



The Challenge Academy Trust

Quality and Standards Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday 13th February 2025 at 5pm

Venue: TCAT Development Centre, Bridgewater High School

Chair: Sheila Yates

Clerk: Melissa Alexander

| Committee Members | | | End of Term |
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| MG | Matthew Grant | Trustee | 20/06/2028 |
| JW | John Warren | Trustee | 11.01.2028 |
| PW | Peter Winter | Trustee | 11.01.2028 |
| SY | Sheila Yates | Chair of Committee, Trustee | 01.04.2027 |
| Also In Attendance | | | |
| KB | Karen Burns | Committee Member | |
| VB | Vicky Briggs | Director of Education, TCAT | |
| TH | Tracey Hatton | Committee Member | |
| AH | Andy Hawley | Lead Practitioner, Alternative Provision | |
| JL | Jo Langstaff | Committee Member | |
| TL | Tim Long | School Improvement Lead, TCAT | |
| AM | Anna Mawby | Lead Practitioner, Careers and Aspirations | |
| CR | Claire Roper | Committee Associate | |
| CW | Carolyn Williams | Committee Associate | |

| Agenda Item | |
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| 1. | Welcome / Items for AOB / Items for Confidential Part Two The Clerk welcomed the Committee to the meeting at 5pm. The Clerk asked if there were any items for AOB and confirmed that there had been two items that would be covered in Part Two of the meeting. |
| 2. | Absence / Apologies / Non-Attendance Claire Roper shared apologies and these were accepted. Karen Burns did not attend the meeting, and apologies were shared in advance and accepted. |
| 3. | Register of Interests There were no Register of Interests noted. |
| 4. | Declaration of pecuniary interests in relation to agenda items |

| | The Committee confirmed that there were no Declarations of Pecuniary Interests in relation to the agenda items. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 5. | Membership and Organisation The Chair confirmed that there were no amendments made to the membership and organisation of this Committee. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. | Minutes of the Quality and Standards Committee 17.10.25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approval of the Minutes: The minutes were approved by the Committee. b) Matters arising: c) Action log: The Chair went through each individual action from the previous meeting. The Committee discussed action 5. and the Chair challenged two areas within the Terms of Reference. It was agreed during this discussion that two amendments were required to ensure this information was accurate in relation to the role of the Quality and Standards Committee. <p>Action Log: All actions were reviewed by the Chair of the committee.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Minute Ref.</th><th>Action to be taken</th><th>By Whom</th><th>Completion date</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>5.</td><td>Terms of Reference to be added to GovernorHub for committee. If there are any queries or if anyone would like to raise something, please contact Melissa Alexander. Typos from the the final copy of the previous minutes from June 2024 to be amended by Melissa Alexander and be updated on GovernorHub.</td><td>MA</td><td>17.10.2024</td></tr> <tr> <td>08b.</td><td>Andy Hawley will be invited to the next Quality and Standards Committee Meeting to report on Alternative Provision.</td><td>VB</td><td>13.02.2025</td></tr> <tr> <td>9a.</td><td>Query raised by MG and JL relating to the 65.8% Mixed (A Level/ Vocational). VB agreed to amend this data.</td><td>VB</td><td>ASAP This was amended and completed following the meeting.</td></tr> <tr> <td>11a.</td><td>Page 4 on TCAT Safeguarding Statement 2024 includes an incorrect date. This will need to be amended.</td><td>VB</td><td>ASAP This was amended and completed</td></tr> </tbody> </table> | | | Minute Ref. | Action to be taken | By Whom | Completion date | 5. | Terms of Reference to be added to GovernorHub for committee. If there are any queries or if anyone would like to raise something, please contact Melissa Alexander. Typos from the the final copy of the previous minutes from June 2024 to be amended by Melissa Alexander and be updated on GovernorHub. | MA | 17.10.2024 | 08b. | Andy Hawley will be invited to the next Quality and Standards Committee Meeting to report on Alternative Provision. | VB | 13.02.2025 | 9a. | Query raised by MG and JL relating to the 65.8% Mixed (A Level/ Vocational). VB agreed to amend this data. | VB | ASAP This was amended and completed following the meeting. | 11a. | Page 4 on TCAT Safeguarding Statement 2024 includes an incorrect date. This will need to be amended. | VB | ASAP This was amended and completed |
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| | | | following the meeting. |
| 11a) | Safeguarding Training requirements needs to be added to GovernorHub to ensure all Governors and Trustees are completing the required training. | MA | ASAP |
| 12) | VB will discuss the post 16 climate with James Gresty in further detail. | VB | 13.02.2025 |
| | Report on external examination access arrangements percentage/number/impact. | VB | 12.06.2025 |
| 7. | Lead Practitioner Presentation: Careers, Anna Mawby <p>The Chair introduced AM to the Committee meeting. AM provided the committee with an overview of the Careers and Aspirations key priorities. AM provided the committee with a brief reflection of the developments that have been made within the Trust and the partnerships that have been developed. AM confirmed that there are statutory requirements that all academies have to adhere to. AM shared that Cheshire and Warrington are the hub that TCAT work in collaboration with and explained that this is an important partnership. AM elaborated that there has been funding granted by the DfE to enable TCAT to work with Careers and Enterprise Company that works alongside The Pledge. The Pledge work with over 400 employers to support students with developing the required skill set to prepare them for their futures in employment.</p> <p>AM referred to 'Gatsby Benchmarks' which is the framework for 'good career guidance'. AM shared as a national level; most schools are hitting 5.5% of the required benchmarks. TCAT academies are hitting 100% of these benchmarks. AM highlighted the significance of the Careers and Aspirations hub group and the impact of colleagues having the opportunity to work in collaboration with one another. AM referred to Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School's figures and explained that the data conveys how the academy has moved forward. The data demonstrates that the 'Gatsby Benchmarks' are having a positive impact and are supporting students in moving forward following their school journey.</p> <p>AM provided the Committee with a summary of the work that the Trust has engaged with to support with Careers and Aspirations development. AM shared that TCAT were requested to engage with the Pilot Careers Impact Review System. The Careers Lead at Padgate Academy led on the Impact</p> | | |

