

## EDUCATION COMMITTEE - MINUTES

**Minutes** of the Education Committee held virtually on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 1pm.

Trustees: Mr S Spry (Chair of Committee, Mrs A Firth, Mrs A George and Mrs A Bull.

Also Present: Ms J Fieldwick (CEO, Brunel Academies Trust). Mrs J Blunden (Chief Executive Officer), Mrs B Couch (Head of Corporate Governance), Mr C Gould (Director of Education), Mrs J Woodhouse (Secondary Education Lead).

Mr J Walden, (Roche Primary School Headteacher) and Mr J Hall, (Cape Cornwall School) for item 3.

Apologies: Mr L Sargeant (Headteacher, Devonport High School for Girls), Ms A Hutchinson.

| Item | Decision                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Action |
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| 1.   | <p><b>Governance Business</b></p> <p>Apologies were <b>RECEIVED</b> and <b>ACCEPTED</b> from Mr L Sargeant and Ms A Hutchinson.</p> <p>Committee members <b>NOTED</b> the amended committee terms of reference with the new quorum of two Trustees <b>HIGHLIGHTED</b>.</p> <p>It was <b>NOTED</b> that no additional conflicts were <b>DECLARED</b>.</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2025 were <b>APPROVED</b> as a true and accurate record of proceedings.</p>                                                                                                                                                         |        |
| 2.   | <p><b>Director of Education report</b></p> <p>The previously circulated report covering primary SATs predictions, secondary GCSE mocks, attendance, exclusions and SEND was <b>NOTED</b> by committee members.</p> <p>The committee <b>NOTED</b> that primary attendance is sitting above national average with secondary sitting below. The committee <b>DISCUSSED</b> the work being put in by schools to work on addressing attendance issues with specific groups of children.</p> <p>The committee <b>DISCUSSED</b> the reduced rates of permanent exclusion across the Trust and <b>QUESTIONED</b> how this reduction had been achieved – the</p> |        |

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|    | <p>committee were <b>INFORMED</b> that this has been due to clearer behaviour management processes, calmer school environments and improved alternative provision placements in collaboration with Wave MAT.</p> <p>The committee <b>QUESTIONED</b> why behavioural issues are increasing amongst girls and <b>DISCUSSED</b> this has been a trust-wide trend linked to post-COVID effects, social media pressures, and a reduced masking of behaviours now evident in secondary phases.</p> <p>The committee <b>ASKED</b> how the trust is mitigating the lack of specialist SEND placements – the committee was <b>INFORMED</b> that Schools are innovating internally; additional ARB's are underway at Helston and Roche; NAHT-level discussions ongoing and funding challenges are highlighted repeatedly to the Local Authority.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |  |
| 3. | <p><b>Tier 3 School Discussions</b></p> <p>The committee <b>DISCUSSED</b> the tier 3 schools being those priority schools currently receiving intensive Trust support.</p> <p>Mr J Walden, Headteacher at Roche Primary School, joined the meeting and shared contextual information regarding the current Y6 cohort including 3 children with EHCPs, high SEN/SEMH needs, complex family and community issues as well as a number of joiner to the school working below expected standard – it was shared that this Y6 cohort is a particularly complex group.</p> <p>The committee <b>QUESTIONED</b> and <b>DISCUSSED</b> the factors which have contributed to the low attainment of this group of children, the general instability that has existed for these children has had a significant impact.</p> <p>The committee <b>QUESTIONED</b> and <b>DISCUSSED</b> the disparity between Y4 and Y5–6 – it was <b>NOTED</b> that the COVID disruption for older cohorts has impacted and younger year groups are benefitting from improved phonics/EYFS strategies which are now embedded.</p> <p>The committee <b>NOTED</b> that multiple adults delivering daily maths and reading intervention are showing early signs of improved confidence and task engagement, though attainment gap remains significant.</p> <p>The committee <b>ASKED</b> what further support is required and <b>NOTED</b> recruitment of a full-time teacher to release the deputy head into Y6 teaching and intervention is underway.</p> <p><i>Mr J Walden left the meeting.</i></p> <p>Mr J Hall, Headteacher at Cape Cornwall School joined the meeting and provided contextual information including the challenges in appointing staff in maths, staffing instability, Y11 readiness and cultural change needs which have been identified in the school.</p> |  |

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|    | <p>The committee <b>ASKED</b> how staffing challenges in maths are being managed and were <b>INFORMED</b> that there is currently a teacher seconded from Hayle and a new specialist maths teacher has been appointed.</p> <p>The committee <b>ASKED</b> what impact is expected from the new maths specialist and were <b>INFORMED</b>: improved consistency, strengthened curriculum delivery, and reduced prediction volatility across sets.</p> <p>The committee <b>ASKED</b> how disadvantaged Y11 pupils are supported and <b>NOTED</b>: compulsory tutor-time interventions, parental engagement strategies, curriculum rebalancing, and high-frequency revision routines.</p> <p>The committee <b>ASKED</b> what cultural changes are being targeted and were <b>INFORMED</b> this is about raising aspiration and resilience, repairing disrupted learning habits post-pandemic and consistent expectations across all subjects.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |  |
| 4. | <p><b>Primary and secondary performance overview</b></p> <p>The committee <b>RECEIVED</b> the previously circulated report with the following highlighted:</p> <p>The predicted combined result for children in primary achieving expected grade is 73%. The committee <b>ASKED</b> how secure these predictions are and were <b>INFORMED</b> predictions are based on standardised score thresholds and rigorous moderation. The committee <b>DISCUSSED</b> the risk of overestimation.</p> <p>Committee members <b>DISCUSSED</b> the new Assistant Director roles and <b>QUESTIONED</b> the impact these are anticipated to have – the committee were <b>INFORMED</b> that the roles will drive consistency, provide quality assurance and school improvement capacity.</p> <p>Secondary outcomes are showing improvement needs specifically in maths. The committee <b>DISCUSSED</b> and <b>NOTED</b> the root causes of secondary maths underperformance, these being staffing shortages, historic non-specialist teaching, curriculum sequencing gaps, small-cohort volatility, and on occasions lack of earlier intervention.</p> <p>The committee <b>DISCUSSED</b> how pressure in y11 can be reduced long term by strengthening the KS3 curriculum, embedding mastery earlier and reducing reliance on Y11 intervention.</p> |  |
| 5. | <p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2026, 1pm – Microsoft Teams.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |