

TCAT



SERVE | CHALLENGE | EMPOWER

2025 ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT



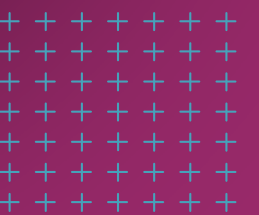
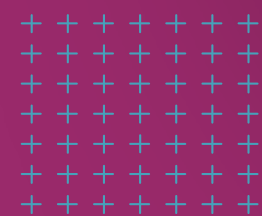
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1. Our Mission



A word from our CEO, Andy Moorcroft

Welcome to The Challenge Academy Trust's 2025 Annual Impact Report. It is a privilege, as Chief Executive Officer, to reflect on another year of progress in delivering our mission to serve, challenge, and empower our educational community. This report captures the impact of our work across education, operations and finance and the values that underpin it: public service, high expectations and genuine collaboration.

Across our family of academies, we work with a diverse and talented group of leaders, staff, and pupils. Together, we have continued to thrive in a complex and changing landscape. TCAT has shown resilience, creativity, and clarity of purpose; strengthening both our educational outcomes and our contribution to civic life. Our influence is growing, and with it our responsibility to ensure that every child and young person we serve has access to exceptional opportunities.

We are deepening our partnerships with higher education, industry and local communities; enriching learning and widening horizons for our pupils. These connections reflect our belief that education is most powerful when it is outward-looking and rooted in place.

We are proud of what we have achieved, but we are not complacent. As TCAT grows in scale and influence, we remain anchored in our core purpose. We look ahead with confidence and ambition, committed to achieving even more for our schools and communities in the year to come.



So, what is the **mission?**



Serve



Challenge



Empower

Our core values



Collaboration and Interdependence

Celebrating Difference

Challenge and Service

Educational Excellence

Sustainability and Wellbeing

Inclusivity and Social Justice



We're proud to be TCAT

TCAT is a unique trust, bringing together a rich blend of primary and secondary academies, a sixth form college and a Church of England high school.

As an inclusive multi-academy trust, we are committed to creating an environment that nurtures, challenges and inspires every young person to achieve their best—for themselves and for their communities.

Improving outcomes for children and young people sits at the very heart of our mission, shaping everything we do.



Improved alignment of resource

Improved outcomes

Clean audits & recognised good practice

Financially secure and stable

Over the past 12 months, we have continued to grow in numbers, strength, complexity and reputation, giving us much to celebrate as a trust.

We now comprise fourteen academies:

- 6 primary academies,
- 7 secondary academies
- A sixth form college.

We are also proud to offer nursery provision across four of our primary academies, including places for two-year-olds and six of our academies host specialist SEND Resource Provisions. Additionally, we have developed an Alternative Provision to support pupils across Key Stages 3 and 4.

Collectively, we are privileged to provide both strategic and operational support to a broad range of schools, trusts and senior/executive leaders beyond TCAT. This outward-facing work offers valuable perspective on our own achievements, including the successful delivery of three RISE projects.

We are proud of the trust's current financial and educational health. This confidence is underpinned by key performance indicators that demonstrate the strong and positive position of both the trust and its academies.



Our commitment to a better future



We're planning for the long term, working towards achieving net zero by 2050 and significantly reducing our carbon footprint. With the combined benefits of our LED upgrades and solar installations, we expect to save at least a quarter of a million pounds this year alone in energy costs.



We're directing resources to deliver greater value for our academies,

Small MAT: 8.2% average recharge
Medium MAT: 7.5% recharge
TCAT: 4%



We're investing in our estates,

Average capital spend per pupil:
Sector 2023 = £395
Sector 2024 = £366
TCAT 24/25 = £409

2. Key Achievements



Key Achievements 2025



Investing in every child's future to improve life chances for all, underpinned by £34 million invested to date in our academies to strengthen provision, facilities and educational opportunity.



The acquisition of Ty'n-y-Felin, the Trust's Outdoor Learning Centre, creating meaningful outdoor learning experiences that broaden horizons and enrich the lives of every young person across the trust.



Shaping futures and raising aspirations through our career pathways and more than 70 employer partnerships, recognised nationally for excellence in careers education.



Pupil outcomes have continued to improve, attendance has strengthened, persistent absence has reduced, and all academies are in a stronger position as a result of being part of TCAT.



Over 1,100 hours of trust-driven professional learning delivered through Education Connect, strengthening staff expertise and professional growth.

3. Educational Excellence



Educational Excellence



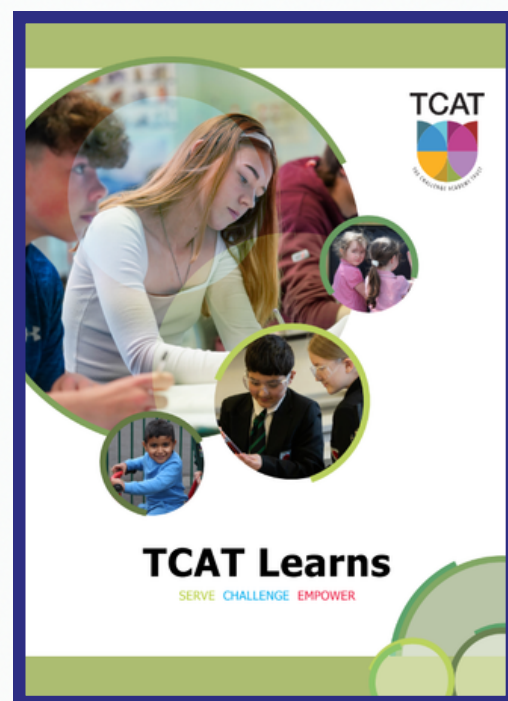
Our strategy is grounded in the most robust educational research and delivered through our TCAT Leads, Learns and Thrives initiatives, which shape our collective ambition for excellence. Together, these initiatives provide the overarching framework for our work on curriculum, assessment, teaching and learning, attendance, behaviour and enrichment. This coherent approach ensures that every aspect of our practice supports children and young people to achieve, grow and thrive.



