Minutes of CAST Board Meeting held on Friday 17th July 2026
in person at the Ockment Centre, Okehampton from 10.35am

Attendees:	Ruth O'Donovan (RO)	-	Foundation Director (Chair)
	John Andrews (JA)	-	Foundation Director (Vice-Chair)
	Deacon Nick Johnson (NJ)	-	Foundation Director
	Steve Hole (SH)	-	Foundation Director
	Nick Baldwin (NB)	-	Foundation Director
	Ingrid Quaife (IQ)	-	Foundation Director
	Alison McDonald (AM)	-	Foundation Director
	Graham Briscoe (GB)	-	Co-opted Director
	Alison Nettleship (ALN)	-	Co-opted Director
	Matt Richards (MR)	-	Co-opted Director
In Attendance:	Zoe Batten (ZB)	-	CEO
	Karl Murphy-Barnes (KMB)	-	CFO
	Rose Colpus-Fricker (RCF)	-	COO
	Kevin Butlin (KB)	-	DoE
	Leah Paiano (LP)	-	Clerk
	Helen Brown (HB)	-	DSC
	Craig Follett (CF)	-	DoE from September 2026
	Emma Gritten (EG)	-	Potential New Director

		Decision /Action
1.	**Welcome and Opening Prayer** RO welcomed all to the meeting and led with a prayer.	
2.	**Apologies and Confirmation of Quorum** JC. Quorum met. CF introduced himself. EG introduced herself. **10.37am EG left the room.** RO asked the Board to consider approving EG as a Co-opted Director and to join the A&R Committee. Q. Should we ask EG at the end of the meeting if she still wants to join the Board? Will do with new Directors. The Board approved EG as a Co-opted Director. HB highlighted the positive fact that EG is the CFO in a Catholic Trust.	
	10.40am EG returned. RO confirmed that the Board had approved EG to be a Co-opted Director. Those present introduced themselves to CF and EG.	EG approved as a Co-opted Director
3.	**Declarations of Interest** NJ Governor at St Edward's.	

4. Minutes of previous meeting 15.05.2026 and 12.06.2026

Minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meetings.

Minutes 15.05 and 12.06.2026 approved

5. Actions Summary - May 2026

Updated on the Actions Summary.

25.20 HB has received materials from the CES and will forward them to RCF.

HB to share materials with RCF

Q. How to take forward? Drafted a piece and have discussed with LCB Chairs, will share with Directors.

Q. Invited to address Education Sunday. Some HTs will do, trying to ensure consistency.

RCF to share Education Sunday piece with Directors and review at October meeting

ALN arrived 10.46am

Review at the October Board meeting.

6. Chair's Business and Chair's Action (if required)

- School closures during recent heatwave - RCF

RCF and KMB kept RO updated. Some classrooms reached temps of 34/35 degrees, reports regularly updated. Schools worked hard during this time. RO thanked RCF and KMB for their work and responsibility, RCF thanked the SIO Team for their support.

Q. How does it affect pupil attendance? Schools were careful to announce closures, so attendance figures didn't dip, guidance issued to confirm authorised/unauthorised absence.

- Overview of Regional Director meeting

RO provided an overview of the recent meetings, thanking KB and ZB for their hard work in advance of the meetings.

KB gave an overview of the Safeguarding discussion at the meetings with 16 Ofsted inspections identifying Safeguarding was strong.

RD discussed the question from the meeting 'what would you do differently'? Nothing, responded appropriately but it was a challenging meeting.

Q. How does this come to a conclusion? A positive and effective relationship with the RD despite the recent meeting. The process to remove the special measures judgment is a shorter process: assign an HMI and monitor swift progress against agreed actions. Previously, special measures would be applied as inadequate across all areas, but for the Notre Dame inspection was only applied to Safeguarding with all other areas needing attention, therefore, will need to move other areas to expected standard.

Directors thanked those at the meetings for attending and the impact on people.

- Property issue - St Mary's, Bodmin - RCF

A letter has been received with photos with a complaint of damage to a boundary. Is in hand with PS and RCF.

- Notre Dame parental email

It is important to receive an email from parents with positive news. Directors were grateful to receive this email.

