

THE ALYESBURY VALE ACADEMY

**YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025**



COOPER PARRY

THE ALYESBURY VALE ACADEMY YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS

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DISCLAIMER

Your external audit findings document is prepared for the confidential use of your trust and forms part of our ongoing communications under International Standard on Auditing (UK) 260 - communication of audit matters with those charged with governance. The findings highlight the key matters and issues arising from our audit and regularity assurance report on the trust's financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025.

The contents of our findings have been discussed with management and their comments and responses have been included where applicable. The matters set out in our findings are those that came to our attention during the course of our normal audit and regularity assurance work, which was designed to enable us to form our opinion on the financial statements and provide our assurance report on regularity. Our work may not necessarily disclose all errors or irregularities and should not be relied upon to do so.

The findings have been prepared for the sole use of the trustees and management of your Trust. We understand that you are required to provide a copy of this document to the Department for Education who may share this information internally within the Department for decision making purposes. With the exception of this, our findings may not, without our express written permission, be relied upon by your trust for any other purpose whatsoever, be referred to in whole or in part in any other external document or made available (in whole or in part) or communicated to any other party. Cooper Parry Group Limited neither owes nor accepts any duty to any other party who may receive this report and specifically disclaims any liability for any loss, damage or expense of whatsoever nature, which is caused by their reliance on these findings.

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DEAR TRUSTEES

Welcome to your external audit findings for the year ended 31 August 2025.

This document sets out the key matters and issues arising from our audit and regularity assurance report on your trust's financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2025. More detail on each area can be found in the rest of the findings.

AUDIT AND REGULARITY ASSURANCE STATUS

REPORT	UNMODIFIED
Opinion on the audit report in the financial statements	
Assurance report on regularity in the financial statements	

OUTSTANDING INFORMATION

- ✓ The letters of representation in relation to the audit and regularity assurance engagement, which will be signed at the same time as the financial statements are approved and signed.

INTERNAL CONTROL IMPROVEMENTS

RISK	CURRENT YR	PRIOR YRS
	-	-
	1	-
	4	-
	N/A	4

KEY AUDIT RISK FINDINGS

KEY RISK	FINDINGS
Management override	No issues identified
Income recognition	No issues identified
Fund accounting	No issues identified
Going concern	No issues identified
Retirement benefits	No issues identified, but the LGPS surplus has been restricted to Nil
Related party transactions	No issues identified

AUDIT ADJUSTMENTS

	REV £000	PEN £000	CAP £000
Pre-audit operating surplus / (deficit)	450	-	(922)
Audit adjustments	-	-	-
Funds transfers	(389)	-	389
LGPS FRS102 adjustments	-	1,406	-
LGPS FRS102 asset ceiling restriction	-	(1,406)	-
NET MOVEMENT	61	-	(533)

UNADJUSTED AUDIT DIFFERENCES

There were no impact on the trust's revenue funds from unadjusted audit differences

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

FUNDS	UNRES'D FUNDS £000	REST'D FUNDS £000	REVENUE FUNDS £000	PENSION FUND £000	CAPITAL FUNDS £000	TOTAL FUNDS £000
Grant income	-	13,103	13,103	-	32	13,135
Other income	955	-	955	18	-	973
Staffing expenditure	(64)	(10,349)	(10,413)	63	-	(10,350)
Other expenditure	(291)	(2,904)	(3,195)	-	(954)	(4,149)
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	600	(150)	450	81	(922)	(391)
Fund transfers	(204)	(185)	(389)	-	389	-
LGPS FRS102 movement	-	-	-	1,325	-	-
LGPS FRS102 asset ceiling restriction	-	-	-	(1,406)	-	(81)
NET MOVEMENT	396	(335)	61	-	(533)	(472)
Funds brought forward	1,228	335	1,563	-	22,401	23,964
FUNDS CARRY FWD	1,624	-	1,624	-	21,868	23,492

UNPICKING THE RESULTS

The table above summarises the overall financial results of the trust for the year ended 31 August 2025 as reported in the financial statements.