TCAT LEADS



TCAT LEARNS



TCAT THRIVES



Delivering Educational Excellence



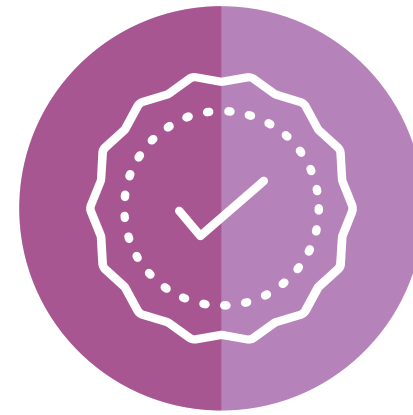
LEADERSHIP

Highly experienced system leaders providing leadership support, challenge, and opportunities.



ACADEMY IMPROVEMENT

Comprehensive academy improvement offer from nursery to post-16.



CURRICULUM

Specialist leaders in education delivering curriculum expertise, support, and development through greater curriculum alignment and improved standards.



COMPLIANCE

Ensuring compliance with educational standards, providing guidance, support and development.

OFSTED activity



All TCAT academies are currently judged as 'good' or better by Ofsted, a testament to our commitment to educational excellence.

Over the past two academic years, several of our academies have undergone inspection, providing valuable external assurance of the quality of education across TCAT. Our most recent Ofsted outcomes demonstrate the continued strength, consistency and resilience of our academies.

These inspections, alongside the established record of strong outcomes across our wider family of academies, reinforce the trust's commitment to sustained improvement and high-quality provision for all learners. The collective performance of our academies reflects a culture of aspiration, collaboration and evidence-informed practice, underpinned by the dedication of our staff and the engagement of our communities.

TCAT Leads

“

Across TCAT, strong and ambitious leadership ensures pupils are guided, encouraged and inspired to flourish as confident young people.

”

TCAT Learns

“

Pupils thrive because the curriculum is designed to help them build knowledge securely and progressively.

”

TCAT Thrives

“

Pupils flourish in caring, inclusive communities where they feel known, supported and valued.

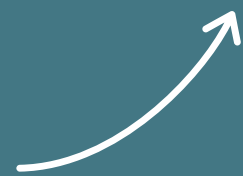
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Primary Success

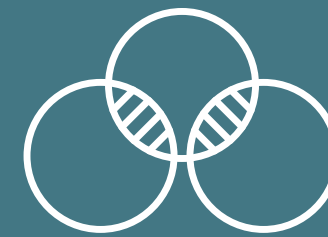
The TCAT primary academies performed broadly in line with or above the national outcomes. Trust performance is consistently higher than national in reading, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling over a three year trend.



Early Years and Phonics continued to **improve** on the previous year



The Trust Maths combined outcomes are generally **above** or **in line** with the **national average of 74%**



The Trust Reading, Writing and Maths combined is **in line** with the **national average of 62%**



The Trust Reading, average is **above** the **national average of 75%** at **82%**

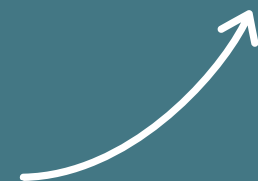
Secondary Success

Strengthening attainment outcomes across key accountability measures:

Secondary academies demonstrate improving performance in attainment and progress indicators, underpinned by curriculum alignment and targeted intervention.



Strong improvement in English outcomes across the trust, with top grades (9–7) rising from 17% to 21% and Grades 9–4 increasing from 64% to 66%, reflecting sustained impact in a key trust-wide priority area.



Maths performance has strengthened significantly, with high grades (9–7) improving from 17% to 21% and Grades 9–5 increasing from 45% to 51%, demonstrating notable progress in another core trust priority.



Attainment 8 outcomes show marked academy-level improvement, including Padgate Academy increasing from 34 to 39, Penketh High School achieving its best ever score of 46.25, and Sir Thomas Boteler securing an Attainment 8 score of 45.37 alongside improved English and Maths outcomes.



Targeted priorities are translating into measurable gains across academies, with improvements in English and Maths outcomes at Sutton Academy and Bridgewater High School, aligning academy focus with trust-wide performance improvement.

College Success

Performance at the college across all pathways of A-Level, Vocational, Mixed and T-Levels was highly positive and above national across many lines, including the high percentage of pass rates. Students taking GCSE Maths and English were significantly above national pass rates.



A-Level Pathway

99.8%

Pass Rate

81%

A*, A, B or C

60%

A*, A, or B

Vocational and Technical Pathway

100%

Diploma & Extended Diploma Pass Rate

81%

Triple Distinction or above (Extended Diplomas)

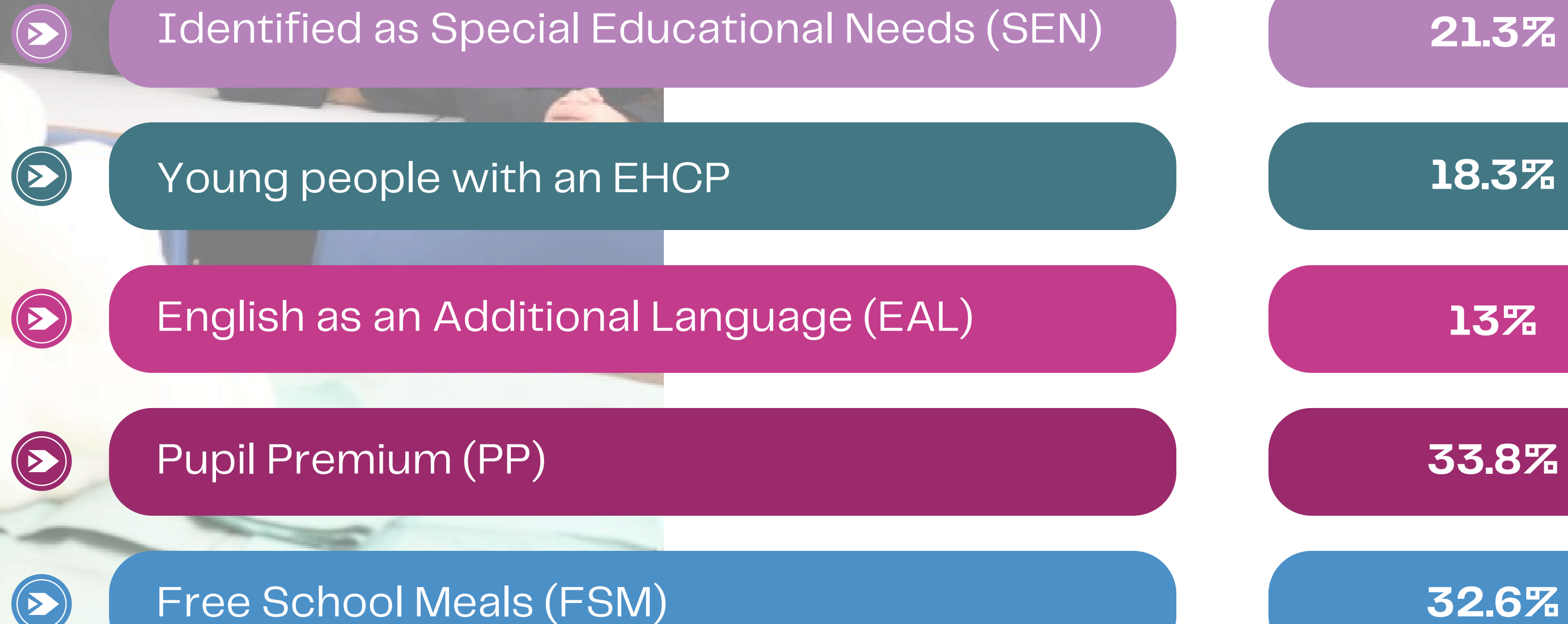
100%

T-Level Pass Rate

Our Demographic

We serve a wide demographic across Warrington, St Helens and the Wirral.

In 2025 our demographic capture shows that:



Attendance

Our comprehensive trust strategy effectively supports academies in improving attendance and reducing persistent absence. Our shared policy, developed in accordance with the "Working Together to Improve Attendance" guidelines and evidence-based research, promotes best practices.



Primary attendance **improved** and is above national (94.8%)

95.3%



Secondary attendance **improved** and is just below national (91.4%)

90.9%

Attendance matters

In 2025, improving attendance remained a central priority for TCAT. We strengthened our systems, tools and leadership capacity to ensure schools had the evidence, expertise and real-time data needed to tackle absence effectively. These developments support a more consistent, proactive and data-informed approach to securing better attendance across the trust.



In 2025, we launched our TCAT Attendance Toolkit, a comprehensive, evidence-based resource built on the latest and most effective research to support schools in raising attendance.