Review System and this resulted in excellent results for the academy. TCAT's engagement and feedback was shared with the DfE and Careers and Enterprise to form the shape of the benchmarking going forward. AM highlighted the achievements of Priestley College and the impact this has had for students at the college.

The Trust are in the process of developing a consistent 'Skills Builder'. TCAT academies are in their first year of engaging with this and this will continuously be developed over time. AM shared the strategic next steps with the Committee which will link with the work completed by Careers and Aspirations Hub Representatives. In addition, AM highlighted that Heads and Principals will need to consider the development of their implementation plans for provide students two weeks of work ex.

A Trustee questioned if there are any suggestions nationally or locally to get the neat figured down.

AM responded by sharing that there is a 'Ronnie Project' with the council. Working interventions are being developed to support students from year seven. AM shared that there are a number of projects that have been developed and wider help to support mental health.

A Trustee commented that Covid had a significant impact and asked if there is any evidence of the neat figures reducing. AM confirmed that the neat figures have reduced.

A Trustee queried what other academies are doing within the Trust. AM confirmed that the context of the individual academy needs to be considered. AM explained that the hub work in collaboration with one another and share good practice. For academies where there is more challenge with parental engagement, funding has been used to encourage parents and guardians to engage with harder to reach families.

A Trustee queried if academies engage with careers conventions.

A Trustee questioned if we have a Trust wide careers convention. AM confirmed that Careers and Enterprise host a careers fair for all schools across the Warrington. AM confirmed that individual academies also lead on their own career's fayres.

AM asked if there is concern across the borough regarding students who are leaving secondary education with a limited number of GCSES/ low grades.

AM confirmed that these figures are on the rise and that this is a worry due to the lack of provision for students.

