TCAT

Quality and Standards Committee Minutes

Thursday 12th February 2026, 5-7pm

Venue: TCAT Professional Development Centre

Chair: Sheila Yates

Clerk: Rebecca Leatherbarrow r.leatherbarrow@tcat.uk.com

Committee Members			**End of Term**	**Attendance**	**Apologies**	**Absent**
MG	Matthew Grant	Trustee	20/06/2028	X		
JW	John Warren	Trustee	11.01.2028	X		
PW	Peter Winter	Trustee	11.01.2028			X
SY	Sheila Yates	**Chair of Committee,** Trustee	01.04.2027	X		
Also In Attendance						
VB	Vicky Briggs	Director of Education, TCAT		X		
KB	Karen Burns	Committee Member		X		
JD	Jo Dommett	Committee Member		X		
CL	Claire Lawton	Observer		X		
TL	Tim Long	School Improvement Lead, TCAT		X		
KP	Keiron Powell	Observer		X		
CW	Carolyn Williams	Committee Associate		X		
GW	Gillian Williams	Observer		X		
DM	Duncan Morrison	Lead Practitioner for Attendance - contributor		X		

	Agenda Item	
1.	**Welcome / Items for AOB / Items for Confidential Part Two** **The meeting started at 17:00** SY welcomed all attendees to the meeting. Introductions were made around the table for the benefit of all present. SY informed the Committee that they would receive a presentation from Duncan Morrison, Lead Practitioner for Attendance during the meeting and thanked him for attending.	**RL**
2.	**Absence / Apologies / Non-Attendance** Apologies were received in advance as GW was running late; GW subsequently joined the meeting. PW was absent and the committee noted that no apologies were received.	**RL**

3.	**Register of Interests** No new declarations were made. The Clerk confirmed that the current Register of Interests remains up to date based on the information supplied by Trustees.	**RL**
4.	**Declaration of pecuniary interests in relation to agenda items** RL invited Trustees to declare any pecuniary or other interests relating to the items on the agenda. No pecuniary interests were declared.	**RL**
5.	**Membership and Organisation** SY thanked the academy representatives for joining the Committee and for their willingness to represent and contribute on behalf of their respective phases. SY confirmed that academy representatives for all phases are now in place. Membership is as follows: • Primary Phase: CL • Secondary Phase: KP • Post-16 Phase: GW	**RL**
6.	**Minutes of the Trust Board meeting held on Thursday 6th November 2025** a) Approval of the Minutes: b) Matters arising: c) Action log: **Action Log:**	**Chair 5 mins**

Minute Ref.	Action to be taken	By Whom	Completion date
2	Contact CW to confirm meeting dates have been received.	MS	ASAP
5	Follow up with post-16 representatives to ensure there is representation for all phases.	MS	ASAP
7.1	VB present a SEND case study at the next Committee meeting.	All	06/02/2026
7.2	Provide update on TCAT Thrives Reviews at the next Committee meeting	VB	06/02/2026
8	Review the keys included in attendance graphs to enhance analysis of data.	VB	In preparation for next meeting.
12	Liaise with Compliance and Information Manager to confirm policies have been ratified in preparation for circulation to TCAT staff via IAmCompliant.	MS	07/11/2025

SY invited Trustees to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, noting that they were very detailed, and asked whether there were any queries.