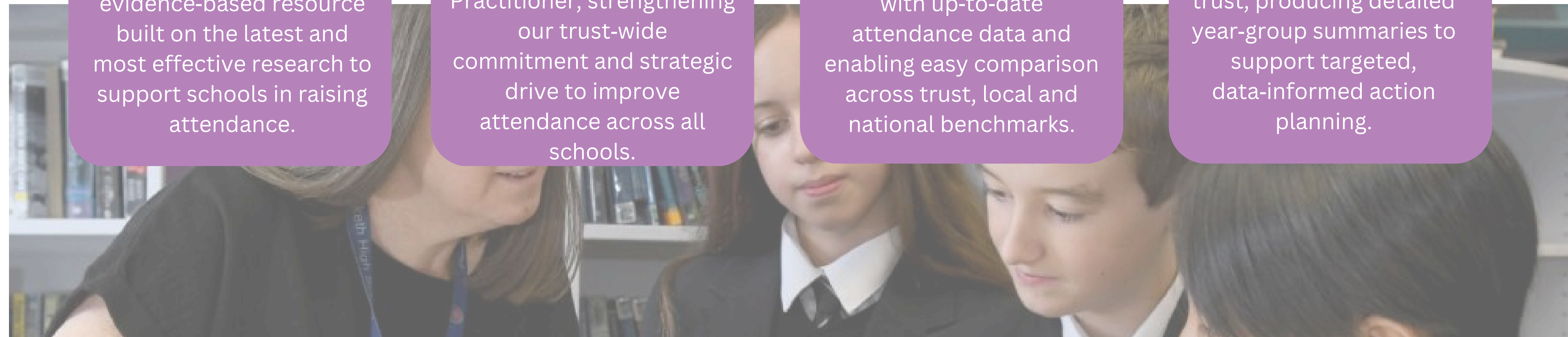
In 2025, we increased the capacity of our Attendance Lead Practitioner, strengthening our trust-wide commitment and strategic drive to improve attendance across all schools.



In 2025, we introduced our weekly Attendance Live Tracker, providing leaders with up-to-date attendance data and enabling easy comparison across trust, local and national benchmarks.



In 2025 we embedded the use of the DfE Attendance Analysis Tool across the trust, producing detailed year-group summaries to support targeted, data-informed action planning.



Inclusion at our core

Inclusion remains at the heart of our approach to achieving curriculum excellence across TCAT. In 2025 we invested further in our alternative provision and expanded the capacity of our Lead Practitioners, who provide specialist support in behaviour, designated provisions and staff training.

-  Our Behaviour Hub and Lead Practitioners champion inclusive behaviour strategies across the trust, helping to cultivate calm, safe and supportive environments where respect, positive relationships and high-quality learning can flourish.
-  De-escalation training has been delivered to enhance staff confidence in supporting pupils with complex needs.
-  We have introduced a new Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub, while continuing to ensure the consistent delivery of My Happy Mind in all primary academies.
-  We have strengthened our commitment to developing highly skilled teams by delivering Team Teach training internally across the trust and integrating our SEND strategy training with wider strands of inclusion to ensure a unified, coherent approach.

Sporting Excellence



TCAT Sports +, one of the region's leading performance pathways celebrating diversity in sporting excellence across TCAT.

80+ athletes involved from across our secondary academies.

World class sport science access for TCAT athletes, including advanced biomechanics, conditioning and high-performance testing.

Unique partnership with Liverpool John Moores University to support our elite athletes.

Enrichment Excellence



Over 800 young people have already visited our wonderful Education Residential Centre, Ty'n-y-Felin situated in Rhoscolyn, Wales.

The centre has undergone a full cottage refurbishment, backed by significant investment in facilities and resources.

A wide variety of events have already taken place from academy visits and corporate days to school reunions and international group stays.

We were proud to host the German Youth Orchestra alongside the Warrington Youth Orchestra.

Expanding Experiences



The TCAT Challenge Award is a cross-phase programme that promotes character development and recognises the individual achievements of students across the trust focusing on the year groups of 4, 5, 8 and 12.

The first-ever TCAT Challenge Awards celebrated the achievements of students participating in the trust's innovative award programme.

The award encourages students to step outside comfort zones, develop life skills, and embrace personal growth beyond the classroom.

200+ students from across the trust had achieved the 15 points required and attended the celebration event with their families.

Opening the world to TCAT students



Through the DfE Turing Scheme, we secured £105,000 to fund a transformative international experience for 42 Year 12 students across three TCAT academies.

The Turing Scheme is the UK's global study-and-work abroad programme, providing funding for students to take part in international placements that build skills, confidence and cultural awareness, with a strong focus on widening access

Over 15 unforgettable days in the Carpathian Mountains, students engaged in conservation and sustainability projects that challenged, inspired, and empowered them to see themselves as global citizens.

We are proud to have secured an additional £108,000 for a 2026 programme in Uganda, ensuring that even more TCAT students can access extraordinary opportunities that extend far beyond the classroom, shaping aspirations for the future.

**Committed to a
bright future**



Clean Audits

In 2025, we conducted internal audits across four key areas, complemented by a comprehensive external audit in November.

The internal audits, carried out by Wylie Bissett, provided objective assessments of our internal controls.

The focus areas for the 2025 audits were:



Admissions: **STRONG**



Cyber Security: **SUBSTANTIAL**



Staff Recruitment & Retention: **SUBSTANTIAL**



Safeguarding: **STRONG**

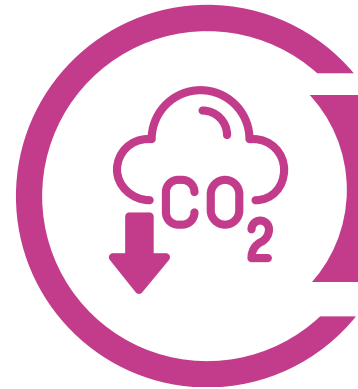
The external audit, conducted by Murray Smith, rigorously scrutinised all spending and financial procedures. We are pleased to report a clean audit, with numerous examples of good practice identified and only two recommendations made (low and medium).



