successful safeguarding audit carried out by Anchored Schools, the academy demonstrated a strong and well-established safeguarding culture. Key strengths identified include leadership and management, multi-agency working and attendance.

Successes and highlights:

OA – Havering



Above average outcomes

Sharing staff between the Havering and Thurrock academies continues to have a noticeable impact on Year 11 outcomes. Academic outcomes for this year group was above the national average for the alternative provision sector with 94% of pupils achieving a Level 1 or GCSE in English and Maths. 94% of the 2025 cohort secured a placement in education, employment or training.

Academy leadership

Academy leadership has continued to have a positive impact on the leadership and management of the academy and significantly strengthened partnership working with the local authority, leading the development of a new primary base, specialist EHCP provision and an expansion of commissioned places.

Quality of education

The effects of joint working between our Havering and Thurrock academies continues to have a positive impact on the quality of education for our pupils. Specifically, the development of reading and literacy, the breadth of subjects in the curriculum and further development of our therapeutic offer.

Anchored Schools

Following a successful safeguarding audit carried out by Anchored Schools, safeguarding was judged to be effective, with a strong culture embedded across the academy. Key strengths identified included leadership and management, multi-agency working, PSHE and individual pupil support.

Successes and highlights:

OA - Nene Valley



Above average outcomes

Once again, our Year 11 academic outcomes were above the national average for the alternative provision sector with 65% of students achieving 4 or more GCSEs.

Academy leadership

The Head of Academy, appointed in September 2023, has had a significant impact on the development of the academy, delivering improvements for pupils.

Curriculum development

We have continued to develop our outdoor education and PSHE curriculum, following its successful introduction in 2021-22. We are now able to offer pupils access to even more activities that provide practical opportunities for problem-solving and risk-taking as well as developing their confidence, resilience and vital life skills. We have also enhanced the range of accreditations we offer alongside GCSE maths, English and science through the introduction of a number of BTEC courses in subjects that support pupils' career aspirations, so they can gain the relevant skills that will equip them for their next steps in education or employment.

Close links with schools

Our close links with local secondary schools has continued with the number of commissioned places available increasing from 35 to 52.

Growth

We have filled all 52 places, demonstrating confidence in the quality of our provision.

Safeguarding Award

Following an outstanding safeguarding audit carried out by Anchored Schools, the academy was awarded the Gold quality mark for the third year in a row. Key strengths identified include leadership and management, multi-agency working and safeguarding culture.

Successes and highlights:

OA – Suffolk



Quality of education

The collaborative work on the academy vision between the trust and Suffolk County Council has meant that the academy is now delivering a sustained level of high-quality education for young people in Suffolk.

Academy leadership

The Head of Academy, appointed September 2023, continues to deliver improvements across the academy, significantly impacting pupils.

Growth

With 54 pupils on roll, students aged 7-16 can now access a range of provision from full-time to bespoke in-reach packages. We have also continued to deliver successful outreach programmes, helping even more children and young people in the county thanks to funding from Suffolk County Council.

Safeguarding Award

Following an outstanding safeguarding audit carried out by Anchored Schools, the academy was awarded the Gold quality mark for the third year in a row. Key strengths identified include leadership and management, safeguarding systems and multi-agency working.

Above average outcomes

Our Year 11 academic outcomes were above the national average for alternative provision and a significant improvement in 2024 with 80% of students achieving GCSEs in Maths and English and 100% of students achieving 1 or more GCSEs.

Successes and highlights:

OA - Thurrock



Above average outcomes

Developments in the quality of education continue to have a noticeable impact on Year 11 outcomes. Academic outcomes for this year group was above the national average for the alternative provision sector, and all Year 11 pupils went on to further education or employment, meaning our Thurrock academy reported 0% NEET (not in education, employment or training).

Growth

In partnership with Thurrock Council and local mainstream school leaders, staff at our Thurrock academy have delivered a number of outreach programmes this year, significantly growing the number of pupils the academy is able to support.

This builds on the positive pupil outcomes achieved during outreach programmes, enabling staff to continue to deliver flexible, tailored, support to achieve the best reintegration opportunities for even more learners.

Safeguarding

Following a successful safeguarding audit carried out by Anchored Schools, safeguarding was judged to be effective across the academy. Key strengths identified include safeguarding culture and ethos, strategic leadership, safer recruitment and first aid/medical processes.

