



**TRUST BOARD LEARNING/PEOPLE COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a Virtual Meeting of the Learning Committee of the Trust Board of South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust held at Liskeard School & Community College School on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 5.30 pm.

<b>Present</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>		<b>Yes/No</b>
Prof V Campbell Barr, Safeguarding	Yes	Miss K Reed, Careers	Yes
Mr J Crisp – Chair and Learning	Yes	<b>In attendance</b>	
Mr C Hodges	Yes	Mr D Buckley, CEO	Yes
Mrs L Lawson, Health & Wellbeing	Yes	Mr K Carrington, DoE	Yes
Mr A Martin	No	Ms K Williams, Clerk to Trust Board	Yes
Ms S Pike, SEND	Yes		

**34. Welcome**

Mr Buckley welcomed everyone to the meeting in Mr Crisp’s absence.

**35. Declaration of Business or Pecuniary Interest and Academy-related parties - update on any changes since completion of written declaration**

Miss Reed declared her connection to Liskeard school through her employer Real Ideas.

**36. Apologies for Absence**

Mr Crisp had advised the Clerk that this was a very busy week for him. Apologies had not been received from Mr Martin and Professor Campbell Barr so they were expected to attend.

**37. Approval of minutes of meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2025 having been circulated in advance, were agreed as an accurate record.

**38. Matters Arising**

**M24. Deeper Delve – Suspensions and Exclusions (See HT Report for data – 2g, 2h, 2i and 4j)**

n) Mr Carrington will be able to provide updates on strategic developments across the year. **A Trustee felt that having updates during in meetings is important and this could be a written update rather than a presentation. It was agreed that positive case studies would also be valuable.** Mr Carrington will provide an update for each meeting. The Clerk will adjust the meeting agendas.

*Update: Complete. Suspensions will be covered in depth in a future meeting.*

**39. Director of Education Update – Kristien Carrington**

A document has been circulated in advance of the meeting. From this:

a) Gaps

Mr Carrington advised he has made some additions to the report, the first being the gap analysis. Mr Buckley explained that the yellow highlighting is this Year’s Year 11 and the white is last year’s Year 11s. Mr Carrington advised the gap has decreased from last year.

Mr Crisp joined the meeting at 17.53.

b) Mr Carrington explained that the gap between PP (Pupil Premium) and non PP has shrunk in the mock exams. We have alignment in assessment. There are still issues how the mocks are done such as moderation and there are still differences but we have a much better picture now in terms of the gap. What we are not seeing is a reduction is the SEND gap and this is growing. One caveat is

that the gap appears much bigger in that previous gap reports have compared all SEND students to all students in the year group. The non SEND students will have achieved better. This is a measure of attainment and not a measure of progress so some of these children made have made really good progress.

- c) **A Trustee asked do we have other data which shows a progress rate.** Mr Carrington advised we are not at this stage yet so we can't talk about progress at Year 11 at the moment.
- d) Assessment  
Mr Carrington advised that he has RAG (Red, Amber, Green) rated primary data which was published in November 2025. The headlines are that the disadvantaged children are doing better although the numbers are small. The primary schools all use PIRA Reading assessment. The data does allow us to have conversations about attendance at primary as there are a number of children who have missed the assessment and we have discussed what action has been taken. 1 in 6 pupils have missed the exam.
- e) Mr Carrington explained that assessment in KS3 is now aligned so we will have comparable data. Alignment is not where we want it to be in Maths and Science. We are discussing with Liskeard and Saltash using a paid for package which will give a national benchmark.
- f) SEF (Self Evaluation Framework)  
Mr Carrington explained that Headteachers are assessing that we need to do better in terms of SEND students. All the secondary schools are having meetings with HoDs (Heads of Department) to review what has happened in mocks and what the next steps will be. With Looe, there is lots more on what the school is focusing on and what is happening in the classrooms on a daily basis. Analysis of KS4 mocks is where we want it to be. Headteachers are accurate on where the schools are.
- g) Safeguarding and attendance  
CPOMS data is categorised and we are starting to build a picture of how the schools are using CPOMS. Reports of bullying at Liskeard has increased and this might be due to their focus on belonging. Looe is working on building a positive relationship with the community. Incident data can be explored with Headteachers. The schools that have seen improvement in attendance which has comes from using phone calls home rather than using text messages.
- h) The DfE website data is not correct. The schools are using this website and this data is being used by the inspection teams. Overall, at Trust level, primary attendance is more stable but secondary schools have had a what can only be described as a catastrophic drop off before Christmas. None of our schools at are national although it is close for two primary schools. Liskeard were near national until before Christmas. Looe is a consistent concern when it comes to attendance. The attendance and behaviour hub has met with the Looe Headteacher, Mr Boyes and we will have 10 days of support from Penrice and there will be an audit which will be reviewed by Penrice.
- i) SDPs (School Improvement Plans)  
Mr Carrington advised that there has been a change in the SDP at Looe due to attendance. Each SDP has been RAG rated. The majority of milestone have been met across the Trust. There are a small number of milestones (Looe, Trewidland and Saltash) which have not been met and there is a narrative around each one.
- j) HR and staff attendance  
Confidential appendix
- k) **A Trustee asked for the reasons for a drop in attendance.** Mr Carrington advised that authorised absence is higher across all the schools and this cannot be higher than the national picture so this is a concern.