Accelerating Sustainability: LED Project & EV Chargers

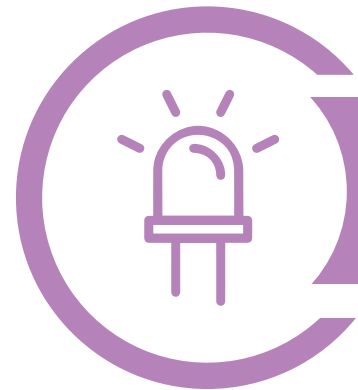
In 2025, the Trust completed a project to change all the remaining internal lighting across the estate to LED lighting. Phase 2 of this project will see all remaining external lights change to LED fittings for winter 2026 across every building across the whole of the Trust.

During 2025, the Trust installed 69 EV chargers across the majority of TCAT sites to promote the use of electric vehicles and carbon reduction.



148,481 Tons of CO2

The 11 academies within the project are predicted to save this number of CO2, on average



1,484,810 Tons of CO2

Over the 10-year life span of the fittings, that equates to this amount of CO2



44,191 football pitches

This means that TCAT will plant over 44,000 pitches worth of trees



7,070,500 trees

That equates to planting this many trees a year



70,706,000 trees

That equates to planting this many trees over a 10-year span



33,745,681km of diesel miles

TCAT will have removed the equivalent of this amount of diesel miles from our roads



842 trips around the world

This is the same as driving around the world 842 times



Supporting the Sector

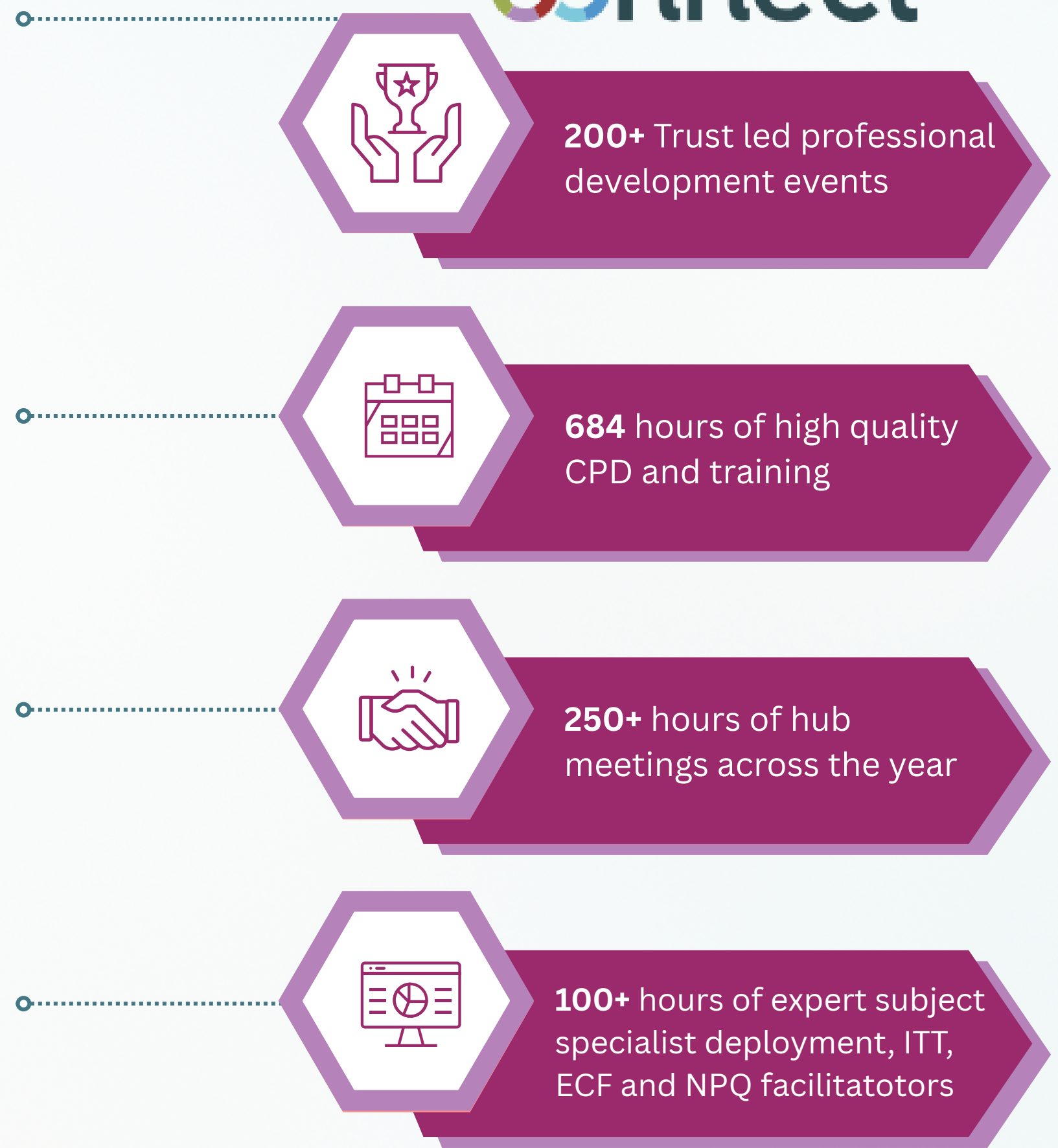
Developing Teams



Our professional development arm, Education Connect, has continued to broaden and strengthen the range of opportunities available to colleagues across the trust and beyond. This year, we delivered a diverse programme of training designed to enhance curriculum thinking, reinforce safeguarding, improve behaviour and attendance, and support wider compliance responsibilities.