7. CEO Report (including update from CFO, COO and DoE)

Q. On the subject of reporting I think we're making real progress, but I still feel there's an opportunity to strengthen the link between our Strategic Goals, the KPIs we monitor, the strategic risks we hold, the assurance each committee provides, and ultimately the assurance the Board receives. If we can make that linkage really explicit, I think it will make our discussions even more strategic and help us focus on the things that matter most.

Specifically, perhaps we could work towards every Board paper identifying: (1) which Strategic Goal it supports; (2) which KPI it impacts; (3) which strategic risk it mitigates; (4) what assurance is being provided to the Board; and (5) what decision or action is being sought from Directors?

The specific questions I have in relation to your excellent report are:

- Of everything currently on your desk, what are the two or three issues that concern you most over the next 12 months?
- Looking ahead to this time next year, what would success look like for you? What would make you say, "We've had a really good year"?
- Which of our strategic objectives is proving the hardest to deliver, and what are the biggest barriers?
- As mentioned above, as we develop the Strategic Operational Plan, could we make what I would call the "golden thread" more visible by showing for each strategic priority:
  - which Strategic Goal it supports;
  - which KPIs tell us whether we're succeeding;
  - which strategic risks it mitigates; and
  - which committee is providing assurance to the Board?

  I think that would really strengthen Board oversight and make it easier for us to see where our challenge should be focused.
- We've understandably done a huge amount of work around safeguarding. What evidence gives you confidence that the changes are now genuinely embedded in day-to-day practice rather than simply being compliant?
- The work on school improvement is encouraging. Which interventions have had the biggest measurable impact, and have there been any where we've learned they haven't been as effective as we'd hoped?
- Falling pupil numbers remain one of the biggest strategic risks. Which schools concern you most from a sustainability perspective, and what actions are making the biggest difference?
- Are there any assumptions within the financial budget that you think are particularly sensitive or could change over the next year?
- The Strategic Operational Plan contains a lot of activity. If Board members could only focus on five key priorities this year, which would you want those to be?
- Where do you feel the Executive Team is most stretched? Is there anything that worries you from a capacity or resilience point of view?
- From your perspective, is there any information you wish the Board received more regularly that would help us support and challenge the Executive Team more effectively?

· Finally, if Government gave you funding for one additional senior post tomorrow, what role would you create and why?

Strategy Day in June 2026 to agree the 5-year Strategic Goals, looking at Goals to ensure they were agile and appropriate for the current landscape, and focused on the Common Good. Decrease in funding and increase in need in many schools, a more holistic approach to being a family of schools.

New Goals, new Heat Map to track KPIs. Will have have measurable datasets in order to track impact and progress. Developing a new Operational Plan, a SELT-owned document but will provide a reporting update at October Board meeting. Ongoing review during the summer holiday.

NB thanked ZB for the report.

Q. What keeps you awake at night and how can Directors support you? A huge amount of uncertainty, the lateness of information, Teachers' Pension pot is effectively full and the Government has reduced the employer's contribution but is likely to be clawed back to fund the teacher and support staff pay awards. Changes to procurement, inclusion funding and a plan that needs to be on the website. Lots of changes but with information at short notice has a huge impact on the Team.

The national decline in pupil numbers is also an ongoing concern. Torbay Council have shared their projections, and the information isn't a surprise but the LAs have increased their focus on pupil numbers. PAN reduction and looking at capacity to convert into SEND provision bases to support education and inclusion. Important to continue with marketing and work with parishes to encourage children to come to our schools but the birth rate is the issue.

A GAG pooled approach will support the delivery of the new goals and the one trust, one family of schools that is rooted in 'the Common Good'. Rolling that conversation out to schools and ensuring that everyone buys into this will be important in the next academic year. Recent contact from a Plymouth CEO concerned about procurement for supply; we're ahead of the curve as we've already joined The Supply Register, which is an approved DfE framework. The system has no more money, need to be creative and work together.

Changes to the LA: the hub process will help with those changes. New authorities to be set up by 2028; consolidated strength in hubs will help us. Torbay has confirmed they are unsure of what is happening to them.

Need to have a model that works well for all our schools, to strengthen our schools. Schools already share SBM time and central resources so need to expand that way of working.

25th September - St Rita's, Honiton. All Directors are invited to a talk on the Common Good.