Successes and highlights:

OA - Tunbridge Wells



Academy transition

Two Bridges School joined Olive Academies Trust on 1 June 2025, becoming the trust's sixth alternative provision academy, OA-Tunbridge Wells. The initial period has focused on establishing Olive systems and expectations, while maintaining continuity for pupils and referring schools.

Partnership working

Positive relationships with referring schools have been developed through effective communication and the introduction of robust induction processes. This work has been supported by trust-level engagement with local multi-academy trusts, strengthening confidence in the academy's role and offer.

Academy developments

Following transfer and 'becoming Olive', there has been a notable improvement in pupil engagement, despite small cohort numbers. Year 10 pupils have responded positively to the introduction of Olive uniform, which has been well received and has fostered a sense of pride. There has also been a tangible improvement in the learning environment, which is now tidier, more organised and structured to support learning.

Attendance

Attendance at GCSE exams was consistently strong at above 90%.

Inclusion and collaboration

A multi-agency Inclusion Panel has been introduced, improving collaborative working with external services and dual-registered schools. This is further supported through the use of Individual Alternative Education Plans.

Outcomes and performance

This year saw further significant improvements in overall progress figures, representing very good pupil progress.

Overall, our 2025 outcomes are above or in line with alternative provision averages in all areas and significantly above national AP benchmarks in the majority. There were notable increases across attainment and achievement measures compared with 2024, demonstrating sustained improvement year on year.

The breadth and ambition of the curriculum continue to support pupils to achieve more and progress successfully. Increased access to academic and vocational pathways has resulted in higher levels of accreditation, with the average number of Level 1 qualifications rising from 5.2 to 5.6. There were also increased percentages of pupils achieving four GCSEs (43%) and five GCSEs (24%), with the proportion achieving four GCSEs now approaching the AP average for pupils achieving a single GCSE.

Performance in core subjects remains a key strength. In 2025, 87% of pupils achieved English GCSE, 78% achieved Maths GCSE and 66% achieved Science GCSE — approximately double the AP national average. Overall, 66% of pupils achieved GCSEs in English, Maths and Science. Attainment across the core subjects increased by over half a grade, from 4.6 to 5.2, further evidencing the academic rigour of the curriculum. In addition, 76% of pupils achieved Level 1 English and Maths, with 10% achieving Level 2 English and Maths.

Destination outcomes also remained strong. Overall 92% of this year's cohort secured placements in education, employment or training.

Shaping national policy

For a number of years, Olive Academies has represented the alternative provision (AP) sector in national policy discussions with the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofsted. Through this work, we continue to support a deeper understanding of the challenges facing the sector and contribute practical expertise to reforms designed to strengthen inclusion for children and young people across the country.

Our national engagement strengthened further in 2024/25. Mark Vickers, CEO, continued his advisory work with Ofsted, supporting its national focus on inclusion and contributing to wider thinking about the role of alternative provision within the inspection framework.

Mark was also appointed to the DfE's Expert Advisory Group (EAG) on Inclusion. The group has met regularly to inform policy development ahead of the Schools White Paper (2026), ensuring that emerging proposals are informed by frontline experience and evidence from across the system.

Our involvement in national reform continues through our role as AP lead within the REACH (Reaching Excellence and Ambition for all Children) consortium. Led by PA Consulting in partnership with the Council for Disabled Children and IMPOWER, the consortium is the DfE's delivery partner for testing reforms to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and AP system.

During the year, the consortium's original two-year contract was extended for a further 12 months, reflecting strong delivery across the programme. As part of this extension, Olive's contribution has doubled from 140 to 280 full-time equivalent days. In addition to providing AP leadership and subject matter expertise, we will now lead three of the nine local authority clusters involved in the programme.

The trust's continued and expanded role in this work reflects the high standard of practice across our academies and our growing reputation within the sector. Through our engagement with Ofsted, the DfE and the REACH consortium, Olive Academies is helping to shape reforms that aim to create a more coherent, inclusive and effective system for children and young people in alternative provision and with SEND.

Financial overview 2024/25

Income

Total income: £11.7 million

- Local Authority.....£6.7 million
- DfE / ESFA£4 million
- Trusts and foundations£500k
- Consultancy revenue.....£400k
- Other.....£100k



Most of our funding is received from the local authorities and the Department for Education (DfE) / Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). During the year, the trust also received a capital grant from the DfE to support improvements to facilities in Cambridge and Suffolk. In addition, OA-Tunbridge Wells joined the trust on 1 June 2025, contributing to an increase in overall income for the period. Generous support from charitable trusts and foundations, including The Evelyn Trust and Olive Academies Foundation, has continued to provide valuable additional income to enhance and extend our work.