The overall net operating result for the year is a surplus for the year is £450,000. This compares favourably against the original budgeted surplus for the year of £124,000 and the operating surplus in the prior year of £540,000.

After transfers from reserves of £389,000 to fund capital expenditure in the year, the overall operating reserves at 31 August 2025 are £1,624,000. This represents approximately 1.4 months of operating costs and compares to the trust's stated reserves policy of 1 months operating costs which equates to approximately £1,135,000.

The LGPS surplus has been restricted at year end in line with the actuary's FRS102 asset ceiling calculations. The total LGPS surplus at 31 August 2025 that has not been recognised in the financial statements is £1,559,000. With the pending funding valuation of the LGPS at 31 March 2025 currently being undertaken, the current surplus balance in the scheme may translate into a reduction in future contribution rates from 1 April 2026 onwards.

The capital funds are presented by the net book value of fixed assets at 31 August 2025.

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS AUDIT AND REGULARITY STATUS

OUR AUDIT AND REGULARITY ASSURANCE APPROACH

There were no changes to our audit and regularity assurance approach as previously set out to you in our external audit plan dated October 2025.

Our final assessment of materiality was as follows:

- ✓ Overall materiality (based on 2% of recurring income) - £282,000
- ✓ Performance materiality (based on 80% of overall materiality) – £225,000
- ✓ Triviality (based on 5% of overall materiality) – £14,100

OUR AUDIT AND REGULARITY ASSURANCE REPORTS

Our audit and regularity assurance fieldwork is complete and we have had an audit completion meeting with Trish Botha and Suzanne Cooper on 25 November where we reviewed the draft financial statements and discussed our audit findings including the contents of this report.

We also attended a meeting with management, the Accounting Office, Chair of Trustees and Chair of the Finance Committee on 2 December where we presented our audit findings, as detailed in this report, and the draft financial statements.

Subject to the clearance of the outstanding matters outlined on this page, we anticipate issuing an unmodified audit report on the financial statements.

In relation to our regularity assurance report, we anticipate issuing an unmodified regularity assurance report.

ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND DISCLOSURES

We have reviewed the accounting policies adopted by the trust and found these to be appropriate for the trust and in line with the sector overall, as well as having been applied consistently throughout the year. There were also no changes in the trust's accounting policies compared to the previous year.

We have also reviewed the disclosures included in the trust's financial statements and are satisfied these are consistent with the applicable requirements of the Academies Accounts Direction 2024-25, the Charities SORP and the Companies Act 2006.

INDEPENDENCE

We have complied with the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard for Auditors and all threats to our independence, as set out to you in our external audit plan dated October 2025, have been properly addressed through appropriate safeguards.

No additional facts or matters have arisen during the course of the audit that we want to raise with you, and we confirm that we are independent and able to express an objective opinion on the financial statements.

FRAUD

We have previously discussed the risk of fraud with management. We have not been made aware of any incidents fraud in the year nor have any incidents come to our attention as a result of our audit testing. Our audit testing is not intended to identify any instances of fraud of a non-material nature and should not be relied upon for this purpose.

REPRESENTATION LETTERS

We have provided management and the trustees with a draft letter of representations in relation to the audit and regularity assurance engagements, which will be signed at the same time as the financial statements are approved and signed.

This letter includes acknowledgement of the trustees' responsibility for the design and implementation of internal controls to prevent and detect fraud.

The draft letter does not include any non-standard representations.

OUTSTANDING MATTERS

Before issuing our audit and regularity assurance reports, we still require the following:

- ✓ The letters of representation in relation to the audit and regularity assurance engagement, which will be signed at the same time as the financial statements are approved and signed.