	No queries were raised, and all Trustees confirmed their agreement that the minutes were an accurate record. **DECISION: The Committee agreed to accept the minutes from the previous meeting with no comments.** **Matters Arising – Action Log** Item 2: **CW advised** that they had believed apologies had been sent for the previous meeting but realised they had not been. **CW confirmed** they had been on holiday at the time. **SY thanked** CW for the clarification. Item 5: **SY confirmed** that GW has joined the committee to represent Post-16 provision. Item 7.1: VB reported that the SEND case study referenced in the previous meeting had been completed and would be circulated. Item 7.2: VB confirmed this item would be covered later in the agenda. Item 8: VB confirmed that the correction required regarding Arbor or FFT has now been completed. Item 12: **SY confirmed** that this process is now in place and RL confirmed that this will be tested following today's meeting. **SY asked** whether there were any additional matters arising; none were raised. KB joined the meeting at 5:05pm.	
7.	**Lead Practitioner:** Spotlight Attendance Strategy and Toolkit (for information and discussion) **SY introduced** the item and welcomed DM, Lead Practitioner for Attendance. DM provided an overview of Trust activity on attendance, outlining strategic aims, operational practice and the approach used during academy visits to raise the profile of attendance. DM summarised his current roles, including work at Bridgewater High School and with the Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence (RISE) project, and highlighted that attendance work brings both challenges and rewards. DM emphasised that attendance forms a first line of safeguarding by enabling early identification of vulnerability and risk. DM presented contextual information on post-Covid trends, including national increases in severe absence, significant rises in persistent absence, lower levels of family engagement in secondary settings, and greater impact on disadvantaged families. DM explained the main attendance typologies used across the Trust, including persistent absence, the cohort whose attendance sits around the mid-80% range, and severe absence. DM underscored the importance of relational practice, placing belonging, safety and connection at the heart of attendance improvement, and advised that culture must be established before strategy can have effect. DM emphasised the need to identify barriers,	**DM 15 mins**

ensure clear ownership through a named attendance champion, and use data with precision.

DM outlined distinct approaches required for different phases, noting that secondary practice often focuses on pupil habits, while primary practice often focuses on parent habits.

DM confirmed that two bespoke toolkits are available for use across the Trust, aligned with DfE expectations and supported by practical resources such as letters and monitoring systems. DM described routine Trust support, including academy visits, weekly attendance monitoring emails benchmarking phases against national figures, and the introduction of Thrive Reviews covering Attendance, Safeguarding, Behaviour including suspensions and exclusions, and LAC. DM also referenced a diagnostic tool developed to support senior leaders.

DM shared examples of early-impact approaches known as quick wins. These included Golden Hour, which involves targeted calls to families after registers are taken; the use of war boards to track data in a dynamic, visual way; the application of DfE banding data to identify priority pupils; the use of dashboards to highlight strengths and concerns; reframing performance in terms of days rather than percentages; and using an attendance calculator to support understanding.

DM informed Trustees of the Attendance Conference scheduled for 9 March 2026 at 11:00, which will be open to Trust and partner colleagues. DM also noted next steps within Bridgewater, including the development of a toolkit aligned to an Attendance for Belonging approach.

SY welcomed GW who joined the meeting at 5:14 and invited questions and discussion.

CW questioned whether all academies now have a clearly identified attendance lead, referencing earlier discussions on ownership.

DM responded that DfE requirements specify an attendance champion in every school and confirmed that all academies have appointed one.

CW questioned whether the introduction of this structure had resulted in measurable improvement.

DM reported that secondary attendance in Warrington is currently among the strongest locally and that the LA is examining contributing factors, with TCAT's role acknowledged having 5 of the 19 Warrington secondaries within the Trust. DM noted involvement in a related pilot study with the DfE.

VB commented on the value of engaging in wider sector work.

DM confirmed participation in the relevant working group.

KB questioned how attendance percentages might influence OFSTED behaviour judgements, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

DM explained that with the introduction of Attendance Baseline Improvement Expectation (ABIE) targets which are based on previous attendance levels plus a small uplift, may provide more nuanced context. DM acknowledged that disadvantaged settings may still face challenges.

