

THE CHALLENGE ACADEMY TRUST

Minutes of the meeting of the Quality and Standards Committee held on Thursday the 15th of June 2023

Time: 16:03 - 18:48

Venue: TCAT Development Centre

Chair: Sheila Yates

Clerk: Katie Whitmore katie.whitmore@entrust-ed.co.uk

Committee Membership and Attendance

Name	Category	Term Ends	Attendance
Andrew Moorcroft (AM)	Ex-Officio Trustee, CEO	N/A	Not in attendance
Lacy Muir (LM)	Trustee	16.12.2026	Absent
Howard Platt (HP)	Chair of Trustees	01.07.2025	Present
Susan Richardson (SR)	Trustee	03.12.2023	Apologies Accepted
Claire Roper (CR)	Non-Trustee Member	N/A	Apologies Accepted
Carolyn Williams (CW)	Non-Trustee Member	N/A	Present
Sheila Yates (SY)	Trustee, Committee Chair	01.04.2024	Present

Also in Attendance

Vicky Briggs (VB)	Director of Education, TCAT
James Colton (JC)	Lead Practitioner Maths, Sir Thomas Boteler
Tim Long (TL)	School Improvement Lead, TCAT
Katie Whitmore (KW)	Clerk, Entrust
Peter Winter (PW)	Chair of Trustees Sutton Academy

Documents Shared Ahead of the Meeting

FINAL Agenda TCAT Q&S 15.06.2023
FINAL Minutes TCAT Quality and Standards 09.02.2023
Item 8 TCAT School Improvement Presentation
Item 9a Trust attendance report June 2023
Item 9b Trust Suspensions and Perm Ex report June 2023
Item 10b Access arrangements Summer 2023
Item 11a Meadowside Ofsted report April 2023
Item 12a TCAT SEND Update

The meeting was quorate, with the required minimum of two Trustees present.

The meeting opened at 17:03

1	Welcome / Items for AOB / Confidential Items
	The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed committee members and observers also in attendance.
	SW was attending as an observer prior to joining the Trust Board from September 2023.

Signed.....

Date.....



	JC was in attendance to present as Maths Lead Practitioner to the committee.
2	<p>Absence / Apologies / Non-Attendance</p> <p>Apologies had been received in advance of the meeting from SR and CR.</p> <p>LM was absent without apologies received.</p> <p>There were no conflicts of interest declared in relation to items on the agenda.</p> <p>Resolved: Apologies for absence were accepted for SR and CR.</p> <p><i>16:06: TL joined the meeting at this point.</i></p>
3	<p>Register of Interests</p> <p>There were no updates to the register of interests.</p>
4	<p>Declaration of Pecuniary Interest in relation to Items on the Agenda</p> <p>There were no declarations of pecuniary interest in relation to items on the agenda.</p>
5	<p>Membership and Organisation</p> <p>SR will resign as Trustee at the end of this academic year. Trustees thanked SR for her commitment.</p> <p>HP and AM were part of the committee by virtue of their roles as Chair of Trustees and CEO respectively and would attend meetings to ensure quorum if needed.</p> <p>It was agreed that at least one additional Trustee was needed to join the committee from September 2023.</p>
6	<p>Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee 09.02.2023</p> <p>a) Approval of the Minutes Resolved: The minutes from the meeting 09.02.2023 were approved as a true and accurate record and would be made public on request.</p> <p>b) Matters arising Items arising from the minutes were included within the agenda; lead practitioner presentations, Scorecard updates, updates on peer reviews, a focus on schools with concerns, attendance, and suspensions, and SEND (Special Education Needs and Disabilities).</p> <p>c) Action log: The action log from the minutes was reviewed:</p>

Signed.....

Date.....