Our breakfast briefings have remained an important platform for advancing the trust's central mission of 'Educational Excellence,' while specialist-led sessions on SEND and AI have played a crucial role in shaping and informing our strategies.

Alongside this, our internal network of hub meetings has continued to provide invaluable support. These forums bring staff together to share effective practice, embed policy, and drive forward key strategic priorities, ensuring consistent improvement across all academies.



Collaboration and collective capacity through our extensive hub network




Our Education offer is supported effectively by a comprehensive range of hubs that lead out on strategy, share best practice and implement policy. Lead Practitioners support this delivery.

Excellence in Action

We continue to lead on the delivery of National Professional Qualifications and the Early Career Framework for the Generate Teaching Hub which serves Halton, Warrington and Wigan. Since we took the regional contract on in 2021, members of TCAT have facilitated hundreds of sessions covering all areas of the national professional qualifications.

During the 2024-25 academic year, we successfully trained a cohort of 17 teachers who achieved their PGCE qualifications through our Initial Teacher Training programme. Six of the trainees successfully secured jobs at TCAT academies and all trainees secured permanent roles in the area.

Additionally, we recruited 19 more teachers to begin their training with us in September 2025, marking our first expansion into primary education.



Effective delivery of several Trust School Improvement contracts to schools, academies and Trusts, commissioned by the Department for Education.

Delivery of commissioned school improvement outreach work across the country.

TCAT has been selected and commissioned as a RISE “supporting organisation”, and we are currently delivering three RISE contracts across the region. This reflects the trust’s growing reputation for excellence in school improvement, as well as external confidence in our leadership, expertise and track record.



“The school centred experience built my confidence massively and pushed me out of my comfort zone, the process is challenging but it’s been a very rewarding year. Most of all, the support from my course leader and mentor was fantastic. I felt I always had someone in my corner who listened, understood and reminded me why I wanted to be a teacher.”

Our commitment to the future of the profession



“The TCAT support team have been a real source of encouragement and support throughout the year, there has always been somebody available to discuss matters relating to the course.”



“I’ve been made to feel really welcome and part of the TCAT community from day one. The TCAT staff have been amazing, they are always quick to respond to any questions and incredibly kind and supportive.”

Working for TCAT



KEY GOALS

Our 'People Plan' encapsulates workload, wellbeing and benefits, demonstrating our commitment to ensure we can:

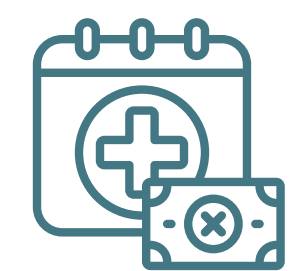
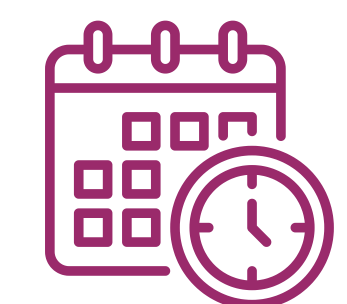
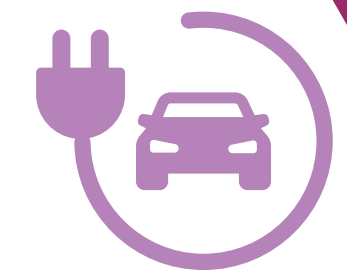
- Provide a workload that is fair and reasonable.
- Foster an environment where employee health and wellbeing are actively supported and promoted.
- Develop employee's personal and professional skills and knowledge continuously throughout their careers.
- Provide structured routes for career progression.
- Reward people fairly with transparent and appropriate pay and conditions of service alongside additional benefits.



The TCAT Offer

Alongside an extensive professional development programme and coaching methodology, our TCAT Plus Rewards Platform offers discounts, rewards, and well-being resources to staff. Benefits include an interest-free technology purchasing scheme, a salary sacrifice green car lease scheme, and a mortgage advice resource, enhancing our overall staff offering.

- Continuous Professional Development
- TCAT Plus (Health, Wellbeing & Staff discounts)
- Cycle to Work scheme
- Smart Tech
- Car Benefit scheme
- Hub support model
- Pension
- Workload strategy
- Maternity, paternity, adoption & shared parental leave
- Enhanced annual leave for support staff
- Entitlement to occupational sick
- Employee Assistance Programme



The TCAT Offer

Popular Retailers

Asda, Tesco, Marks & Spencer, Morrisons and Sainsburys are the top retailers, showing high use of savings to reduce weekly shopping costs.



Discounts

Highest discounts used at AA Breakdown Cover, Cineworld, Odeon, GoCompare, Costa.



Development

£11.5k spent through the Cycle Scheme, supporting greener, healthier commuting.



Activity

Almost **3,000** transactions made with **£296,000** spent through the platform.