	VB observed that inspection processes appear increasingly influenced by attendance-related factors, including scrutiny of micro-groups and suspension patterns. DM emphasised that inspectors are likely to focus on the demonstrable impact of a school's strategies. A wider discussion followed regarding the inspection framework. VB observed that recent inspection expectations have become more demanding. **SY reflected** on a recent inspection where feedback was highly positive, yet the overall judgement remained at Expected due to national benchmarks, raising concerns for schools in more deprived contexts. VB noted that such judgements can feel at odds with the positive narrative offered verbally. **KB commented** that the revised framework has created difficult experiences, particularly relating to leader wellbeing. VB observed continued pressure on leaders. **SY noted** that leadership teams experienced prolonged pressure throughout inspections. **KB stated** that the process can feel overly compliance-driven. VB observed that small cohorts significantly affect progress towards stronger ratings. **SY reflected** that the distinction between culture and strategy is central, observing that some post-Covid learners find conventional classroom routines difficult and may benefit from alternative approaches. VB linked attendance work closely with Trust priorities relating to SEND, disadvantage and curriculum. **SY acknowledged** the value of DM's contribution and thanked DM for the presentation. DM left the meeting at 17:30.	
8.	**Quality and Standards Presentation:** (for information and discussion) - Scorecard and academy Education updates - SLT Seminar Reflections - Lead Practitioner Autumn impact reports - ITT, ECT and NPQ update - Education Connect - Trust External School Improvement work **SY introduced** the item and invited VB to present. VB shared the presentation document and provided an update on priorities from the Autumn term. VB outlined that the Trust is currently in a delivery phase with continued focus on curriculum development, the launch of iPads and the iTeach programme, and maintaining priority areas at the forefront of each meeting.	**VB** **25 mins**

VB summarised recent educational activity across the Trust, including key developments in attainment, the cycle of RAG meetings, and publication of the OFSTED report for Great Sankey Primary School. VB reported that lead practitioners have submitted their updates for this term and highlighted the strong work taking place in academies, including substantial involvement with TL. VB thanked academy heads for supporting the release of staff for this work.

VB provided an update on data developments led centrally by Laura Fletcher, Data and Operations Officer. VB shared that Scorecards previously shared with Trustees are now supplemented by weekly attendance reports and emerging data on suspensions and permanent exclusions. VB noted that the dataset is expanding and enabling earlier conversations, improved efficiency and more proactive decision-making.

VB reflected on the recent SLT Seminar, explaining that it built on the Autumn session with a continued focus on curriculum and preparation for OFSTED expectations. VB noted that forthcoming inspections for senior leaders would further support understanding of the framework and benefit Trust academies.

VB moved on to lead practitioner impact reports.

SY paused at this point, acknowledging the volume of reports and thanking VB for the summary provided.

SY raised a query about the proportion of time some lead practitioners spend on RISE activity, expressing concern about whether significant external deployment could limit the service offered to Trust academies.

VB explained that capacity is reviewed before any RISE commitments are agreed, and Trust academies remain the priority. VB noted that the History LP now has additional availability within the Trust as that RISE deployment has concluded.

TL commented that increasing demand reflects positively on Trust expertise and creates opportunities to expand capacity. TL also highlighted that income from external deployment is now guaranteed for four terms, enabling forward planning and the development of new LPs.

VB observed that the LP model is evolving, with some LPs progressing to senior levels within their own academies, which can create additional pressures for academies. VB outlined the approach of identifying additional staff or advertising for individuals who could contribute for limited days, supporting longer-term capacity building.

SY questioned whether lead practitioners would still spend time working within academies.

VB confirmed that maintaining in-school practice remains essential and is part of the planned model.

SY emphasised the importance of LPs retaining active school-based experience to ensure their work remains grounded in practice.

VB referenced Martine Molyneux, Lead Practitioner for MFL, as an example of an LP whose work has expanded.

TL noted that MFL performance and capacity issues make this area a priority and commented on the positive impact of Lead Practitioner involvement in primaries.

VB noted that this has expanded subject expertise.

TL highlighted the Trust's focus on strengthening subject offer and aligning programmes of study.

SY observed that not all primaries across Warrington are Trust-aligned, though acknowledged the approach is a positive direction.

VB explained that some primaries have independently commissioned this work, and the aim is to secure consistent progression for children across phases.

KP commented on the value of the RISE model, noting that DM's dual role across TCAT and RISE demonstrates benefits. **KP observed** that where middle leaders are involved for fewer days per week, they gain wider experience while remaining grounded in their own academy.

TL added that the model offers professional progression opportunities.

CW noted the recruitment advantages of Lead Practitioner involvement in RISE, particularly in challenging recruitment environments.

JW raised a question relating to the lead practitioner summary reports. **JW asked** who finalises the summary information.

VB confirmed that VB completes this.

JW queried whether the summary generated through AI reflects the priorities intended by the Lead Practitioner authors. **JW observed** that there is a risk that summaries could contain inaccuracies without authors reviewing them.