- l) **A Trustee asked is there an informal gauge of progress in the schools.** Mr Carrington advised there are measures of progress from assessments being completed for each year group. Typically to measure KS4 progress, they would have data from primary but this is not consistent.
- m) **A Trustee referred to the process of mocks and asked how this is being tested and is there guidelines.** Mr Carrington explained that the way they are conducted is standard but the papers are now the same but at Looe they do not have consistent markers like there are at Saltash and this is the discrepancy at the moment in terms of marking at assessment afterwards. Looe is not as accurate at Saltash. **A Trustee asked if the Saltash staff will provide training or support.** Mr Carrington advised this is the case.
- n) **A Trustee noted the wealth of data and transparency and asked are the governors interrogating the data more thoroughly and if not, should the Trustees be doing so.** Mr Carrington advised that as expected, there are more in depth conversations with the senior leaders and the governors will have the same desire for the schools as the Trustees do. He is not sure of the extent to which the governors are challenging but a lot of time and effort is going into this by the SLTs (Senior Leadership Teams). Mr Buckley advised that there is a 6 meeting format for LGCs (Local Governing Committees) and there is a deeper delve at three meetings and Trustees could instruct governors to look at certain areas of focus. Mr Buckley added that hopefully now we have a greater understanding, we can argue what should be the schools' priorities based on the data.
- o) **A Trustee noted the level of data which is not being challenged in depth.** Mr Carrington suggested that there can be a process where areas of focus are highlighted by committee conversations and this informs further discussions with SLTs and governors for deeper challenge. Mr Carrington advised the next set of data will have all year groups and this will help generate areas of focus.
- p) **A Trustee asked what the themes might be for the issues for the HoDs.** Mr Carrington advised this is not a concern but this is relating to both competence and cultural but all schools are taking action.
- q) **A Trustee referred to the RAG rating areas of concern and asked was this pre or post mock data.** Mr Carrington advised this was before. **A Trustee noted that this data might led to missed opportunities by us not reacting as quickly as we can and felt that we are at risk of schools under performing with issues around SEND.** Mr Carrington noted that the lag is a fair comment. There is the ability to adapt and change priorities mid-year. The schools are holding their curriculum leads to account in a way that they have not done before. Mr Buckley advised that there is almost a year lag from what we are seeing but the schools have already taken action so the committee should be looking at what the data is doing and asking questions about the system being agile. Mr Buckley noted that the key questions for the committee would be along the thread of have governors realised there is an issue with SEND and what have they done about it.
- r) **A Trustee felt that these questions are being posed in this forum but we are not getting the answers to this.** Mr Buckley advised that we could adapt the method and the executive team can identify the key areas and then Trustees can hold them to account.
- s) **A Trustee asked what is the one thing which is keeping the executive team awake at night.** Mr Buckley is surprised at the SEND data. We are trying hard to move quick enough to address the issues and we have been digging deeper with the Headteachers. This has taken everyone by surprise and we are looking at the reasons for this.
- t) **A Trustee asked if SEND is one of the biggest risks are in terms of Ofsted.** Mr Buckley advised that on a individual basis we do well with SEND and the Local Authority have praised our SEND teams. At the same time, we need to acknowledge that there is a massive change in the SEND landscape. We need to ask the right questions. Mr Carrington added that SEND is also a concern from his point of view. Mr Buckley noted that suspensions were too high and the feedback was too low so we have taken action on this and have more data on the success of strategies.

- u) **A Trustee referred to PP and SEND and asked are students in one category or the other.** Mr Buckley advised there are multiple intersections. There are lots of questions to dig under the data in terms of the different categories and how this data is interpreted.
- v) **A Trustee asked why we are splitting data between boys and girls in primary but not at secondary.** Mr Carrington advised there is no specific reason for this. Mr Buckley advised that we are keeping labels to senior level as this can lead to assumptions.
- w) **A Trustee referred to the attainment data and assumed that SEND students will have targets for progress some of which might not be academic progress and suggested that this might need to be included in the data.** Mr Carrington advised that the ambition is that we can provide answers to these types of questions but we only have raw data at the moment.
- x) **A Trustee noted that we may need to be able to show where our weaknesses are in terms of SEND.** Mr Buckley explained the complexities of categorising what is in the EHCPs (Educational and Health Care Plans) and evaluating what we thought would work. Mr Carrington advised we have data to compare how SMART children feel against national.