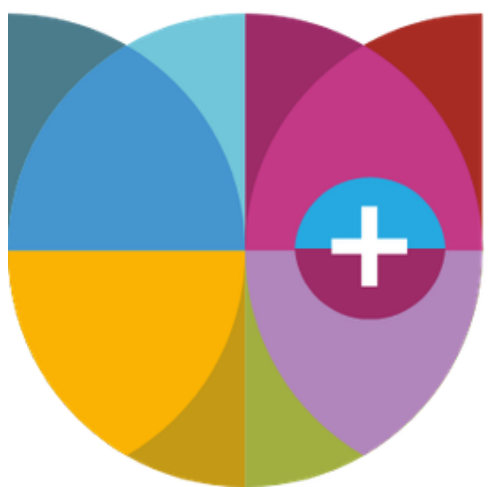


SmartTech

85 new SmartTech applications totalling £35,000 in employee tech purchases.



TCAT PLUS



Engagement

45% of employees have logged into TCAT Plus and made savings.



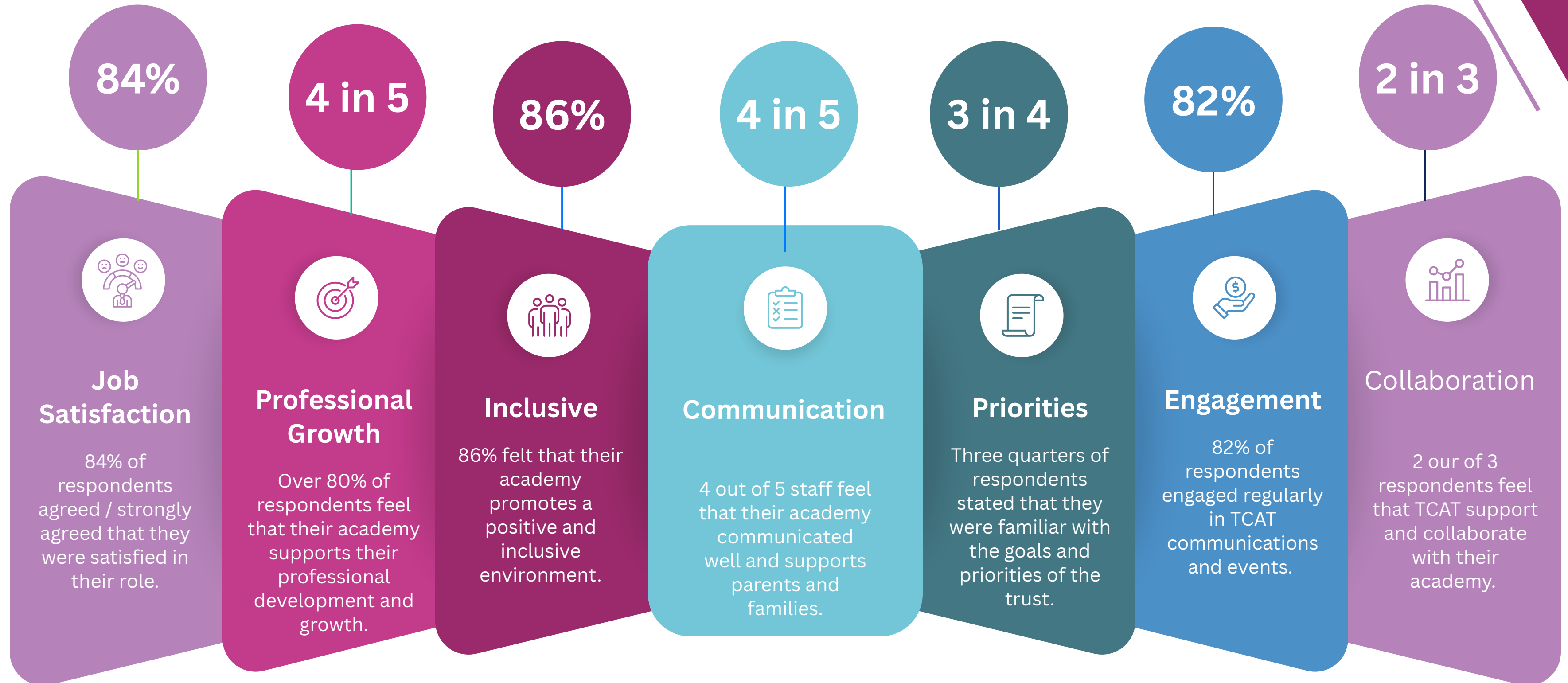
Savings

Over £16,000 saved, with thousands more earned in cashback by staff.



Staff voice and well-being

The annual Staff Survey in September garnered a **positive response**, indicating widespread job satisfaction. Achieving a trust average of **97% staff attendance** further reinforces this positive sentiment.



What do our staff say?

“I feel fully supported in my role and feel valued at work. The culture is very positive, and it is a pleasure to come into work each day and work alongside such dedicated, hardworking colleagues.”

“I feel that there is a strong investment in teaching staff from the academy and TCAT.”

“I really enjoy my role. I have had good interaction with the Governors and feel appreciated in my role.”

“I find my hub network very helpful. They are supportive and definitely help with workload.”