Q. When will we receive the external Safeguarding review? In the checking phase.

Q. Have we selected the primary schools? Not yet.

Q. Who chooses? We will, and need to be a mix of LAs and school sizes.

Q. Factor in those schools that are likely to be inspected? Yes, ZB will finalise in Autumn term.

Q. Being fact checked, can you give a sense? SBC is stronger than ND, lots of areas of strength, commonalities but has many strands for focus. A detailed report with clear actions.

Q. Strategic Progress: This reads as though we're paying an extra £30k per year for energy to meet the "Net Zero claims" - have I misinterpreted that? No, we are paying £30k as a premium for green gas to meet the net zero claims, electricity has no additional costs. Renewed gas guarantee. Consider that carefully, lots of green washing in the sector and not authentic, strict audit trail which feeds into SECA and feeds into Strategic Goal 9. The expense can't be overlooked, looking to fund through streamlining, saved £37 000 by moving from SIMS to BromCom as an example.

Q. Key Risks for Board Awareness - Estate Condition: Given the low yield for our cash in bank, and the ever-increasing costs for building materials, are we not better to spend approx. £6m on capital projects before our "savings" are actually worth less in material terms? We could, but KMB's advice is not to do this.

Q. How are we supporting SEND pupils with their persistent absence, and where are we recording the reasons for absence so that there is a fully briefed handover for our new Director of Education when he starts in September? Where is the action plan(s) to rectify this? Attendance Policy is different in terms of school accountability but not in terms of parents. Persistent absence used to be the trigger and now focuses on broken weeks to catch children earlier. Children need to feel recognised and valued for attendance to improve. Tone is directed at schools to ensure they address the attendance expectations; the culture of the school is paramount. Attendance hasn't improved where schools haven't acted with provision. Inclusion Lead for the Trust addresses children with SEND to ensure their need is met, the vast majority of school leaders will reflect as to whether this is an unmet need, Trust Lead and SIOs will drill down into this. Training on adaptive practice.
New inclusion funding will be directed through a Trust Inclusion Strategy, 25 additional days to work through and implement this and the funding, to catch children early. The Strategy will have a strong focus on technology and working with Cornerstones Trust as a Microsoft partner to enhance learning and access.
Attendance improvement support plans capture the barriers to learning and attendance will be captured in the plan along with the pupil's aspirations. It is imperative for the school to identify the barriers and to mitigate them; parents are supported to address the home barriers. Doesn't change the relational approach; have to work within national guidelines but deliver in terms of a relational approach. Work with part-time timetables for those who struggle to attend full-time, have to be signed off by the SIO, agreed by parents and other agencies, for a fixed period of time and to support back into school. Same with suspensions: reintegration meetings have to happen before the first day back and must address any barriers before the pupil/student returns.
Schools have been trialling broken weeks, positive and excited about the approach as persistent absence can mask other attendance patterns and identifying additional children, and supports the relational approach.
The challenge is the secondary schools due to poor leadership of attendance, cultural, and provision. Part of the wider work being done at the secondary schools. Anticipate a significant turnaround in terms of attendance with CF's focus, primaries are further along with this.

Q. What will Directors see in terms of increased scrutiny? Split E&S meetings into two to be able to focus on areas, attendance and behaviour is a standalone in each meeting cycle, explored in depth, actions plans drawn up for Notre Dame include a section on attendance which will be reported into the Board. Broken weeks approach is what CF is working with currently. JC is the Lead Director for attendance.

8. Review of SEF and One-Year Operational Plan

For information. SELT-owned operational plan which links to the Strategic Goals. New dashboard, new operational plan, and will be easier to triangulate KPIs. This is the operational element of how to deliver the KPIs and will look at a Trust Operational Plan. Progress has been made; some areas will feed into next year.

Q. What is the likelihood of Ofsted looking at the Board, and how are we preparing for it? MAT inspections are coming; the previous Trust review was in 2017, with a Trust focus triangulated through the schools. Preparing for a MAT inspection: the Heat Map and Dashboard will feed into that; the role of the Link Director and review of the link between Director level and school level;

consistent approach, with visit notes produced for the wider Board to have a holistic view. Documents within GovernorHub as evidence, decisions made at Committee level to redirect funding to support school improvement, the impact of this investment on pupils. Need to sharpen questions and discussions to have a clear narrative but will be clearer once the paperwork is in place.

Q. Checklist as Directors to upskill? Link Director protocols are already in place, as is the supporting framework for visits and the timelines for this. Visit forms are to be used and the form contains prompts that guide the areas to be looked at. ZB is happy to have a conversation with any Director who is still unsure about the process. Lead Directors review for next academic year.