40. **Looe Community Academy – Position paper**

A document has been circulated in advance of the meeting. From this:

- a) Confidential appendix.

41. **Risk Register – Update**

- a) We have a meeting to review this in February. We have met with TSLT and have agreed the risks. There is just a question of how we monitor the risks.

42. **SEF – Update**

- a) We have now moved onto the new model and we have an effective model. We will continue to look at the assessment and as TSLT, we moderate the assessments and we will be keen to discuss with the Executive Headteacher following the Trewidland Ofsted visit. We are intending to see if we can recruit a registered inspector within the Trust.

43. **Review of Policies**

- a) SEND – to discuss the key changes in procedures in the policy framework agreed in December and consider if further revisions needed  
Mr Buckley thanked Trustees for approving the SEND policy so that we were compliant. Mr Buckley explained that there has been an increase in the rate of SEND applications and all Local Authorities are in debt due to this.
- b) We have a number of complaints relating to SEND in the later stages of investigation. Mr Buckley summarised the length, breath and complexities of complaints surrounding SEND. There are some pupils who have unmet needs due to stretched services and a number of students who are unable to manage in a mainstream setting. One of the main risks is losing staff who want to do the best for students but some are under fire from parents.
- c) It is not uncommon for classes to have up to 25 SEND students and research suggests that teachers can only reasonably make three variations or modifications to the class. We have taken this model and have this in place which means teachers have something reasonable.
- d) **A Trustee noted that legislation says “all” reasonable adjustments which means that they are not limited and there is a concern that the Trust is at risk by limiting the number of reasonable adjustments from a legal basis.** Mr Buckley advised that legal advisors have said that it is the responsibility of the Trust to define what is reasonable.
- e) **A Trustee noted although we can define what is reasonable but the law says that we need to do all reasonable adjustments and not limit the number.** Mr Buckley advised that we could

determine the whole range of adjustments which are legally required although not legally or physically possible and what is reasonable for one person to respond to. Mr Buckley advised there is universal provision and also student led provision further to the three classroom modifications. Three is a reasonable number of modifications to a lesson and this is not considered differentiation.

- f) **A Trustee noted a concern that we are starting with the teacher and not with the student and we might be forced by government legislation to take a wider variety of SEND in future. A Trustee asked if we have taken the wording around three modifications from other schools/Trusts as without this, this could be a legal risk.** Mr Buckley advised that he is not aware of the written number of three being specific in any other school or Trust policy.
- g) **A Trustee noted we are trying to have something tangible and being evidence based is somewhere to start and for lack of anything else, meeting the needs to the children is important. The Trustee added that if teachers are pushed beyond their capacity, we need to decide what is reasonable.** Mr Buckley advised that we should be accountable to our decisions around this.
- h) **A Trustee noted the importance of the interplay for individual reasonable adjustments and the universal offer which helps all students, the universal offer is catering more general needs. A Trustee asked how we better frame this as we are not limited to three reasonable adjustments as much happens before the student gets into the classroom.** Mr Buckley advised the SENCOs have communicated the universal offer with parents and how this has been put together is satisfying most parents and we are keeping this under reviews so it meets the diverse needs of children. In some cases, we have given a Pupil Passport with staff training the child to use interventions correctly. There is a limit to what a teacher can do over and above this so we are supporting teachers to remain sane. Athena is a Trust getting the most pressure and they have decided that there are only three responses full stop and this is a massive interpretation of the three. Mr Buckley summarised some of the reasonable adjustments listed in EHCPs which are not actually reasonable in a mainstream setting.
- i) **A Trustee asked have we or can we, seek legal advice around the numbering of three and can this answer be provided in writing. A Trustee referred to capacity and suggested there is an argument for further investment to recruit someone who can lead the work in SEND or use consultant. A Trustee asked is there a plan for further discussion to work this through.** Mr Buckley advised that we have already contacted our legal advisors but we can seek further advice. Athena has also taken legal advice and they have been advised that they are legally correct. In terms of funding, we are over budget and so we are looking at how we use staff.
- j) **A Trustee asked if we could use some of the reserve to recruit a further member of central staff.** Mr Buckley advised that it would be poor practice to use reserves for this and our reserves are only around 8% so we need to be prepared for every eventually. It would also be a structural change in terms of staffing and we need to be sustainable and remain within the 80% of the budget on staffing.
- k) **A Trustee suggested that we would use consultancy which would be temporary or use a fixed term contract and there is an argument for using the reserves proactively as this would have a positive impact. A Trustee asked if we have access to RISE funding.** Mr Buckley advised that when we attend the national conferences, we have a bank of people that we can call on if we choose to invest in this and we have used external support. We are trying to build capacity and expertise within the Trust.
- k) **A Trustee noted that Hole Education is a provider.** Mr Buckley explained there are a number of providers available and the SENCO group have brilliant expertise. Mr Buckley added that we need to bring SENCOs together and debate further.
- l) **A Trustee referred to the SEND network and Rise and asked what the position is.** Mr Buckley summarised the situation with Rise. Mr Buckley advised that we are getting Rise funding for attendance and we will see what support is given. The quality of external support has been

variable. Mr Buckley advised that the best training which we have had, has been through Acorn Trust as their work is brilliant so we need to use the network intelligently.