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS KEY AUDIT RISKS AND FINDINGS

As part of the audit planning process, we sought to minimise the risk of material misstatement occurring in the financial statements and remaining undetected at the conclusion of our audit work. To do this, we evaluated the inherent risk of misstatements arising, the risk that such misstatement will not be detected or corrected through the internal controls in place and designed audit procedures which will most efficiently and effectively reduce the risk of material misstatement remaining undetected to an acceptable level. This risk assessment process is designed to ensure that we focus our audit work on the areas of higher assessed risk of material misstatement to the financial statements.

Our audit focus was drawn to the following key risk areas and our initial assessments at the planning stage and the findings from our audit work on these areas is summarised below:

RISK	RISK GRADING	FRAUD RISK	IMPACT OF SIGNIFICANT JUDGEMENTS / ESTIMATES	AUDIT FINDINGS
MANAGEMENT OVERRIDE	SIGNIFICANT	YES	HIGH	NO ISSUES IDENTIFIED
INCOME RECOGNITION	SIGNIFICANT	YES	MEDIUM	NO ISSUES IDENTIFIED
FUND ACCOUNTING	HIGHER ASSESSED RISK	YES / NO	MEDIUM	NO ISSUES IDENTIFIED
GOING CONCERN	HIGHER ASSESSED RISK	YES / NO	MEDIUM	NO ISSUES IDENTIFIED
RETIREMENT BENEFITS	HIGHER ASSESSED RISK	NO	MEDIUM	NO ISSUES IDENTIFIED, BUT THE LGPS SURPLUS HAS BEEN RESTRICTED TO NIL
RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS	HIGHER ASSESSED RISK	YES	LOW	NO ISSUES IDENTIFIED

For each of the above key risk areas, more information on the audit work undertaken and our overall audit findings is detailed on the following pages.

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS KEY AUDIT RISKS AND FINDINGS

RISK	AUDIT WORK UNDERTAKEN	OUR FINDINGS
MANAGEMENT OVERRIDE AND BIAS <i>Is there is any evidence of misstatement in the financial statements due to management bias?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We obtained a report for all transactions posted to the accounting system and used data analytics to review these, including testing the rationale for a sample of any unusual transactions and journals identified. ✓ We reviewed areas of significant accounting estimation including the basis of any management assumptions. ✓ We discussed the basis and business rationale for any significant non-routine transactions which came to our attention during the course of our audit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No matters came to light during our audit work that need to be brought to your attention. ✓ We did not identify any evidence of management override or bias in your accounting records or financial statements.
INCOME RECOGNITION <i>Is income recognised in line with relevant standards and guidance?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We reviewed the accounting policies adopted, considering the guidance and recognition criteria set out in the Academies Accounts Direction to ensure these are appropriate. ✓ We reviewed the nature of all significant income streams and investigated any key fluctuations in the year. ✓ We agreed ESFA / DfE and LA funding to supporting remittances and pupil census data to ensure correct accounting treatment. ✓ We reviewed capital grants and funding to supporting award information for point of entitlement to ensure the correct accounting treatment. ✓ We performed substantive testing on other key income streams, reviewing source documentation to ensure the income recognition criteria has been satisfied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No matters came to light during our audit work that need to be brought to your attention. ✓ We have concluded that income is not materially misstated in the financial statements.
FUND ACCOUNTING <i>Is restricted income correctly identified and expended?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We ensured that expenditure of significant restricted income streams is in line with the funding agreement or terms of funding. ✓ We reviewed significant capital projects in the year to ensure all expenditure and fund balances have been properly accounted for, including any amounts transferred from reserves. ✓ We ensured appropriate disclosures are included in the financial statements relating to any restricted and / or designated funds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No matters came to light during our audit work that need to be brought to your attention. ✓ We have concluded that expenditure is allocated appropriately in the financial statements and that the balances of funds as reported in the financial statements are not materially misstated.