VB explained the process, describing the checks undertaken, the Keeping In Touch meetings held with Lead Practitioners and the human quality-assurance steps. VB clarified that full reports remain available to Trustees.

JW expressed concern about reliance on summaries where the author has not reviewed the final version.

VB explained the balance between producing accessible summaries and retaining full reports for scrutiny.

SY commented that as line manager, VB is responsible for the final content.

TL added that any use of AI requires robust checks, and outlined confidence in the process VB has adopted.

SY noted that triangulation is available through access to full reports and asked JW whether assurance had been achieved.

JW confirmed assurance.

VB checked whether Trustees wished to continue receiving summary reports.

DECISION: Trustees confirmed that were happy to receive summary reports.

SY noted that the PE Lead Practitioner would attend in the summer term to present their work.

VB highlighted that each meeting provides an opportunity for Trustees to identify which Lead Practitioners they may wish to meet with.

VB then introduced an update on the Educational Excellence programme noting that Deputy Headteachers are leading the work to develop the THRIVE reviews, which was recently presented to the Central Executive Team.

VB shared that a pilot THRIVE review is taking place at Bridgewater, with plans to refine the model for Priestley College and primary settings. VB noted that the programme does not provide grading but focuses on shared practice and contributes to belonging.

VB provided an update on ITT recruitment and noted that although numbers are slightly lower than at the same point last year, this appears consistent with wider sector patterns. VB noted an encouraging increase in primary applications and referenced current candidates, including a chemistry applicant.

CW commented that university PGCE numbers are also down.

VB reported that academy heads recently interviewed the current cohort and several candidates have already been recruited.

KP asked how many trainees progress into Trust posts, noting that he had recently made two appointments at Bridgewater which had been considered outstanding.

VB emphasised that recruitment standards remain high to ensure the best provision for pupils.

VB updated Trustees on Early Career Teacher (ECT) numbers and the need to retain ECT engagement, as disengagement affects funding.

VB provided an update on National Professional Qualifications (NPQs), noting these figures reflect wider steering group activity beyond TCAT.

JD commented that the numbers initially appeared high but were clarified by this explanation.

VB referenced a training and CPD update from Melissa St Clair, TCAT Development Lead.

VB also provided feedback from the recent safeguarding conference.

CL and CW commented positively on the event and its speakers.

	TL outlined recent RISE deployments and noted that St Mary's had recently received a positive OFSTED inspection outcome. **JD shared feedback** from the Shrewsbury headteachers meeting where positive experiences of working with TCAT were reported. VB attributed this to TL's leadership. **JD added** that the academy had been in category for a long period and experienced a significant shift in culture. TL explained that the ambition within RISE is for academies to be judged Expected in all standards. **SY questionned** whether RISE involvement would reduce once this is achieved. TL responded that although this is the intention, progress in some areas, particularly attainment, may take longer. TL reflected positively on the head's work on attendance. TL also referenced the financial management of RISE activity, highlighting the work of David Halsall, Trust Chief Financial Officer, in ensuring that spending and redistribution of income remain well monitored. TL noted new deployments beginning this week and described early work on post-OFSTED plans, including forensic analysis of attainment and progress across groups, evidence bases, curriculum progression and cultural indicators. TL expressed confidence that this approach will benefit schools with less robust starting points. **SY asked** whether strong progress could offset slightly lower attainment in inspection outcomes. TL said this is generally the case, though remains a contentious point nationally with the new OFSTED framework.	
9.	**Attendance, Suspensions and PEX:** (for information and discussion) - Attendance autumn term, including academy spotlights - Suspensions & PEX autumn term, including academy spotlights VB presented the attendance headlines for the autumn term, drawing on FFT data. VB explained that Trust-wide performance for both primary and secondary phases is broadly in line with or above national comparators, although improvement remains a continual focus. VB noted that national attendance often dips during periods of seasonal illness. VB provided a breakdown of primary and secondary attendance, highlighting key groups and comparing performance against national and local data. VB identified significant ongoing challenges at Dallam Community Primary School and Meadowside Community Primary School but emphasised that these issues relate closely to contextual factors. VB reported that DM has been working closely with both academies to support improvement.	**VB 15 mins**

MG questioned whether the flooding at Meadowside last year continued to affect attendance.

