

EDUCATION COMMITTEE - MINUTES

Minutes of the Education Committee held virtually on Monday 27th April 2026 at 1pm.

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

Also Present: Mr L Sargeant (Headteacher, Devonport High School for Girls), Mrs J Blunden (Chief Executive Officer), Mrs B Couch (Head of Corporate Governance), Mr C Gould (Deputy CEO), Mrs J Woodhouse (Secondary Education Lead), Mr J Woodward (Director of Inclusion).

Mrs N Ambrose, (Pensans Primary School Headteacher) and Mr D Jones, (Goonhavern Primary School) for item 6.

Apologies: Ms J Fieldwick (CEO, Brunel Academies Trust),

Item	Decision	Action
1.	Governance Business Apologies were RECEIVED and ACCEPTED from Ms J Fieldwick. It was NOTED that no additional conflicts were DECLARED. The minutes of the meeting of 16th January 2026 were APPROVED as a true and accurate record of proceedings. Trustees REQUESTED that future minutes reflect greater clarity and consistency in recording Trustee challenge and scrutiny.	
2.	Director of Education report The previously circulated report was CONSIDERED in detail. <u>Early Years</u> It was REPORTED to Trustees there is a positive trust-wide trajectory against the government ambition of 75% GLD by 2029. Trustees CHALLENGED and QUESTIONED where GLD remains lower, particularly at Pensans and Threemilestone, probing whether issues were systemic or cohort-specific. The committee was INFORMED that challenges are cohort-driven and that a trust-wide Early Years strategy will be presented in Trustees in September 2026. <u>Phonics</u>	

	Trustees QUESTIONED why outcomes appear static (c.84%) despite trust-wide alignment with recognised schemes. The Deputy CEO ACKNOWLEDGED FRUSTRATION, clarifying that scheme choice is not the issue; rather, inconsistent rigour of implementation is the determining factor. It was NOTED that Assistant Director capacity going forward will be pivotal in driving consistency. <u>Multiplication Tables Check</u> Trustees NOTED POSITIVELY the strong predicted outcomes. Trustees NOTED that improvements stem from: ○ Trust-wide strategy beginning in Year 2 ○ Regular assessment windows ○ Engagement strategies including competitions and shared practice <u>Key Stage 2 Outcomes</u> Trustees WELCOMED predicted improvements but SCRUTINISED: ○ the reliability of predictions ○ trust-wide benchmarking processes ○ risk of optimism bias in small cohorts The Deputy CEO CONFIRMED standardised cut-off scores (Autumn 92 / Spring 97) and acknowledged some headteachers remain cautious or inconsistent in application. The use of Insight as a trust-wide assessment platform was described as a “game-changer”. Trustees CHALLENGED for reassurance that predictions are both robust and defensible, not simply aspirational. The Deputy CEO confirmed that moderation, shared papers and repeated challenge now underpin all predictions. <u>Data Presentation</u> A trustee noted confusion in alphabetical listings (e.g. Five Islands sometimes listed as The Five Islands). This was ACCEPTED as a systems issue and ACTIONED for future reports. <u>Secondary Performance Overview</u> The committee engaged in EXTENSIVE CHALLENGE regarding secondary outcomes. <u>Overall Position</u>	
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	The Committee NOTED WITH CONCERN the mixed picture, particularly in maths, and queried why improvement had not accelerated sooner. Officers ACKNOWLEDGED that: ○ progress has been too slow in some settings ○ interventions have become reactive rather than planned <u>School-Specific Challenge</u> <u>Cape & Helston:</u> Trustees challenged the timing of intensive interventions introduced so close to exams. Trustees described the situation as “too little, too late” from a strategic perspective. Officers agreed that the current approach is not sustainable long term, though judged necessary in the pupils’ immediate interests. <u>Mounts Bay & Fowey:</u> <i>See confidential minutes</i> <u>Assessment Alignment</u> Trustees CHALLENGED for clarity on why full alignment remains incomplete. constraints were explained to Trustees linked to national curriculum consultation and legacy specifications, it was confirmed alignment work is progressing where possible. <u>Inclusion, Behaviour and Attendance</u> <u>Inclusion & SEND</u> Trustees QUESTIONED and CHALLENGED the attainment gap for pupils with SEND. Officers outlined: ○ the Equity 8 model ○ simplified SEN adaptations for classroom teachers ○ ARB pressures and increasing EHCP demand Trustees requested ASSURANCE that the inclusion strategy is moving beyond compliance to having meaningful impact. Behaviour The committee NOTED AND COMMENDED a 50% reduction in suspensions and permanent exclusions Trustees challenged the St Ives behaviour model, questioning why a relational approach correlated with increased suspensions. Officers outlined how the	
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	relational approach sometimes works better with older children and confirmed re-alignment with trust expectations. Attendance Trustees DISCUSSED and QUESTIONED the explanation that deprivation accounts for low attendance in some schools. Officers clarified that: ○ deprivation is a significant but not sole factor ○ small cohorts amplify statistical movement Trustees EMPHASISED that poor attendance must not be normalised as contextual. The Committee thanked officers for the thorough report.	
3.	Context for Tier 3 School Discussions The Committee were given context regarding both Pensans and Goonhavern Schools in preparation for meeting each of the Headteachers. <u>Pensans</u> Pensans is a school that's been with us for about 8 years. It's one of our two most challenging primary schools. It currently has an Ofsted Requires Improvement judgement from the previous inspection. Over 50% of the children within the school are entitled to free school meals. The current Headteacher has been in post for four years. <u>Goonhavern</u> Goonhavern joined TPAT in November 2024 and suffered from instability with leadership prior to the appointment of one of our own experienced leaders. The school has low numbers of children entitled to free school meals and outcomes are usually above the national average.	
4.	Discussion with tier 3 Headteachers: <u>Mrs N Ambrose – Pensans School</u> Mrs Ambrose outlined the context of Pensans School and Trustees CHALLENGED and ASKED questions around: • readiness for inspection under the new framework • resilience of predicted outcomes • ARB impact and leadership stability	

	The Headteacher: • Outlined the staffing instability and ARB complexity • Confirmed strong Trust challenge and support The committee DISCUSSED and NOTED the confidence from the Headteacher that outcomes represent the maximum possible for the cohort. Trustees THANKED Mrs Ambrose for her time and work to drive standards forward. <u>Mr D Jones – Goonhavern School</u> Mr Jones outlined the context of Goonhavern School and Trustees CHALLENGED and QUESTIONED around: • reputation damage following leadership turnover • nursery viability • community confidence in trust involvement The Headteacher: • Emphasised listening, visibility and restoring trust • Described deliberate, phased change • Outlined plans to close the nursery responsibly • Reassured trustees that the school's identity will be retained Trust Reflection Trustees acknowledged the complexity but stressed the need for: • clear trust narrative • faster stabilisation where possible • proactive reputation management	
	Key Reflections and Next Steps The Chair summarised that: • Trustee challenge was both necessary and appropriate • Secondary improvement requires earlier intervention and greater urgency • The committee will expect sharper reporting, clearer accountability and faster impact Officers AGREED and acknowledged that the level of challenge must now translate into measurable change, particularly in the secondary phase.	

5.	Date of Next Meeting TBC	
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