Expenditure

Total expenditure: £11.1 million

- Staffing£8.1 million
- Learning resources.....£1.2 million
- Other.....£1.1 million
- Buildings and facilities.....£700k



The largest part of our funding was spent on staff salaries. The trust also engaged more professional consultants to assist with the delivery of resources to pupils and complete the growing number of external consultancy assignments.

NB: Figures over £1 million have been rounded to the nearest £100k. For exact amounts, please see our annual accounts: <https://oliveacademies.org.uk>

Our people

164

members
of staff



95%

are **happy**
in their role

94%

satisfaction
with training

93%

would recommend
Olive Academies as a
good place to work



93%

satisfied
with support for
professional growth



**Effective
induction**

programme
for all staff

Pupil and staff
**wellbeing is
a priority**

**Extensive
training**

and one-to-one
coaching

High quality CPD and opportunities for **career progression**

“

Being part of Olive Academies means making things happen – **supporting children who have felt let down by education**, giving them the skills to be successful and watching them grow.

Working with vulnerable young people to give them **the best environment to thrive and achieve** in is a united goal across the trust and something we are all passionate about.

”

Partnership working

Fundamental to our work at Olive Academies is the recognition that for too long pupil referral units and alternative provision (AP) academies have worked in isolation. We continue to prioritise the development of strong national, regional and local partnerships with mainstream schools, local authorities, multi-academy trusts (MATs), charities, community organisations and businesses to ensure that children and young people receive coherent and joined-up support.

These partnerships range from formal commissioning agreements to deliver outreach and short-term intervention in mainstream schools, to collaboration with charities providing specialist therapeutic and family support. We have also strengthened our estate and specialist offer through the support of funders and strategic partners.

During the year, Olive Academies further developed significant strategic partnerships with two large MATs and education partnerships. We are proud to be working with STAR Academies and the Archdiocese of Birmingham to support the development of inclusive provision across their schools, sharing our expertise in alternative provision and inclusion.

The Evelyn Trust provided significant grant funding to develop a therapeutic outreach offer in Cambridgeshire, enabling us to extend specialist support to children and families earlier and more effectively. In addition, as the strategic partner for Norfolk County Council, Olive Academies is continuing to provide advice and guidance as the local authority develops its AP strategy. In Suffolk, our Deputy CEO provides ongoing expert guidance on national AP best practice through his role as AP representative on the Suffolk SEND Strategic Improvement Board and facilitates information-sharing between the board and its stakeholders in the Suffolk AP system.

On a national level, the trust continues to represent the AP sector in policy discussions and formal advisory structures with the DfE and Ofsted. This includes the CEO's membership of the DfE's Expert Advisory Group on Inclusion and both the CEO and Deputy CEO's membership of the DfE's Change Programme Advisory Board. We also continue our partnership with the REACH consortium as alternative provision lead, supporting the DfE in the implementation and testing of reforms introduced through the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan.

Through these partnerships, Olive Academies continues to strengthen the alternative provision sector, ensuring that our expertise contributes not only to improved outcomes within our academies, but to wider system reform and inclusive practice nationally.

Some of the partner organisations we work with:



A teal-tinted photograph of a person in a school uniform, likely a student, sitting at a desk and writing in a notebook. The person is wearing a dark sweater over a light-colored collared shirt and a striped tie. The notebook is open, and a pencil is visible on the page. The background is a solid teal color.

**All inspected academies
are Ofsted-rated 'Good'**

Commissioned work

Our commissioned work extends Olive Academies' expertise beyond our own settings, supporting partners across the country to strengthen inclusive practice and improve outcomes for children and young people nationally.

Throughout this academic year, Olive Academies has continued to work with a range of local authorities, trusts and organisations to provide targeted support and consultancy. This has included sustained engagement with Havering Local Authority, alongside projects with Ethos Multi-Academy Trust, River Learning Trust, Aldridge Education, the London Borough of Redbridge, the Archdiocese of Birmingham, Brighton & Hove City Council, JP11 Multi-Academy Company and Norfolk County Council. These partnerships reflect growing recognition of Olive Academies as a specialist provider with deep expertise in inclusion and alternative provision.

All commissioned projects have focused on strengthening inclusive practice at both system and school level. Mainstream settings are increasingly seeking support to respond to the evolving and complex needs of children and young people, while local authorities are working to ensure that provision delivers both impact and value for money within constrained budgets. Olive Academies supports partners to evaluate their current offer, identify areas for development and implement practical, sustainable strategies. This work enables schools and systems to use their resources more effectively, improve outcomes for pupils and build capacity for long-term improvement in inclusive practice.

Olive Academies Foundation

Olive Academies Foundation expands what is possible for our students, creating opportunities that inspire confidence, broaden horizons and support success beyond the classroom.

Established in 2021, Olive Academies Foundation is the charitable arm of Olive Academies Trust and works in partnership with the trust to provide additional opportunities for students beyond the scope of the curriculum.

The foundation's vision is to support all children and young people attending OA provisions by enabling them to participate in experiences and projects that deepen engagement in learning, broaden their horizons and develop essential life skills. Through a programme of funded initiatives, students are encouraged to challenge themselves, build resilience and grow in confidence.

The foundation raises funds that are distributed through grants to academies across the trust, supporting projects that respond to the interests and needs of their students. These initiatives range from enrichment activities and outdoor learning to specialist resources, creative programmes and mentoring opportunities.

The work of the foundation is guided by a board of volunteer trustees who work closely with the trust's leadership team. This partnership ensures that the foundation's work remains closely aligned with the needs of OA students and communities, enabling programmes to reach more young people across the trust and extending the impact of the foundation's support.



A person wearing a school uniform, including a white shirt, a striped tie, and a dark V-neck sweater. The sweater has a logo on the left chest that consists of a stylized 'A' and 'B' intertwined, with the text 'The Academy' below it. The person is holding a white bowl. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

**All academies assessed by
Anchored Schools were
judged to have effective
safeguarding**

Governance

5 Members

9 Trustees

30 AAB members

4 AAB meetings per academy

8 Committee meetings

5 Board meetings

Our members oversee the work of the Board of Trustees and are responsible for ensuring the purpose of the trust is met.

Our trustees are volunteers who make sure the trust and its academies are well-run and focused on giving every child a high-quality education. They set the overall direction for the trust, agree the important plans and policies, and ensure leaders are doing the right thing to support pupils, keep everyone safe and use money wisely. Their role is to make sure every academy in the trust provides the best possible opportunities for all children.

Our two board committees — the Finance and Audit Committee and the Education Performance and Standards Committee — provide detailed scrutiny of all key aspects of the trust's work. They examine financial management, safeguarding, academy performance and educational standards, and report directly to the board. Their role is to ensure trustees have the robust information, assurance and expert guidance they need to make informed decisions and to be fully accountable for leadership, outcomes and the effective use of public funds across the trust.

Management of operations across the trust is delegated to the chief executive officer (CEO) and executive leadership team, known as the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG), who are responsible for implementing the trust's strategic plan and overseeing the financial management.

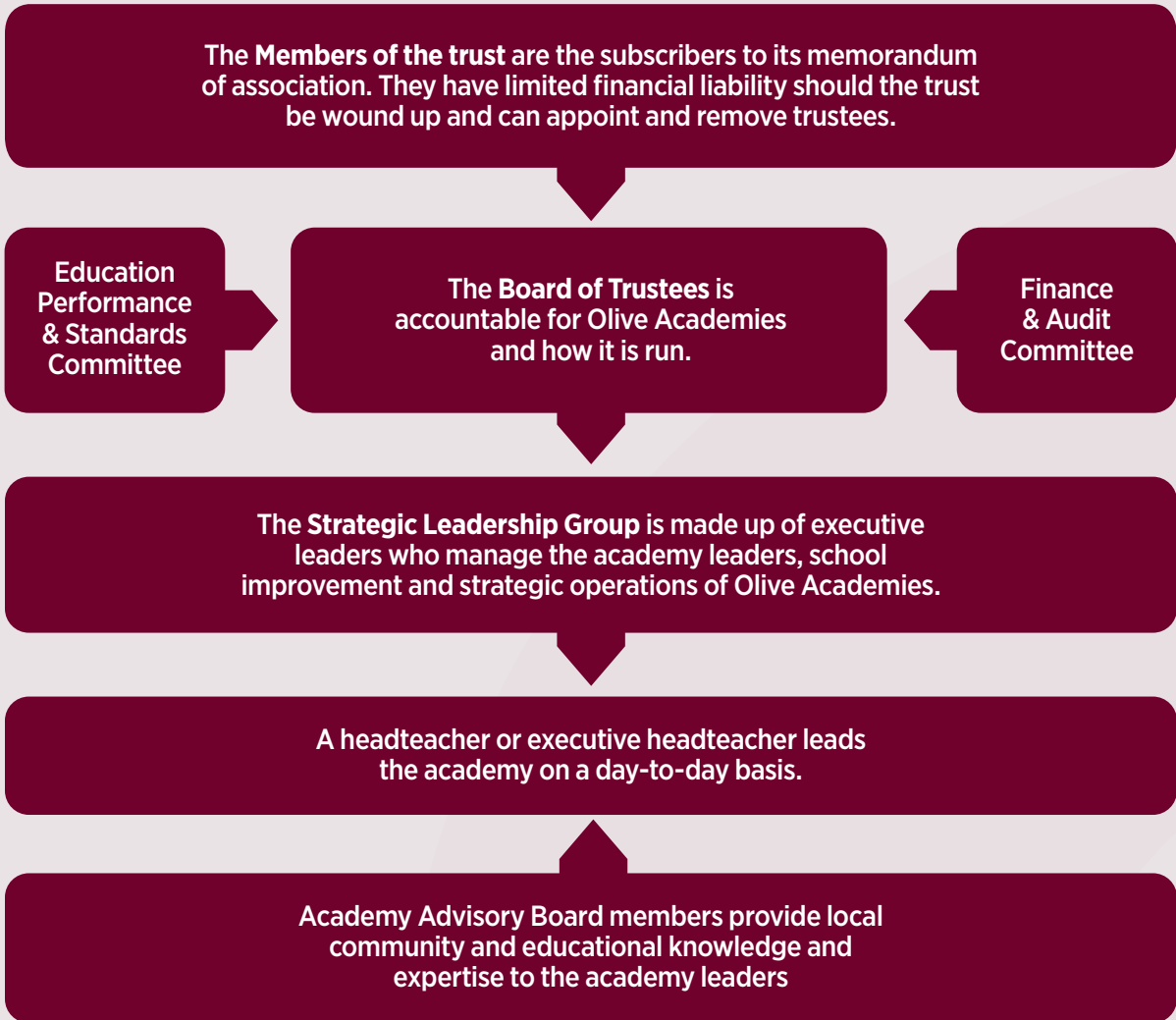
The SLG includes a director of academies who is responsible for academy improvement, a deputy chief executive who is responsible for strategic management of operations not related to education, a director of resources who is responsible for the sound financial management of the trust and a director of engagement who oversees the work of the Olive Academies Foundation and outreach.

Within each academy, management is delegated to the executive headteacher and headteacher, under the guidance of the Academy Advisory Board (AAB) and SLG. Headteachers are responsible for meeting all educational and operational targets for outcomes within their academy.

Each academy has an Academy Advisory Board (AAB) which is responsible for localised challenge and support. They provide guidance on the local context and on leading the academy – we recognise that strong partnership working with local schools, communities, the local authority and other partners is vital to our success and to educational outcomes of children and young people who attend an Olive academy.

More information is available at:
<https://oliveacademies.org.uk/about-us/governance>