VB responded that the academy had maintained strong attendance after the flooding and that the current picture is stable, with evidence of gradual improvement.

VB summarised group-level analysis, noting that overall trends are positive and that outcomes for pupils with EHCPs and those with SEND are encouraging.

VB then presented the secondary phase data, comparing Trust academies with Warrington, St Helens and Wirral. VB highlighted that attendance challenges are more significant in St Helens and Wirral and noted that Northwest performance generally remains below national levels.

VB shared that some individual academies have made recent gains, including BCA, where leadership changes have contributed to improvement. VB reported close working relationships with The Sutton Academy and South Wirral High School in response to more complex attendance challenges.

GW observed that Wirral attendance is notably lower than Warrington and commented that when selective grammar schools are excluded, non-selective academies such as South Wirral High School compare more favourably.

VB noted the value of hearing from DM earlier in the meeting, as it contextualised the wider picture of Trust attendance work.

VB presented further analysis of secondary groups, noting continued progress for SEND pupils and improvement among Year 11. VB linked some of this movement to disadvantaged pupil data. VB emphasised the significant daily effort undertaken by attendance teams and reported that, overall, the Trust continues to hold its position well.

KP reflected on the FFT data at school level, stressing the importance of contextual comparison with similar schools. **KP noted** that Bridgewater performs strongly against national data and emphasised the need to interpret the data alongside FSM quintile comparators. **KP noted** that DM's message on contextualisation is important.

VB outlined some of the smaller cohort patterns before moving on to persistent absence. VB reported Trust performance against the local authority and Northwest benchmarks, noting that South Wirral High School stands out positively.

GW commented that close partnership work with DM is contributing positively to the picture.

VB noted the same applies to The Sutton Academy, where similar work is underway.

SY observed that the Trust may have real opportunities to support improvement in the new academies in St Helens and Wirral and expressed interest in what progress may look like over time.

GW commented that external perspectives can be valuable in highlighting the everyday challenges faced.

VB then introduced the suspensions and permanent exclusions data.

	SY noted the positive impression created by the volume of green indicators in the report. **JD reflected** on the link between belonging, culture and exclusion data, observing that substantial decreases in suspensions at some academies suggest meaningful cultural shifts. **JD referenced** Penketh High as an example. VB highlighted Padgate Academy as another strong example, noting that reductions were evident as early as the first half term of Autumn. VB explained that these improvements reflect significant cultural work and a strong graduated approach. VB reported that Penketh High has focused on de-escalation, SEND support and structured conversations that promote thoughtful decision-making. VB noted The Sutton Academy's higher figures and reported ongoing work with the headteacher to address this. VB added that this pattern is reflected in the academy's IDSR profile. **CW requested clarification** on whether comparisons were based on the same point last year or total figures. VB confirmed that the data shown is overall, though more detailed breakdowns can be provided. **CW commented** on The Sutton Academy's figures and expressed surprise. TL noted that the gap will reduce over time. VB explained that the data is shared weekly and that this supports open and challenging leadership conversations. TL cautioned against assuming that reducing exclusions always reflects lower need. TL explained that reducing suspensions effectively requires careful cultural and structural development and noted that such work had been in place at Penketh High for the past eighteen months. TL commented that Trust academies have now established more mature systems. VB affirmed that The Sutton Academy has similar structures in place and emphasised that decision-making is deliberate and well considered. VB added that being new to the Trust brings additional adaptation and leadership development. VB assured Trustees that all permanent exclusion decisions are subject to rigorous internal processes, carefully documented discussions and professional judgement. VB stated that decisions are only made when they are the right course of action and, in some cases, the process leads to a different outcome.	
10.	**Assessment and Outcomes:** (for information and discussion) - Secondary Mock Data Update - Year 6 Assessment Update - Priestley College Briefing **SY opened the item by thanking KP** for carefully reviewing the papers and identifying an error.	**VB 15 mins**

Clerk RL shared the corrected information, noting that the predicted Grade 4 English and Maths figure for Penketh High should read 67.3% and the equivalent figure for The Sutton Academy should read 57%.

VB provided an update on secondary mock outcomes. VB reported that the most recent set of data came from the November mock examinations and that several actions have already been identified, including comparison with Year 10 mock outcomes. VB confirmed that lead practitioners have been deployed to the academies most in need of targeted subject support.

VB noted that improving attainment at Grade 4 and Grade 5 has been a priority since last year and shared that centrally delivered English and Maths tutoring has produced mixed success across academies. VB highlighted upcoming English and Maths conference events designed to strengthen practice further.

JD asked about the differences between mock outcomes and leadership projections, noting that some academies foresee limited change while others expect significant progress. **JD questioned** whether there was an established measure comparing last year's progress trajectory with this year's.

VB responded that the use of 4Matrix now provides stronger comparisons with previous years and allows for subject-level analysis. VB added that the system contributes to increasingly detailed scorecards.

JD observed that some academies typically accelerate rapidly in the final weeks before examinations, while others show more gradual movement. **JD suggested** that the Trust is developing a strong position by interrogating these patterns.

VB agreed and highlighted that greater volumes of data will continue to strengthen the precision of analysis, particularly at departmental level.

SY reflected on early data-driven work undertaken at Priestley College, noting that the key improvement came not from the data itself but from the actions that followed. **SY described** seeing a substantial improvement in the accuracy of predictions and the quality of professional dialogue once regular progress data became embedded.

TL emphasised that OFSTED scrutiny requires leaders to demonstrate not simply the gathering of data but the effectiveness of the actions taken as a result.

VB noted the increasing volume of data across the Trust.

SY commented that cross-academy collaboration has contributed significantly to improvements, allowing departments experiencing challenge to learn from those performing strongly.

TL added that this exchange of practice has proven highly influential.

VB confirmed the use of 4Matrix for secondary academies and Insight for all primary academies. VB noted that Insight currently does not generate Reading Writing and Maths combined scores but that the provider is working with the Trust to develop this. VB reported that primary writing continues to require focused work.

	CL shared with the committee recent work to strengthen writing in the primary academies, explaining that the previous English Hub had now been divided into separate reading and writing hubs. **CL described** a joint approach with key staff across academies that will operate alongside the moderation group led by Amanda Downey, Headteacher at Dallam Community Primary School, emphasising the need for alignment from nursery to Year 6. VB confirmed that several focus academies are receiving additional support due to the scale of improvement required. VB noted that the presentation included only Year 6 data for the purpose of clarity. **JD commented** that the presentation format was helpful and **asked** whether the absence of comparative data from earlier years was intentional due to small cohort sizes in primary academies. VB explained that Insight is still relatively new and the Trust is in the process of building multiyear datasets. **CL added** that the system provides detailed breakdowns when exploring individual bands. VB highlighted that further work is underway to strengthen scorecards and ensure that Trustees receive high-level summaries backed by detailed evidence. VB then provided an update on Priestley College. VB reported working with George Contos, Acting Principal, on the scorecard and shared key messages from recent discussions. **CW asked** about GCSE resits at the college. VB explained that relevant information will be extracted and summarised for Trustees. **MG commented** on national variation in the publication of resit data, noting that some colleges do not include GCSE resits at all, which affects comparability. **JD observed** that parts of the publicly available report may be open to misinterpretation. VB confirmed that work is underway with Priestley College to ensure the scorecard accurately reflects the college's profile. **SY highlighted** that many students entering Priestley without Grade 4 in English or Maths achieve it after one year, which is a significant strength. VB reported that early indications suggest the college is likely to hold its position compared with last year and that data quality will improve further next year. **SY noted** that performance in the higher grades is also strong. **CW commented** that the data appears positive, particularly in relation to the targets that had been set. **SY invited** any further questions, and none were raised.	
11.	**Safeguarding Update:** - Draft minutes from Safeguarding Panel meeting 27.01.2026	**SY** **5** **mins**