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| | AM left the meeting at 17:28 |
| 8. | <p>TCAT School Improvement</p> <p>a) Scorecard and academy Education updates (PowerPoint)</p> <p>VB explained that updates to the academy scorecards has been a significant piece of work, and shared that all scorecards are now linked with Arbor, the MIS system used within all but one academy. VB explained the reasoning behind this is to ensure that all data is an accurate and up to date. VB highlighted that this has been very powerful and resulted in more meaningful conversations during scorecard meeting. VB shared that Priestley College have a different MIS as Arbor is unable to provide their service, and VB shared that she has worked closely with James Gresty to ensure data for Priestley College is accurate linked to the Scorecard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VB shared that BCA were shared in the Fairer Schools Index and celebrated the academy's achievement. • Meadowside Community Primary School have returned to their site following the flood that occurred at the academy. • Computing Hub and STEM Offer funding has been pulled. VB and Chris Hillidge have met with the Local Authority to discuss potential funding to support with the huge void this will result in. • Six peer reviews have been completed. VB shared that the reviews have been welcomed by leaders and have been extremely positive. The reports are available for the Committee. <p>b) SLT Seminar Spring (PowerPoint)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VB shared the focus of Educational Excellence is the running theme for all SLT CPD seminars. VB shared that the aim of the sessions is to bring colleagues together and visit each other's academies. • Senior Leaders across the Trust have come together for face-to-face sessions and the Trust have distributed a survey to collect staff feedback on the impact of the SLT seminars and engagements. <p>c) Lead Practitioner Autumn Impact Reports (Summary PP and reports)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VB shared that there are in depth reports available for the Committee should they require these. VB explained to attendees that the reports are written specifically for VB, however, these are available for Trustees should they wish to view them. VB added that sitting behind each of the Impact Reports are a series of consistent notes of visits. <p><i>A Trustee challenged the difference in detail contained within the Impact Reports and highlighted that some are impact based and some are narrative based.</i></p> |

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| | <p><i>VB confirmed that it may be worth renaming these reports to 'Update Reports'.</i></p> <p><i>A Trustee queried information contained in the Teaching and Learning Impact Report and the figures relating to ECT engagement.</i></p> <p><i>VB explained that there have been amendments to the way in ECT engagement is recorded. VB referred to the data whereby it was recorded that 6 ECTs out of 54 ECTs have engaged in seminars. VB confirmed that TCAT have gone back to the contact with Generate Teaching Hub to highlight these figures and the changes that have been implemented. VB confirmed that these changes have been led by Teach First and provided justification as to why the figures are lower than we would expect.</i></p> <p>d) ITT, ECT and NPQ update (report)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current ITT cohort are performing well and have engaged in regular training and Headteacher and Principal interviews. <p>e) Education Connect (report)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An observer commented that TCAT have their own credibility <p>f) Trust External School Improvement work (PP)</p> <p>TL provided an overview of the external school improvement work that TCAT are leading on. TL shared that the Trust are supporting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christ the King • Maricourt • The Learning Partner Trust • Cowley • Birchwood High School • Bridge Futures • The Heath Family Trust |
| 9. | <p>Attendance, Suspensions and PEX</p> <p>a) Attendance 2024 Autumn term, including academy spotlights (report)</p> <p>VB referred to the attendance report that was shared with the Committee prior to the meeting. VB highlighted that there had been a slight drop in attendance in October and provided some context for the reasoning for the drop in attendance in this particular month. The Committee demonstrated that they were pleased with the attendance of the Trust.</p> <p>b) Suspensions & PEX 2024 Autumn term, including academy spotlights (report)</p> <p>VB referred to the report and highlighted key data. VB shared that there is a very thorough process followed before any permanent exclusion is made.</p> |

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| | <p><i>An Observer commented that the guidance is extremely clear and rigorous.</i></p> <p><i>VB added that the Trust have invested time in to ensuring policies and procedures are clear to support colleagues across the Trust, ensuring correct processes are followed, with additional CPD training offered to staff.</i></p> | |
| 10. | <p>Assessment and Outcomes</p> <p>a) Assessment update (KS3 assessments)</p> <p>VB explained there is a shared curriculum in Maths, English and Science and that the next steps are to develop shared assessments.</p> <p>VB added that shared assessments are being implemented within the primary academies and explained that the National Curriculum has been used to feed the curriculum planning and aid with assessment development.</p> <p>b) Olex AI project (report)</p> <p>TL provided the Committee with information relating to Olex AI and the way in which this particular platform will aid with the precision in marking and will reduce the workload for colleagues. TL shared that Sarah Mullen, TCAT's English Lead Practitioner has endorsed this and led this product across the Trust.</p> <p>TL referred to TCAT's Digital Strategy and the work that is being conducted to develop the implementation of artificial intelligence to improve standardisation. TL explained that this is a long-term plan which forms part of the Trust's Strategic Action Plan.</p> <p>c) Target setting update</p> <p>VB confirmed that targets are contained within the Scorecard and are up to date.</p> <p>d) Mock data update (demo)</p> <p>TL provided the Committee with a demonstration of the 4Matrix platform. TL shared that the Trust can now have access to subject summaries for each individual academy across the Trust. TL demonstrated that data can be compared to previous years and analysis of data can be assessed by academy/ Trust.</p> <p>TL used the mock results for Beamont Collegiate Academy as an example for the Committee to showcase the data that can be held within this platform. TL added that 4Matrix empowers Lead Practitioners to use this data to inform their planning and preparations for peer reviews/ subject specialist support.</p> <p><i>A Trustee queried who is responsible for importing the data.</i></p> <p><i>TL confirmed that Laura Fletcher has transferred the data into 4Matrix and highlighted that this has not been onerous</i></p> | |