5 pillars for strong trusts and already addressing. Another change is new quality trust descriptors from the DfE. Working in the CMAT network with colleagues who sit on the advisory boards but is embryonic. Biggest concerns are who is qualified to carry out MAT inspections, need enough people nationally to understand the nuanced approach and differing funding models. Have to consider the Catholic lens.

Q. When do you anticipate a framework may be available? Things coming out next academic year, and ZB will share with Directors once documentation from the DfE becomes available.

Q. Link Director approach, any merit in looking at reports to provide advice on where to focus. ZB will see where further support can be provided. The role is relational, cannot replicate the work of the LCB, provide a view for the Board on the impact for the children and the Common Good, and also a review of the governance work of the LCB. Including LCB reviews, and Chairs's Forums. Consider when we revisit the Link Director role.

9. Strategic Goals

Strategic Goals approved by the Board

RO thanked those for attending the Strategy Day. A positive day with celebration and attendance at Mass.

Finalised Goals have been provided in the Board pack. Speak of the Catholic mission, and the Common Good. RO thanked ZB for the groundwork for the day.

Q. What are the boxes at the end? CAST values. Values are Gospel values woven into those areas. Lack of narrative. They talk to the values and behaviours that we expect.

The Board approved the new Strategic Goals.

Q. Replace from now? From September.

10. Heat Map

Dashboard to be discussed at the October meeting

Updated but final view of this particular document. Educational areas do not align with current frameworks, so they haven't been updated; the Ofsted criteria are out of date, for example. Will be captured in the new Dashboard.

From next academic year, it will be more succinct and clearer.

Directors suggested some time to focus on the new Dashboard. At the October Board meeting.

11. Estates End of Year Report

Directors felt this was an excellent report. RCF will pass to PS.

Wanted to reflect the reality of estates over 2025/26, a lot of successes but facing severe structural issues due to financial constraints. National reputation in digital estates. An increasingly tightened financial position. 52% of investment is funded through reserves.

Defect liabilities identified through estates condition surveys and will model plans for the December Board meeting.

RCF provided an overview of the report.

Important to consider the next 5-years for estate compliance but also needs to include Martyn's Law and site security.

Operating on a 73% capacity across the Trust.

SH highlighted the amount of work carried out, and all credit that H&S has been paramount. Reaction to the carbon footprint has been crucial. Cannot rely on reserves for estates and need to prioritise. Funding will not come from the Diocese so contained within our finances.

Q. Condition surveys with a view of putting all schools into a good category? Trying to get a snapshot of the current position.

Q. Finalised the expert fees cost? Have discussed with PS but it is ongoing.

Q. 4 red audit actions, how quickly to be resolved? Not going to be resolved quickly, linked to legionella actions and being managed by risk assessments.

Q. Fire door program timescale? Must be addressed by the end of next academic year. Directors asked for a progress report on that.

Fire door progress report to be shared with Directors

Directors discussed the requirement for investment in schools and failure to do so will result in a Diocesan focus. Quarterly meetings with the Diocese, support this report being shared? EG highlighted that the report goes to her Diocese each quarter. Obligations to maintain buildings, report has been authored for us and should consider what is shared beyond Directors.

Estates information to be shared in RCF's report to the Diocese

The Board approved RCF, including the key achievements in her usual report.

RO thanked PS for his report.

HB requested that this is discussed further as the Bishop could request the report.

The Board approved the commissioning of the forthcoming 5-year plan.

Board approved the commissioning of 5-year plans

12. Safeguarding Report

May report aligned with a data drop.

Enormous pressure. KCSiE 2026 underpins Safeguarding in schools and was published on the 7th July.

KB and LP to meet next week to finalise the policies. Have worked with DSLs on the consultation and anticipated changes. The seeking assurance work included KCSiE changes. Need to have ready for schools by 1st September to meet the statutory deadline and need the trust from Directors to finalise and share with schools next week.

Q. Need approval on the finished document or to take the comments on this version and to finalise? Prudent for Directors to have the final sign off and a quick turnaround for approval.