Our governance structure



Olive Academies Independent Schools charity

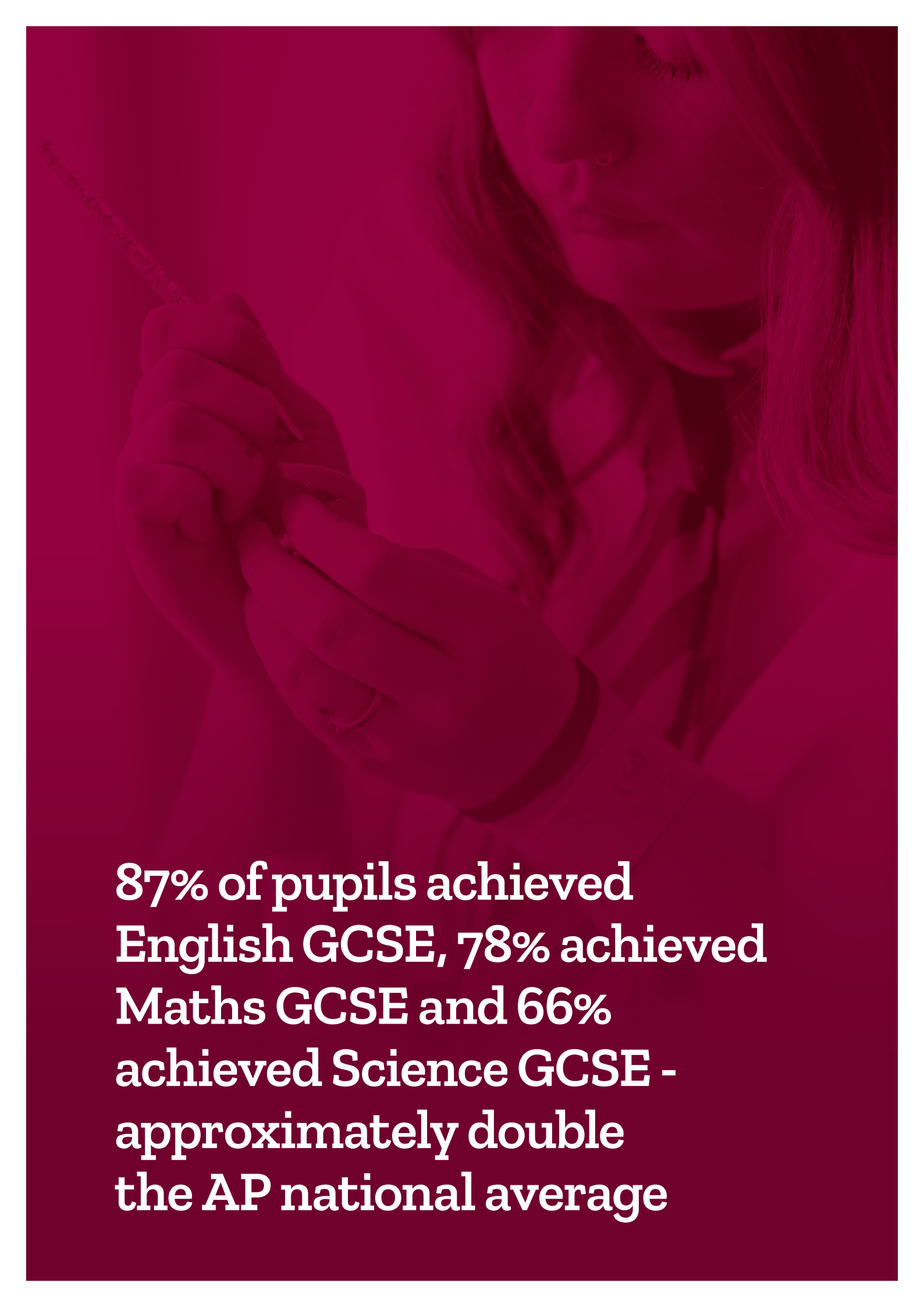
On 28 April 2025, Olive Academies established a new charity to enhance support for vulnerable children with specialist needs within the local community of Thurrock. Created in response to increasing demand for high-quality, personalised provision, the charity has been developed to provide both educational and pastoral support.

The charity's principal initiative is the establishment of an independent school offering alternative provision for children with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. The school is designed to deliver a tailored, therapeutic education within a nurturing environment, enabling pupils to access support that meets their individual needs. Its curriculum will focus on developing emotional regulation, resilience and positive engagement in learning, with the aim of supporting pupils towards appropriate long-term educational pathways.

Governance is provided by a proprietary body responsible for ensuring that the independent school meets all relevant Independent School Standards. This structure supports strong accountability, high-quality leadership and compliance with statutory and safeguarding requirements.

The charity is underpinned by a commitment to transparency, ethical leadership and a child-centred approach, ensuring that provision remains responsive to the needs of the young people and communities it serves.

The independent school is set to open in 2026.



**87% of pupils achieved
English GCSE, 78% achieved
Maths GCSE and 66%
achieved Science GCSE -
approximately double
the AP national average**

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[@OliveAcademies](https://www.facebook.com/OliveAcademies)



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Olive Academies is a charitable company incorporated in England and Wales with registered number 8747464.

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