11. TCAT Strategic Objectives

a) **ReRoute focus** (AH presented to the Committee)

AH provided the Committee with contextual background relating to the development of the Designated Alternative Provision. AM provided the Committee with a timeline which consisted of a timeline of pilot project. AH detailed that there was a twelve week 'step out placement' that was organised for KS3 who were struggling to access school.

AH explained that a Working Party has been established to lead on the development of the Alternative Provision with specific guidance from Behaviour Leads within TCAT. AH shared the details of the staff who lead the Alternative Provision and the roles of each member of staff. AH explained the developments for the provision and presented the model for 2024-25.

AH provided the Committee with insights and explained that this model has been developed following the lack of capacity at Cassia Alternative Provision. AH shared details regarding the development of specific cohorts such as EBSA and SEMH as well provision providers.

AH shared that TCAT sold 7 KS3 places to four academies within the Trust. AH added that the Trust are working closely with Warrington Borough Council to discuss the prospect of offering places to external clients which will contribute towards income generating. AH shared pupil and parent voice with the Committee, as well as the attendance figures which demonstrate the rise in pupil attendance. AH highlighted where there had been significant reduction in attendance, there is specific need for the individual student.

The Committee were provided with a summary relating to the KS4 cohort and the provision in place for students. AH shared that there are currently four KS4 students attending the AP and there is currently one application for a student to join the AP which has gone to the Panel.

In addition, AH provided the Committee with details relating to the current KS3 cohort, linked to the SEMH Model. There are currently seven students with one place available. AH shared that the TRY HARD Project has been implemented and has been positively received. AH shared details relating to the TRY HARD and Strengthening Minds Programmes and the variety of activities that students have engaged with.

AH referred to the 'outreach' work that has been led across the Trust, including primary out read, ITT CPD, de-escalation and SEND, behaviour support training and Team Teach training which will be offered to all TCAT academies. Reference to the curriculum was made and the curriculum links in the core subjects of Maths, Science and English to ensure that students

who attend the Alternative Provision are engaging with a similar curriculum to support to improve consistency.

AH concluded by sharing the future planning for the Alternative Provision and shared that the key focus will be relating to Primary Outreach. AH also highlighted the importance of the long term EBSA Provision to secure LA funding and KS4 planning.

A Trustee questioned how much academies pay to attend the Alternative Provision.

AH confirmed that each academy pays approximately £15,000 per place and that the Trust do not receive funding.

A Trustee challenged if the venue is appropriate.

AH confirmed that it is not financially viable to move the site for the Alternative Provision and confirmed that the assessment of the venue has been completed. AH confirmed that this has formed part of the business plan and confirmed that the Trust would like to continue to host the Alternative Provision at The Halliwell Jones Stadium.

A Trustee asked for a description of the Alternative Provision and the number of males/ females.

AH confirmed that there is an even mixture of genders that make up the current cohort.

A Trustee queried if students who attend the Alternative Provision are provided funding.

AH confirmed that no funding is provided and that the individual academies cover the costs. VB added that TCAT are working with the Local Authority and have discussed the prospect of in the long-term, opening the Alternative Provision as a school. VB shared that the Local Authority have carried out a quality assurance exercise and the report received highlighted the strengths of the Alternative Provision and the prospect of opening as a school, supported with the potential base funding.

A Trustee questioned if the Local Authority should be providing an Alternative Provision.