	SY introduced the item and invited JW to provide feedback on the safeguarding documentation. **JW summarised** the content of the draft minutes from the Safeguarding Panel meeting held on 27 January 2026, outlining the key items reviewed and discussed by the panel. **SY noted** that Rebecca Leatherbarrow, Trust Safeguarding Lead, had provided a comprehensive report covering all recent safeguarding reviews across the Trust. **SY highlighted** that the Post Incident Reflection following the lockdown at South Wirral High School had been particularly valuable, as it identified examples of effective practice that could be shared more widely across Trust academies. No further comments or questions were raised.	
12.	**TCAT Strategic Priorities:** (for information and discussion) - TCAT I-Teach - Curriculum and Assessment Strategy Board **12.1 TCAT I-Teach** TL provided an update on the rollout of iPads across the Trust. TL explained that the implementation follows a train-the-trainer model, with twelve centrally delivered training sessions taking place both in academies and at the central site. Academy heads nominate staff to receive an iPad and the associated training modules, with the expectation that these staff will then replicate the training within their academies. TL reported that by summer most staff will be upskilled, with full coverage expected in primaries and approximately twenty percent early adopters in secondaries. TL highlighted that the programme focuses on eight core iPad-based teaching practices that all staff will be able to use consistently by the end of the year. **CL provided examples** of how colleagues are already applying the technology, including split-screen functionality for taking registers while displaying student activities, and using slow-motion recording to support subjects such as science. **CL described** growing interest and creativity among staff. TL outlined future plans to demonstrate selected iPad teaching practices to Trustees. TL reported ongoing alignment with the Excellence in Teaching and Learning document and development of a digital equivalent that supports pedagogical approaches using iPads. TL described the increasing use of Steplab to record lessons, store approved training resources and build a searchable archive of practice. TL explained that an I-Teach group, made up of headteachers or their delegates, is now making shared decisions about apps and training requirements, supported by tighter controls over app availability, user access and device management. TL explained that internal analytics will soon enable detailed monitoring of iPad use across classrooms, supporting conversations about confidence, training needs and impact on practice.	**TL/ VB 15 mins**

JD asked whether Priestley College is involved in the programme.

TL confirmed that the college is engaged but highlighted challenges relating to compatibility with older projection systems. TL outlined current workarounds involving desktop casting software and explained that Apple TV devices are being considered as a long-term solution. TL emphasised that desktops are not yet redundant but may become obsolete as more functions transition to iPads.

CL described increasing enthusiasm across the Trust, with staff sharing techniques such as image annotation and classroom casting.

KB shared positive feedback from a science teacher at Bridgewater, commenting on the quality of the implementation and the responsiveness to issues raised.

TL noted that this reflects the strong emphasis on training quality within the original tender and credited external expertise for helping refine the Trust's model into eight clear teaching applications.

KB observed that the structured and accessible approach is likely to increase staff confidence in classrooms.

CL added that there is a growing sense of shared purpose across the Trust, spanning nursery to college.

CW queried whether staff are required to complete any data-related agreements.

TL confirmed that staff sign work-based acceptable use terms and that data expectations are reinforced regularly.

CW asked whether performance data is drawn directly from the device.

TL clarified that data is only used for school purposes.

CW asked whether unions had raised any concerns.

TL explained that the analytics remain internal and are intended to support staff and strengthen practice.

KP reflected that strategically selected early adopters, including staff who may initially have been sceptical, are now recognising the benefits.

SY expressed interest in the practical use of the devices but noted initial difficulties such as handwriting recognition.

TL shared techniques to address this, including recommended tools and handwriting conversion functions.

VB noted TL's expertise in this area.

SY acknowledged having initial reservations about the cost-benefit balance and highlighted concern regarding the compatibility of board systems at Priestley College.

TL reassured Trustees that the current workaround is effective.