"Improvement in culture is fragile" relates to Notre Dame and not the whole Trust. A huge amount of work is being carried out, but leaders are not mastering the knowledge. The picture is a lot better, but we need to see a quick mastery of the knowledge and a greater capacity in September, with 3 new posts who will be L3 DSL trained and supported by the Ted Wragg Trust. Staff and students are more attuned to reporting concerns, with strong examples where students have spoken to trusted adults about how supply staff have spoken to them. DSL and HoS working effectively with LADO. Need the mastery to move forward at pace. SBC is more advanced than ND.

Need the key staff to master this to enable others to master it.

Always monitor and pick up things, school visits are a key example of this. Reviewed and revised the policy, successful subsequent trips which demonstrated they were able to apply this. Need to apply in other areas.

Q. Identified weak teaching and provision, ongoing challenges and uncomfortable conversations to be had, the Board is going to need assurance. Improvement over time, not fast enough, conversations have been had, action will be taken.

Directors thanked KB for his work and commitment.

CF's experience coming in will be crucial. Not where KB wants them to be but will be over time.

Regulatory standards are different for an independent nursery and have to report directly to Ofsted when there is a concern or incident. Regulatory visit by Ofsted. Process has been followed and the timely action and reporting has been recognised as positive. KB provided an overview to the Board.

Assurance of the speed at which we act, the cognisance, and the robustness of our policies and procedures to protect the children in our care.

ALN confirmed she had met with KB and LP, that the incident was discussed but that policy and procedure had been amended across the Trust regarding images and technology.

Images have been harvested from school websites outside of the Trust, this was picked up during the latest DSL forum. Use of children's photos on school websites has been halted across the Trust as we cannot safely use images; the National Crime Agency has confirmed this is a holding position.

Q. The Safeguarding competency of people should be for all staff; does the electronic training reduce this competence? Resource material is delivered face to face and assessments are undertaken individually or as a group. Also expect schools to engage with LA training and opportunities. EYFS training last week from an external provider, which was well received by schools. SSS Learning allows us to react to local context quickly.

Directors highlighted the competent and robust response to a safeguarding concern and pleased that the HMI has echoed this.

KB provided an update to the reporting schedule.

Q. When HT is suspended, remove access to CPOMS and emails? Revoked by the HR Team.

Q. Any part of the policy relating to self-referral?

RO thanked KB for his contribution to the Trust and collaboration with Directors, robust discussions, and commitment to all the schools. RO wished KB a long and happy retirement.

KB shared that working at Plymouth CAST and with the Diocese has been the pinnacle of his career; personally, professionally and spiritually.

Meeting paused at 13.23
Meeting reconvened at 13.57

13. RE and Catholic Life

Directors thanked HB for her excellent report and the wider information.

It is important to remember we are here with Christ at the centre. Expect the highest educational standards but also the highest standards, the child is the most important in all that we do.

Thinking about marketing and important to include CSI outcomes to promote the holistic approach to children.

HB thanked ZB for attending the regular meetings with the team.

HB thanked KB on behalf of the Diocese, for his commitment and support of the Diocese, and for his knowledge and professionalism.

14. Education and Standards

14.1 Update from Chair of Education and Standards

No meeting in the last cycle, but the Safeguarding meeting took place, and the impact statement has been provided. The reporting schedule was discussed thoroughly.

14.2 Term Dates

Term dates to be discussed at E&S and then October Board

ALN advised she received a parental email requesting a review of the October half term dates to become two weeks. Term dates and the admissions criteria are discussed two years in advance and could be sensible for the Board to discuss for the future, and to review with LA and other school dates. Wouldn't need to be applied Trust-wide as different LAs.

Q. Which meeting? E&S and then Board in October.

14.3 SATs national publication delay

ALN provided an overview and the reasons for the publication delay.

KB provided the following headlines which are subject to change:

1.5%/2% uplift to come.

Combined at the end of KS2 - 7-8% increase, within touching distance of national. The highest increase ever had.

Greater depth combined - up 2% to 7%, national is 8%.

Reading, the next project, up 1% to 72%, national 75%. Greater depth up 3% to 30%, in line with national.

Writing up 6% to 71%, national 73%. Greater depth up 2% to 11%, the highest ever.

Maths up 8% to 73%, national 75%. Greater depth 24%, highest ever, national 27%.

The context of the children we work with, the mission of the Trust. 28% of the children have an EHCP. Proud of the schools.

Higher challenge in terms of the demographic, loss of £3.5/4m in funding, more responsibility of leaders, mixed-age classes. Still work to do. Exceptionally proud of the achievement. Would normally prepare the full dataset for September/October. 31 schools.