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS

KEY AUDIT RISKS AND FINDINGS

RISK	AUDIT WORK UNDERTAKEN	OUR FINDINGS
GOING CONCERN <i>Is the trust able to continue operating for at least 12 months from the date of approval of the financial statements?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We reviewed the trust's 3-year forecasts, cashflow information and challenged key assumptions used including any scenario planning or sensitivity analysis undertaken around the key assumptions ✓ We reviewed the trustee's going concern conclusions and the going concern commentary included in the financial statements. ✓ We ensured appropriate disclosures are included in the financial statements relating to the trust's going concern position and going concern assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No matters came to light during our audit work that need to be brought to your attention. ✓ We agree with the trustees' conclusion that the trust is a going concern and we are satisfied with the disclosures included in the financial statements.
RETIREMENT BENEFITS <i>Is the local government pension scheme liability accurately accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We reviewed the actuary's FRS 102 valuation report(s) and data used, including benchmarking the assumptions used against other trusts and the sector overall, and ensured the correct disclosures have been included in the financial statements. ✓ To the extent there was an LGPS asset at the year-end based on the actuary's FRS102 report, we reviewed the basis of the actuary's asset ceiling calculations and the extent to which any asset has been recognised in the financial statements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In line with the actuary's asset ceiling calculation, the LGPS asset of £1,559,000 as identified in the FRS102 report has been reduced to an amount of £Nil in the financial statements. ✓ No matters came to light during our audit work that need to be brought to your attention. ✓ We have concluded that the LGPS liability is not materially misstated and is correctly accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements.
RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS <i>Are all related party transactions identified, approved and disclosed in the financial statements?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ We reviewed the trust's registers of interest to ensure complete and in line with the Academy Trust Handbook requirements. ✓ We tested all related party transactions to ensure they have been undertaken in line with the Academy Trust Handbook and are appropriately disclosed in the financial statements, including any trustees' remuneration and any other transactions with trustees or key management personnel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No matters came to light during our audit work that need to be brought to your attention other than the internal control improvement noted below. ✓ We did not identify any additional related parties or transactions that require disclosure in the financial statements.

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS

AUDIT ADJUSTMENTS

From our audit work we identified certain proposed adjustments in the financial statements. These have been discussed with Trish Botha and have been adjusted for in the financial statements as follows:

	REVENUE £000	PENSION £000	CAPITAL £000
Surplus / (deficit) per pre-audit trial balance	450	-	(922)
Financial statements adjustment for LGPS pension cost charges per the actuary's FRS102 report	-	81	-
<u>Audit adjustments for:</u>			
None noted identified	-	-	-
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	450	81	(922)
Adjustment for transfers between funds	(389)	-	389
Financial statements adjustment for LGPS actuarial movement in the year per the actuary's FRS102 report	-	1,325	-
Financial statements adjustment to restrict the LGPS asset amount based on the actuary's asset ceiling calculation	-	(1,406)	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS FOR THE YEAR	61	-	(533)

The adjustment for the funds transferred from revenue funds to capital funds of £389,000 arose due to additional capital expenditure in the year on additions as these were funded from the trust's reserves.

UNADJUSTED DIFFERENCES

There were no unadjusted differences identified from our completed audit procedures.

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS INTERNAL CONTROL IMPROVEMENTS

The trust's management are responsible for the identification, assessment and monitoring of risk and for developing, operating and monitoring the systems of internal control within the trust and for providing assurance to the board of trustees that it has done so.

Our audit and regularity assurance work included consideration of internal controls relevant to the preparation of the financial statements and the statement on regularity, propriety and compliance in order to design audit and regularity assurance procedures that are appropriate for the purposes of our audit and regularity assurance engagement, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control. Our audit and regularity assurance engagement are, therefore, not designed to identify all internal control weaknesses.

The matters reported below are limited to those areas identified during the audit and regularity assurance engagement where internal control improvements are recommended, including any improvements recommended in prior years.

The detailed internal control improvement recommendations, which are set out on the following pages, have been graded based our assessment of their potential risk to the trust according to the following grading system.