Purposeful Growth



Our journey so far



1st May 2017
Bridgewater High School join TCAT



1st May 2017
Penketh High School join TCAT



1st June 2017
Sir Thomas Boteler High School join TCAT



1st April 2018
Penketh South Primary School join TCAT



1st December 2019
Broomfields Junior School join TCAT



1st April 2023
Appleton Thorn Primary School join TCAT



1st September 2024
The Sutton Academy join TCAT



1st May 2017
Priestley College join TCAT



1st June 2017
Great Sankey Primary School join TCAT



1st July 2017
Beaumont Collegiate Academy join TCAT



1st December 2018
Padgate Academy join TCAT



1st December 2019
Meadowside Primary School join TCAT



1st August 2024
Dallam Primary School join TCAT



1st March 2025
South Wirral High School join TCAT



Growth

Alongside significant growth in pupil numbers at Penketh High School, Bridgewater High School, Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School and Priestley College, we were delighted to welcome South Wirral High School into the trust in March 2025. This expansion brings TCAT to a family of 14 academies of around 12,000 young people and around 1,456 staff.

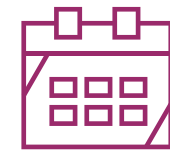
Combined with the addition of our education centre at Ty'n-y-Felin and our plans to further develop our Alternative Provision, this marks another exciting chapter in the trust's continued growth and development.



Growth Strategy



Deepen and refine curriculum alignment to secure greater continuity, clarity and impact.



Accelerate the rollout of our i-Teach iPad strategy and enhance the digital ecosystem.



Expand and strengthen relationships with our key partners.



Drive operational excellence and cost efficiency.

Financial Strength



Financial Summary

In a year where organisations across the world have faced significant pressures, TCAT has continued to show strength and stability. We are pleased to report that the trust remains in a strong and secure financial position.



Sustainable financial performance, delivering a £0.5 million operating surplus in 2024/25 prior to the strategic use of reserves for planned investment.

£0.5 MILLION



Strong financial foundations: collective revenue reserves of £5.5m that are being managed to maximise returns.

£5.5 MILLION



Invested into buildings and facilities since TCAT was formed, providing transformation for many academies.

£26.6 MILLION



Cash reserves invested in secure government bonds, generating predictable returns to support investment and central services.

£4.2 MILLION

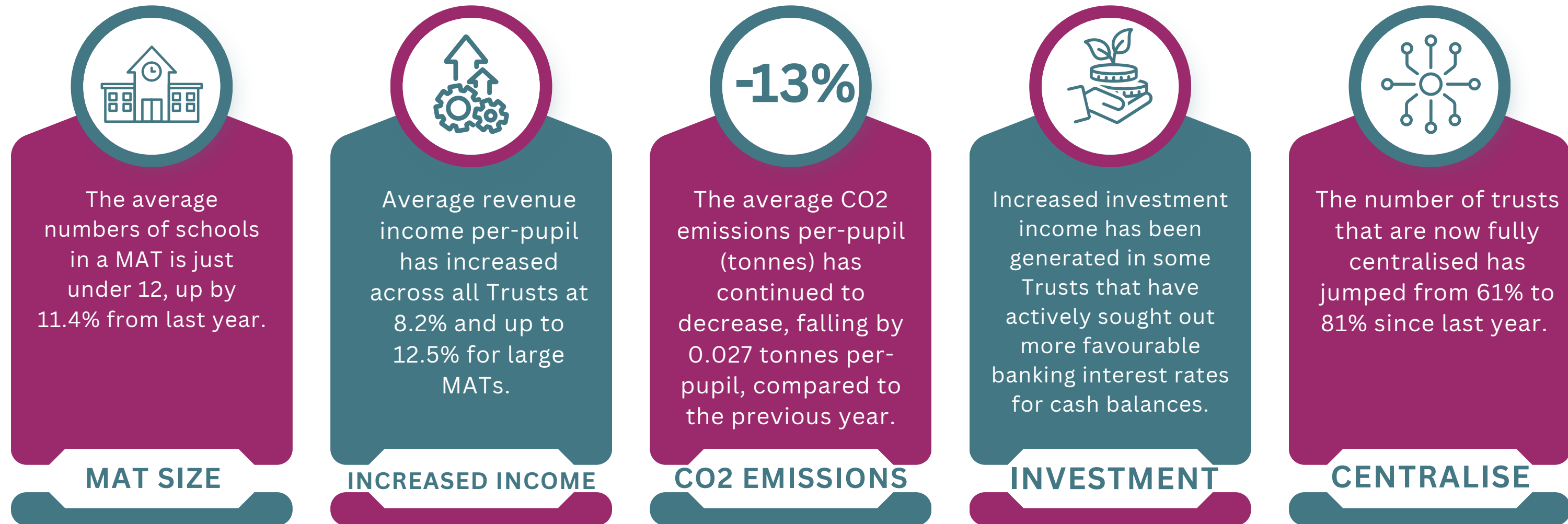


Invested in decarbonisation and sustainability projects across three years from 2023.

£10.8 MILLION

Academy Benchmarking

We use the Academies Benchmarking Report as a key tool to inform our strategic decision-making. This enables us to compare our performance with similar trusts and identify opportunities for greater efficiency and value for money. The insights guide our thinking on staffing structures, long-term sustainability, capital investment and future growth.



The national data also reinforces a clear trend: larger MATs consistently demonstrate stronger resilience, deliver better value and operate with proportionately lower central charges. This evidence base supports our own growth strategy, giving us confidence that expanding the trust will further strengthen our financial sustainability and enhance the quality and reach of our central services.

TCAT



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2025 Annual Impact Report