	Minute Reference	Action to be taken	By Whom	Completion Date
	2	MM will share the updated position paper for MFL (Modern Foreign Languages) across the Trust with the Committee.	MM	COMPLETE
	7	Maths Lead Practitioner would be invited to next meeting 15.06.2023	VB	COMPLETE
7	Maths Lead Practitioner Presentation <p>The Maths Lead Practitioner shared a presentation with Trustees detailing the Maths strategy that was being implemented across the Trust:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historically Maths had underperformed Trust-wide, and Progress 8 outcomes in 2022 had evidenced that this was still the case. Several reasons for this had been investigated and ruled out, including behaviour, staffing, and funding. It had been identified that Maths at Key Stage 3 was an issue across the trust, with varying expectations and levels of ambition across Heads of Department, with evidence of narrowing the curriculum at Key Stage 3 based on the performance of children in Key Stage 2. In order that all children access a full curriculum, TCAT would move to a common curriculum across the Trust for Maths at Key Stage 3; the White Rose Maths scheme will offer consistent pedagogy, assessment, and transition across phases. The Lead Practitioner had been working with Heads of Department at all academies since Christmas to implement the scheme. Heads of Department had been tasked with reviewing their curriculum to ensure quality of curriculum, assessment, scaffolding and pedagogy in line with the Whiter Rose Maths scheme and to identify any gaps for development. There had been a mixed reception to the White Rose Maths scheme across schools, with a big concern regarding fitting all the content into the curriculum. The Lead Practitioner had countered this. <p><i>17:21: CR joined the meeting at this point.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture and standards had been discussed with Heads of Department, to consider the classroom environment to encourage learning. Student Attitudes had been considered; the White Rose Maths scheme had broken down content into granular knowledge for children to achieve and be successful, which would in turn create a positive attitude. Heads of Department had attended an online session with the Head of Curriculum from White Rose Maths 20.03.2023, which explained the rock-solid foundation the scheme offered to build upon going into Key Stage 4. TCAT had bought the White Rose Maths package for CPD (Continued Professional Development), which will deliver five training sessions across the year for Heads of Department. All schools will deliver White Rose Maths at Key Stage 3 from September 2023. 			



- The Lead Practitioner will review all schools starting from the end of the Autumn term 2023, with regular monitoring of impact, and provision of support.
- The Maths strategy at Key Stage 3 will remain on the agenda at the Curriculum and Standards Committee ongoing.

Trustees questioned if the whole curriculum would change at all schools.

The Director of Education advised that there would be individual plans at each school, as some schools were already using aspects of the scheme, however all would be using White Rose Maths at Key Stage 3. **Trustees noted** that the approach to English for example was more diverse across the Trust, which was working well, however the outcomes across the Trust for Maths were consistently and historically not good enough which had warranted this considered approach. **Trustees commented** that some primaries within the Trust used the White Rose Maths scheme at Key Stage 2, which would aid transition to Key Stage 3.

Trustees asked if there was any consideration for children at Priestley College who would retake Maths.

The Director of Education stated that the retakes at Priestley for Maths were good, however they would follow the Key Stage 4 exam syllabus; the focus of this strategy was for consistency across Key Stage 3.

Trustees queried if the Key Stage 4 curriculum for Maths varied across the Trust.

The Lead Practitioner advised that there were two exam syllabuses across the Trust, with one single school using one of the two. The syllabuses were similar; however it was felt that the focus should be at Key Stage 3.

Trustees questioned how the new scheme would manage differentiation amongst students.

The Lead Practitioner advised that there was depth to the scheme, and use of the 'read the room' pedagogy would enable teachers to go deeper with those children who were secure.

Trustees sought clarification of whether children were taught in sets across TCAT schools.

The Lead Practitioner stated that there was a mixed position across the Trust. The strategy at Sir Thomas Boteler was discussed as an example; children were in mixed groups for Maths at Key Stage 3, with a class for high ability and a class for transition. Previously children had been placed in ability sets, however there had been a disproportionate number of disadvantaged children in the lower ability classes which had driven a move to mixed ability classes. Ultimately the change had removed the gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students. The White Rose Maths scheme worked well for mixed ability teaching.

Trustees asked if there was support from Heads of School for the scheme.

The Lead Practitioner advised that all Heads had accepted the changes. The Director of Education advised that Heads of School had been part of every single step and invited to every training session.



	<p>Trustees queried if staff had left TCAT schools because they objected to the approach. The Lead Practitioner shared that this had not been a sole factor for staff leaving, however it may have been a contributing factor to some that had been considering a move. The Director of Education advised that all Heads of Department had shared that they would have liked collaboration and consultation, however this had been done previously and had not worked.</p> <p>Trustees asked if Heads of Department had felt cut-off in their attempts to improve their curriculum. The Director of Education stated that Heads of Department had had several years to improve outcomes and following the outcomes in 2022 there was a need to move and make changes immediately.</p> <p>Trustees questioned if the scheme had a strong online offering for the eventuality that lockdown happened again in the future. The Director of Education confirmed that the online offering was good and would have been extremely beneficial to outcomes had this been in place during the previous lockdown. Primaries had used this scheme during lockdown successfully.</p> <p>Trustees sought clarification that this scheme would aid the growth of the Trust. The Director of Education clarified that everyone involved in teaching Maths at Key Stage 3 across the trust will be teaching same curriculum, including ECTs (Early Careers Teacher) and non-subject specialists, which would aid succession planning, would create a bank of resources online, and ultimately protect schools within the Trust.</p> <p>Trustees queried the time the Lead Practitioner would need out of role to implement the new scheme across schools. The Lead Practitioner advised that he would be out of role for one day per week and was building more capacity with the Director of Education.</p> <p>Trustees noted that the impact of the new scheme will be evident longer-term with the scheme starting at Key Stage 3. The Lead practitioner acknowledged the long-term investment; however all schools will have assessments along the way to measure impact.</p> <p>Trustees thanked the Lead Practitioner for Maths and asked that he return in the future to evidence impact of the scheme.</p> <p>Trustees acknowledged that this was a great example of TCAT in action, where a problem had been identified and a solution implemented.</p> <p><i>17:49: JC left the meeting at this point.</i></p>
8	<p>TCAT School Improvement</p> <p>a) Scorecard and School Updates</p>



The Director of Education and the School Improvement Lead shared updates on key schools which had specific concerns, however assured Trustees that work had been taking place in all schools across the Trust. They referred to a presentation, which would be shared on GovernorHub with Trustees after the meeting.

- Penketh High

Follow up visits to previous TCAT reviews, and a review of predictions for assessment, had taken place. Suspensions remained the highest in the Trust however had decreased over the year; there were several pupils who had more than one suspension which identified that a different approach was needed as the current approach was not working.

Trustees asked if Key Stage 3 Foundations were discussed with Penketh.

The School Improvement Lead confirmed that this was discussed annually and believed that the high level of suspensions signified that something within the curriculum was not working. There was a high level of SEND suspensions, which signified that the SEND department was not working effectively.

Trustees queried if the challenge of the new build at Penketh next year had been considered.

The School Improvement Lead confirmed that more capacity was being built with lead practitioners, who would be deployed in Penketh particularly in the Autumn term.

- Padgate Academy

The impact of follow up visits to previous TCAT reviews, and Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) preparation visits had been evident.

Trustees sought reassurance further to the Heads of Department for Maths and English moving on from Padgate.

The Head of School Improvement confirmed that a new Head of Maths with vast experience from a local secondary school had been successfully recruited. A new Head of English had also been recruited, despite the current recruitment crisis. The Heads of Department had fed back that part of the pull to these roles was to work within a Trust.

- Meadowside

Meadowside had been the most challenged school within the Trust, and the impact of work undertaken by the Director of Education and the School Improvement Lead was shared with Trustees.

Trustees recognised the positive outcomes at Meadowside and thanked those involved for their hard work.

- Priestley College

The impact of work undertaken and focus from the Director of Education and School Improvement Lead was shared with Trustees.



Trustees questioned if there was statutory regulation regarding attendance at FE (Further Education).

The Director of Education advised that there was no statutory regulation regarding attendance at FE, however Priestley acknowledged that they could be tighter around attendance. There were no national figures to compare against as colleges followed several different attendance structures. FEs would be judged on student retention but it was not a legal responsibility. There had been issues with students leaving mid-year which had been to join full-time employment because of the cost-of-living crisis. TCAT had challenged the leadership team to identify trends within attendance explore what could be done to address these trends.

- Broomfields

The junior school was in the window for an Ofsted inspection and work had been done in preparation.

Trustees asked if there was still an issue with numbers on roll at Broomfields.

This was an ongoing issue linked Cobbs Infant school. Most if not all of the pupils from Cobbs will go on to Broomfields. The issue is that recruitment at Cobbs is low which leads to low numbers at Broomfields and there is very little Broomfields can do to influence that as Cobbs are not in TCAT. TCAT was supporting Broomfields with advertisements locally to increase admissions.

- Appleton Thorn

The primary school had recently joined TCAT, and work had been done around induction.

b) Peer Reviews and follow-ups

The Director of Education and the School Improvement Lead referred to a presentation that would be shared with Trustees after the meeting, and noted the following highlights:

- An interim plan was in place at Penketh South Primary following the resignation of the Headteacher. The Deputy would act as Head until the end of the academic year 2023-24. Recruitment for new Headteacher will begin at the end of February 2024.
- Spring reviews had taken place at all schools, and Summer assessment meetings had all happened.

c) Lead Practitioners Spring update

The Director of Education and the School Improvement Lead referred to a presentation that would be shared with Trustees after the meeting. A key highlight noted was that TCAT was the first Trust in the country to be part of Ofsted's Careers Guidance Review. When the report was received this would be shared with Trustees and celebrated across the Trust.

d) Hub Updates

The Director of Education and the School Improvement Lead referred to a presentation that would be shared with Trustees after the meeting, and noted the following highlights:

- There were now thirteen lead practitioners for next year for education.
- There was now extra capacity within the Safeguarding team.
- There were now over thirty different hubs; new hubs had been introduced based on need and request.



	<p>Trustees asked for elaboration on the EAL (English as an Additional Language) Hub. The hub lead was from Padgate Academy. The Head from each school in the Trust had been asked to identify the lead person for EAL within their school to join the hub. The aim of the hub was to come together with ideas to support pupils with EAL. Trustees would like to see EAL representatives from the community engaged in LGBs (Local Governing Boards) and PTAs (Parent Teacher Associations).</p> <p>Trustees queried if there was any money attached to the hubs. Hub members were not funded for their involvement. Maths had been a strategic priority Trust-wide which has resulted in funding of the Maths hub.</p> <p>Action: EAL engagement in LGBs and PTAs will be included within the next EAL Hub meeting agenda.</p> <p>e) Trust School Improvement Work - External The School Improvement Lead advised that TCAT had been approached by the DfE (Department for Education) to support other trusts as part of TSI (Trust and School Improvement programme).</p> <p>Trustees questioned if those schools TCAT was supporting were potential TCAT members. The School Improvement Lead advised that this was not the case; TCAT were engaged to offer support to these schools and impact school improvement. Lead practitioners were deployed to support these schools. In the longer-term capacity would be built within hubs to support more schools externally.</p> <p>Trustees sought reassurance that succession plans were in place for teacher moving into the role of Lead Practitioners. The School Improvement Lead advised that it was evident that TCAT offered progression for teachers within the Trust, which was an important pull in recruitment.</p>
9	<p>Attendance and Suspensions</p> <p>a) Attendance The Director of Education referred to the report that had been shared with Trustees in advance of the meeting, and noted the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penketh High was noted as an outlier regarding attendance however it had improved. • A key message Trust-wide was that schools were still facing a real battle to keep attendance levels as they should be, and schools overall were doing a good job. • Attendance was being impacted by holidays, habits formed during school closures, and EBSA (Emotionally Based School Avoidance). • Efforts to address attendance made in individual schools had been scrutinised by TCAT. • A separate attendance hub will be created next year.



	<p>Trustees queried if schools had different strategies for attendance. The Director of Education advised that this was the case, and that the new safeguarding hub will build resource for schools to access.</p> <p>b) Suspensions The Director of Education referred to the report that had been shared with Trustees in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Trustees asked if recurrent suspension of a small number of children was skewing figures. The Director of Education advised that this was the case and was particularly challenging at Penketh High.</p>
10	<p>Assessment Arrangements</p> <p>a) Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 The Director of Education shared a verbal update with Trustees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Stage 1 assessments had been checked internally and found to be compliant at all schools. • Key Stage 2 assessments had been spot checked and all were looking secure. • Great Sankey Primary had been spot-checked by the LA (Local Authority) around Phonics assessment. • A high proportion of schools within the Trust were being moderated around Key Stage 2 assessments. <p>b) Access Arrangements Report The Access arrangements report for Summer 2023 had been shared with Trustees in advance of the meeting.</p>
11	<p>Ofsted</p> <p>a) Meadowside Report The Director of Education had shared the Ofsted report with Trustees in advance of the meeting. Trustees were pleased to see that Meadowside had received an ungraded inspection and continued to be judged as 'Good' in all areas.</p>
12	<p>TCAT Strategic Objectives</p> <p>a) SEND Strategy The Director of Education had shared a presentation with Trustees in advance of the meeting, which detailed SEND strategies over the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms, and noted the following highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TCAT could now offer a suite of resources for leadership and to support teaching and learning. • An online seminar will be shared with teachers in relation to CPD (Continued Professional Development) around SEND.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more comprehensive offer linked to Educational Psychologist support will be developed next year. <p>Trustees asked if there had been many complaints from SEN parents who felt that schools were not delivering. The Director of Education advised that this was not the case, other than one complaint at Penketh. There was an increasing number of SEN across the LA.</p> <p>b) Maths Strategy Update This had been delivered by the Lead Practitioner presentation within Agenda Item 7.</p>
13	<p>Safeguarding Update</p> <p>The Chair shared that the Safeguarding Panel had met 23.05.2023. The Panel had looked at Safer Recruitment policies across TCAT, which showed some inconsistency; the Safeguarding lead had assured the Panel how this would be addressed. The Panel had been reassured that all schools had completed a Safeguarding review, with a list of strengths and areas for development identified. Trustees were assured that schools were being supported and reviewed.</p> <p>The Director of Education advised that the Safeguarding team would go back to providing supervision from September 2023.</p>
14	<p>AOB</p> <p>There were no items of other business.</p>
15	<p>Date and Time of next meeting</p> <p>Dates for 2023-24 would be confirmed by the Trust Board 13.07.2023.</p> <p>Trustees thanked the Director of Education and the School Improvement Lead for their meaningful reporting to the Committee over 2022-23.</p>
16	<p>Confidential Matters</p> <p>Confidential Items were captured within a Confidential Appendix.</p>

The meeting closed at 18:48

Action Log

Signed.....

Date.....



Minute Reference	Action to be taken	By Whom	Completion Date
8	EAL engagement in LGBs and PTAs will be included within the next EAL Hub meeting agenda.	VB / TL	ASAP