- m) **A Trustee suggested that SEND needs further debate.** The key areas for further consideration and discussion are checking the legality of the number three and sources of information and who are we using to increase capacity. An update on this will be provided at the next meeting and we can then decide on next steps. The Clerk to add to the next agenda.

**Action: D Buckley/The Clerk**

- n) **A Trustee noted the time being spent on complaints and the resources being used and queried how we can communicate with families to bring them alongside us which would free up time and resources.** Mr Buckley again thanked the Trustees for agreeing the SEND policy as the SENCOs have feedback that the SEND policy is helping to structure discussions with parents and this has reduced the issues and number of complaints.
- o) Mr Buckley advised that we need to look at the trend on what will be the likely changes for the southwest in terms of SEND.

#### 44. **Guidance/instructions to LGCs**

- a) Assessment has aligned across the schools which will give us comparable data and allow the Trust Board and executive team to better understand the position of each school.
- b) There is an increasing gap between SEND student and non-SEND student outcomes. The LGCs need to be aware this exists and are challenging with their SLTs for the reasons why this is the case and what action is being taken. The SEND policy and approaches to SEND are a key focus of the Learning & People committee and there will be further discussion on this over the year.
- c) The schools have all moved over to the new model of the SEF. This allows better comparison and moderation of Headteacher's judgments.
- d) There is ongoing work to the Risk Register. TSLT have come together to agree the risks and the Trust Board will discuss further in their extraordinary meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> February.

#### 45. **Summary of matters for the Trust Board**

- a) Assessment has aligned across the schools which will give us comparable data and allow the Trust Board and executive team to better understand the position of each school.
- b) There is an increasing gap between SEND student and non-SEND student outcomes. The LGCs need to be aware this exists and are challenging with their SLTs for the reasons why this is the case and what action is being taken. The SEND policy and approaches to SEND are a key focus of the Learning & People committee and there will be further discussion on this over the year.
- c) The schools have all moved over to the new model of the SEF. This allows better comparison and moderation of Headteacher's judgments.
- d) There is ongoing work to the Risk Register. TSLT have come together to agree the risks and the Trust Board will discuss further in their extraordinary meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February.

#### 46. **Summary points from LGCs**

A document was circulated in advance of the meeting. From this:

- a) The summary points had been circulated.

#### 47. **Headteacher's Reports – Any questions to ask or deep dives needed in future meetings**

A document was circulated in advance of the meeting. From this:

- a) Mr Buckley advised we have had some feedback from governors so we have added a new tool. By the end of this round of LGC meetings, all the data will be completed. The RAG rating is currently

based on national benchmark but the risk meeting did suggest that benchmarks should be set by Trustees.

- b) Trend P (Primary) and trend S (secondary) data is now provided. Trustees can analyse a particular area of interest. Those in governance can ask more trend related questions on the data. The indicators are fixed now until next year.
- c) **A Trustee queried if it is possible to review live documents.** Mr Buckley advised that Trustees could have access to live versions. The reason we give a hard copy is so that we can all discuss the same a version. It was noted that view only rights could be given and all documents are kept in Teams but it is still helpful for there to be a hardcopy for meetings.

**Action: The Clerk**

48. **Agreements made by email**

- a) None.

49. **Date of next meetings:**

25-02-2026, 28-04-2026 and 08-06-2026 at 5.30pm.

The meeting closed at 20.22.

<b>Action Summary</b>	
<p><b>M43. Review of Policies</b>  <b>m) A Trustee suggested that SEND needs further debate.</b> The key areas for further consideration and discussion are checking the legality of the number three and sources of information and who are we using to increase capacity. An update on this will be provided at the next meeting and we can then decide on next steps. The Clerk to add to the next agenda.</p>	<p><b>Action: D Buckley/The Clerk</b></p>
<p><b>M47. Headteacher’s Reports – Any questions to ask or deep dives needed in future meetings</b>  <b>c) A Trustee queried if it is possible to review live documents.</b> Mr Buckley advised that Trustees could have access to live versions. The reason we give a hard copy is so that we can all discuss the same a version. It was noted that view only rights could be given and all documents are kept in Teams but it is still helpful for there to be a hardcopy for meetings.</p>	<p><b>Action: The Clerk</b></p>