RISK	DESCRIPTION	CURRENT YEAR	PRIOR YEAR
	HIGH RISK: The improvements recommended are so fundamental to the system of internal control and governance that action should be taken immediately to minimise the risk of material misstatement or governance failings.	-	-
	MEDIUM RISK: The improvements recommended have an important effect on the system of internal control and governance such that a lack of action could lead to a material misstatement or governance failing.	1	-
	LOW RISK: The improvements recommended would improve the system of internal control and governance generally in line with good practice, but are unlikely to lead to a material misstatement or governance failing	4	-
	RESOLVED: The improvements recommended in the previous year which have now been resolved.	N/A	4

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS INTERNAL CONTROL IMPROVEMENTS

CURRENT YEAR

RISK	CONTROL WEAKNESS	IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSES
	PROCUREMENT POLICY ADHERENCE From our procurement testing, we noted that the procurement policy was not followed in all instances. We noted instances where although the total project was above the relevant procurement threshold, but each invoice was individually below this threshold, the relevant alternative quotes / tenders were not being obtained in line with the procurement policy.	We would recommend that the value of the project in total, rather than the individual invoice, is taken into account when assessing the need to consider value for money. This will ensure that the Trust is achieving good value for money on all significant purchases.	<i>Recommendation accepted. Capital spend is adjusted throughout the year as funds become available and although it was our initial intention to do a particular area of the building e.g. DT flooring we were later able to add in an additional area. Therefore, financial regulations were correctly followed for each project at the time of instructing the work to go ahead. Going forward we will request quotes for the full works that may happen in the year and also broken down into smaller projects.</i>
	AUTHORISED SUPPLIER LIST During our purchase walkthrough testing and procurement testing, we noted that there is no authorised supplier list. This poses a potential risk to procurement controls and compliance.	We would recommend establishing an authorised supplier list to ensure staff have a source of approved suppliers to purchase from.	<i>Recommendation accepted. We have started work on this authorised supplier list.</i>
	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST From our related parties testing, we noted that interests were missed off the register of interests for three trustees, and that a declaration of interest was missing for one Trustee. A total of five interests were omitted from the register.	We'd recommended that the Register of Interests is kept up to date for any interests the Trustees and Members have in other entities to ensure it is a complete list of all potential related parties.	<i>Recommendation accepted. The register of Interests has now been updated and will be kept up to date. Our Finance manager will monitor quarterly and liaise with Clerk to the Governors to ensure compliance.</i>
	NO WRITTEN RECONCILIATION PROCESS IN PLACE From our income testing we have identified there is no formal process in place to check the GAG funding statements back to the census information.	We would recommend that a formal process is implemented whether the pupil numbers per the census are reconciled to the GAG funding statement.	<i>Recommendation accepted. Although a reconciliation was undertaken, it was not formally documented. This will be implemented going forward.</i>

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS INTERNAL CONTROL IMPROVEMENTS

CURRENT YEAR

RISK	CONTROL WEAKNESS	IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSES
	PAY REVIEW MINUTES From our payroll testing, we noted that the Accounting Officer's salary review discussion was not minuted at a formal pay review meeting.	We would recommend that a formal minuted meeting is held to discuss and approve the salary of the Accounting Officer, and that this is also noted and ratified by the full Board of Trustees.	<i>Recommendation accepted. We have communicated with our CoG and established correct procedures for the Accounting Officer's salary review going forward.</i>

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS INTERNAL CONTROL IMPROVEMENTS

PRIOR YEAR UPDATES

RISK	CONTROL WEAKNESS	IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSES AND CURRENT YEAR UPDATE
	DEFERRED CAPITAL GRANTS We noted that the capital grants of £32k have been fully deferred to the 2024/25 financial year.	We recommend that the terms and conditions of the capital grants are reassessed to determine if any part of the grant relates to the current financial year and subsequently recognise income in line with FRS 102 and Charities SORP guidance, ensuring it is matched with the associated costs in the correct period.	<i>Historically we have always deferred the full capital grant. The recommendation is now accepted. Going forward the capital grant will be recognised as income in the year in which it is received.</i> 2025 YEAR UPDATE This is considered to be resolved as there were no instances of this in the current year.
	DEFERRED TEACHERS PAY PENSION GRANTS We noted that the Teachers' Pay and Pension Grant has been fully deferred to the 2024/25 financial year.	We recommend that the terms and conditions of the Teachers' Pay and Pension Grant are reassessed to determine if any part of the grant relates to the current financial year and subsequently recognise income in line with FRS 102 and Charities SORP guidance, ensuring it is matched with the associated costs in the correct period.	<i>Recommendation is accepted. The income was deferred based on the DFE guidance stating that the income can be carried forward to future financial years. Going forward income will be taken in the year in which it is received.</i> 2025 YEAR UPDATE This is considered to be resolved as there were no instances of this in the current year.
	RELATED PARTY INFORMATION We noted discrepancies between the list of Trustees as recorded at Companies House, the trust's website, and the Government's Get Information About Schools (GIAS) database.	We recommend the trust performs regular reconciliations of the trustees listed at Companies House, on the organization's website, and in the GIAS database. Ensuring all records reflect the current and accurate list of trustees.	<i>The staff governor resignation was updated on GIAS and on our website but not on Companies House. Recommendation accepted. Regular reconciliations will be conducted going forward.</i> 2025 YEAR UPDATE This is considered to be resolved as there were no instances of this in the current year.

YOUR EXTERNAL AUDIT FINDINGS INTERNAL CONTROL IMPROVEMENTS

PRIOR YEAR UPDATES

RISK	CONTROL WEAKNESS	IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	MANAGEMENT RESPONSES AND CURRENT YEAR UPDATE
	OPENING BALANCES During our review we noted that the opening balances did not reconcile by £109k.	We recommend implementing stronger controls and review processes for recording and reconciling year-end adjustments to prevent similar issues in the future	<i>This relates to the capital grant and Imacs & PCs which were included in our capital plan in 23/24. The supplier was unable to deliver prior to August and these items were therefore shown under restricted reserves in our opening balances. Going forward we will implement stronger controls to ensure that year-end audit adjustments are processed.</i> 2025 YEAR UPDATE This is considered to be resolved as there were no instances of this in the current year.

APPENDIX

3 YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY

A summary of the trust's operating performance and revenue funds over the last three years, including some key financial ratios is as follows:

	2025 £000	2024 £000	2023 £000
Educational grant income	13,103	12,326	11,466
Other operating income	955	900	780
Staffing expenditure	(10,413)	(9,552)	(8,613)
Other operating expenditure	(3,195)	(3,134)	(3,303)
REVENUE SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	450	540	330
Transfers to fund capital expenditure in the year	(389)	(351)	(114)
NET MOVEMENT IN REVENUE FUNDS	61	189	216
Total operating funds brought forward	1,563	1,374	1,158
TOTAL REVENUE FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	1,624	1,563	1,374

KEY FINANCIAL RATIOS

% staff expenditure to total expenditure	76.5%	75.3%	72.3%
% other expenditure to total expenditure	23.5%	24.7%	27.7%
% staff expenditure to total operating income	74.1%	72.2%	70.3%
% staff expenditure to educational grant income	79.5%	77.5%	75.1%
Months expenditure in revenue funds (i.e. reserves)	1.4	1.5	1.4
% educational grant income held in revenue reserves	12.4%	12.7%	12.0%
% total operating income held in revenue reserves	11.6%	11.8%	11.2%
Capital investment ratio (% of brought forward operating reserves and current year revenue surplus / (deficit) used for capital expenditure	19.3%	18.3%	7.7%

THANKS FOR READING

We operate from superhubs across the UK.
These are located in Castle Donington,
Birmingham, Manchester, Reading, London
and Edinburgh

advice@cooperparry.com

cooperparry.com

Certified



Corporation

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