	SY asked whether the approach is equally useful across all phases of education and noted recent discussions about the strategy with inspectors. TL emphasised that the programme represents an opportunity to achieve a significant shift in teaching and learning and explained that Apple analytics will demonstrate usage patterns across all phases. **SY asked** whether staff who do not use the devices regularly should retain them given the investment. TL confirmed that baseline surveys are being completed and that usage will be monitored. **CW noted** that the programme could be beneficial for recruitment and retention. TL described a session run with Initial Teacher Training (ITT) students and discussed future questions about whether iPads should be extended to Teaching Assistants and other staff roles. **KP commented** on workload and wellbeing benefits, highlighting the demands of working across a split-site academy and the time saved through improved classroom setup and casting capability. **KP suggested** that moving away from desktops could represent a major efficiency gain. **SY reminded** colleagues that some specialist rooms, such as those in engineering, rely on fixed software. **KP agreed** and noted that future discussions regarding student devices would need to take this into account. **CW noted** that the approach will complement wider strategic developments. **KP highlighted** the potential to reduce dependency on interactive boards. TL observed increasing collaboration among staff and shared examples of problem-solving approaches. **SY asked** about accountability for lost devices. TL confirmed that strong tracking measures are in place and that devices can be remotely disabled. **KB added** that devices can be locked immediately if lost. **SY asked** for regular updates on usage and impact. TL acknowledged this and agreed to provide ongoing reporting. **ACTION: TL to provide regular updates on iTeach implementation and impact.** **Curriculum and Assessment Strategy Board**	

	VB reported that the Trust is moving towards greater alignment in curriculum and assessment and has now established dedicated boards led by headteachers. VB confirmed that the Curriculum and Assessment Strategy Board met earlier today. **SY asked** whether roles and responsibilities had been set out for the board. VB confirmed that a draft structure and terms of reference are under development and will be shared at a future meeting. VB described recent work on early years and curriculum changes due in 2027 and noted that these updates will be shared with secondary headteachers to support collaborative planning and timely decision-making. VB informed Trustees that two further boards are being developed and will be shared at a later date.	
13.	**Policies:** (for information and approval) • Attendance Draft Policy • Behaviour Draft Policy • Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Draft Policy • Safeguarding Reporting and Record Draft Policy **SY noted** that all Trustees had received the draft policies with updates clearly highlighted. VB explained that the Safeguarding Recording and Reporting policy was new and had been reviewed through the safeguarding processes. **13.1 Attendance Policy** **JW questioned** why Bridgewater data appeared in the draft in red. VB explained that each academy would personalise the red-highlighted sections to reflect their own academy. **13.2 Behaviour Policy** **JW asked** whether the Trust operates a single behaviour policy or multiple local versions. VB confirmed that there is one Trust-wide behaviour policy. **JW observed** that wording within section 4.1 implied multiple policies and asked that this be reviewed for clarity. VB agreed to check and amend the section. **JW noted** that some academies may still be using older behaviour policies. VB confirmed that all should now be using the Trust-wide policy with academy-specific appendices. **SY asked** whether this alignment is monitored during compliance checks.	**VB** **5** **mins**

	JW questioned the reference to Priestley College and asked what distinction exists between the college and school-based sixth forms. **JD clarified** that the legal framework for colleges differs, which explains why specific references to college specific policies are required. **SY explained** that the intention is to ensure clarity regarding whether the policy applies to Priestley and to ensure that Priestley is acknowledged in Trust wide policies as one of the academies within the Trust. **ACTION: The Priestley College policy will be specifically referenced by name.** **13.3 Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions Policy** **JW raised a similar question** relating to Priestley and its inclusion in the procedures. **SY explained** that the college is not required to have the same exclusions policy as schools and confirmed that the intention is to acknowledge procedural differences clearly within the policy. VB provided additional clarification. **ACTION: The Priestley College policy will be specifically referenced by name.** **13.4 Safeguarding Recording and Reporting Policy** RL confirmed that the policy had been updated following feedback from the Safeguarding Panel. CW commented that the policy was very clear and effective. No further comments were raised.	
14.	**AOB:** No additional items were raised. SY thanked the observers for attending and asked them to leave the meeting at this point. The time was noted as 18:51.	**Chair**
15.	**Date and time of next meeting** The next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 11th June 2026, 5-7pm	**Chair**

Actions Summary:

Minute Ref.	Action to be taken	By Whom	Completion date
12.1	TL to provide regular updates on iTeach implementation and impact.	TL	At next Q&S Meeting
13.2	The Priestley College policy will be specifically referenced by name.	RL	ASAP

13.3	The Priestley College policy will be specifically referenced by name.	RL	ASAP