VB confirmed that this differs dependent on the borough and confirmed that the Local Authority are not required to offer an alternative provision. JL explained that there are very limited provisions in place. VB added that TCAT identified the need for the students within the Trust and have actioned this need.

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| | <p><i>An observer commented that the curriculum will support students in their reintegration and complimented the formation of the Alternative Provision.</i></p> <p>AH exited the meeting at 6pm.</p> <p>b) Digital Strategy (presentation)</p> <p>TL presented a Digital Strategy Overview to the Committee and provided justification for each individual strand. TL provided examples of technologies that are used to support colleagues with achieving transformational impact. TL explained that this is a medium-long term strategy. In the immediate, the Trust have developed Project Innovators who will have the opportunity to implement technology to support them in their role. Project Innovators will report back on the good practice to showcase the benefits.</p> <p>TL highlighted that 'voice to text' is an example of a case study that will be implemented across the Trust and used by colleagues in a variety of roles to improve daily practices. TL acknowledged that there may be some immediate costs such as the purchasing of iPads to assist Project Innovators with their research and explained that this is essential to support with the Trust's commitment to the development of the Digital Strategy.</p> <p><i>A Trustee queried if the Trust are considerate of the safety of using artificial intelligence.</i> <i>TL confirmed that the Trust security is high level and added that the Trust are going to be very clear on the parameters that Project Innovators will use and</i></p> |
| 12. | <p>Safeguarding Update</p> <p>a) Feedback from Panel meeting b) Minutes from Safeguarding Panel meeting:</p> <p>SY explained the CPOMs Spotlight is a big project that is being implemented across the Trust. SY added that the Safeguarding Panel spent a significant amount of time discussing the Home Elected Education and Children in Care.</p> |
| 13. | <p>Policies</p> <p>a) Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy: VB explained that this policy is being quality assured by Stone King, TCAT's legal advisors. VB shared that this was previously a protocol, and shared that this has now been made a policy to protect the academies and the practices demonstrated. VB added that Richard Freeth, Stone King, will also be delivering face-to-face training on Friday 28th February to further support the implementation of this policy and improve consistency across the Trust.</p> <p>b) TCAT Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Supporting Guidance:</p> |

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| | <p>VB explained that the supporting guidance has been developed in conjunction with the Suspension and Permanent Exclusion policy and is an internal document which will contain all required templates to support colleagues within the Trust.</p> <p>c) Curriculum for Excellence Policy VB explained that the Curriculum for Excellence Policy has been developed and that contributions have been taken from colleagues across the Trust to produce this policy. VB added that this policy links with the TCAT Trust priority of Educational Excellence to strengthen curriculum across the Trust.</p> <p>d) Attendance Policy VB confirmed that the attendance policy has been developed and distributed with colleagues.</p> <p>e) Behaviour Principles (for information) VB confirmed that the Behaviour Principles have been shared with colleagues across the Trust as a point of reference to be used in alignment with the academy's individual Behaviour Policy.</p> <p><i>The Chair requested approval from the Committee to ratify the policies. These were approved by the Committee.</i></p> |
| 14. | <p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was no other business discussed during the meeting. |
| 15. | <p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 12th June 5-7pm |
| 14. | <p>Part Two – Confidential</p> <p>There are Part Two items to be discussed which will be captured in a separate confidential document accessible for relevant colleagues.</p> |

| Minute Ref. | Action to be taken | By Whom | Completion date |
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| 6. | <p>Terms of Reference: Page 12. Point 14. Clarification of what policies the Committee are required to ratify. A generic statement is required linked to the remit of the group. Page 12. Monitoring of the LGB/ remove Point 17.</p> <p>A review of the Terms of Reference and update to ensure this reflects the work of the Committee.</p> | MA/ AL | <p>ASAP</p> <p>This will be brought to the next meeting.</p> |
| 8. | Scorecard demonstration to be added to the agenda for the next Quality and Standards Committee meeting. | VB | 20/05/2025 |
| 13. | <p>Item 13: TCAT Behaviour: change policy to principles Add academy Behaviour Policy</p> <p>DG ensure that the documents can be amended.</p> | MA DG | ASAP |
| 14. | Carolyn Williams to be added to the Quality and Standards Confidential Committee | MA | 13/02/2025 |

The Chair thanked for the Committee for their time and the meeting was closed at 19:04