One school came in with a lower combined, 30 children and 6 EHCPs.
Another school had extremely poor results due to poor teaching and oversight. Quality of teaching has been identified and reported by the SIO.
St Joseph’s, Newton Abbot is a RISE school, small cohort, incredible HT, national average for combined is 63%, Trust 65%, 75% for St Joseph’s. Writing 75%, Reading 100% at ARE, Maths 100% at ARE, Maths greater depth 38%, national 27%. Combined in 2023 was 29%, 75% in 2026, School is full for September.

ALN highlighted that the data improvements are also linked to whole Trust initiatives and the implementation of them.

KB reviewed his projections for the end of spring term, combined was 62% and schools have delivered 60%. Projections are accurate and linked to the impact of Atom and Quest. Into secondaries from September.

ALN thanked KB for his honesty and integrity, the support for our schools has been inspirational.

15. Finance and Resources

15.1 Update from Chair of Finance and Resources

JA thanked SELT for their reporting and support for the Committee.

Headlines - will return a surplus but an ongoing issue, and GAG pooling is a must from September 2027.

15.2 Management Accounts to May 2026

Discussed at F&R. Report provided to the Board.

Forecasting a surplus of £596 000, just over 1% target. Variation between income and expenditure as previously reported.

Have started year end processes and external audit work.

15.3 Approval of Annual Budget and 3-Year Forecast

Requires Board approval for 2026/27.

Budget process since January as drip fed information from the Government. Finalised the budgeting process and then the pay award information for teachers was published. The budget does include the updated pay award and part funding, proposal for 6.5% over the next two years. Still waiting for support staff pay award information, balloting members and closing on 9th September.

DfE return has been postponed by a month to the 24th September, new deadline due to reworking the budget. Budgeted for 3.2% backdated to 1st April, 3.3% pay award and suggestion of part funding.

Teachers' pension scheme - employers' rate will be reducing from April 2027, 28.7% to 17.6%. £1.2m saving but the Government is clawing it back. Don't know how it will be achieved during the year. £3b saving and effectively using to fund the pay awards.

A lot of hard work involving HTs, SIOs, SBMs, HR colleagues. Projection is £418 000, just short of the 1%. 10 schools looking at a deficit. 1 will have a chance to move to a surplus. Significant deficits and out of school's control such as number of EHCPs, lagged funding etc.

Westcotts networking event discussed that Trusts are setting deficit budgets, increasingly difficult to balance the books with the current structure of the Trust and need to go to GAG pooling. Not positively received by some.

F&R recommend the budget with the proviso that if the support staff pay award has a material impact, the F&R Committee would reconvene.

The Board approved the budget with this proviso.

The Board approved the budget subject to the F&R proviso to reconvene if required

RO thanked KMB for the work.

16. Audit and Risk

16.1 Update from Chair of Audit and Risk

Covers finance and operations. Highlighted:

H&S audits which were discussed at the H&S meeting, no real concerns.

Evolve system and the use within the Trust for off-site visits and trips.

No serious issues - internal audit, insurance at the Trust, estates risk monitor including lighting the change in funding, DP and IT Security. Final approval to merge the Health and Wellbeing Committee.

GB areas of new legislation - new mobile phone requirement, new restrictive intervention from the Government, allergy legislation for AAIs and staff training.

ATH was published this week, governance areas affected and implementation from 1st October. 5 changes - inclusion, financial training expectations, appointing CFO rules, enhanced for procurement, and tighter controls on executive pay, pensions and severance payments.

RCF - Evolve audits. Data return from Devon Education Services for 24/25. Significant level of non-compliance despite an intensive training program, update to the Trust policy. June 2026 further policy update, further bespoke training for HTs and EVCs in Autumn term. Commissioned a further audit of this year's data to see the ongoing compliance.

Allergy Policy. Benedict's Law in September 2026. Waiting for DfE guidance, which was released last week, drafted a CAST policy which SELT will review next week. Trust policy has been reviewed in line with the DfE guidance, Dorset model, and Devon model policy. Schools need the policy as soon as possible due to the level of personalisation

Allergy Policy to be approved via Chair's Action and review in September Board meeting

Q. SELT to review next week, Chairs' Action and review in September? Yes.

Congratulations to GB on a clean audit report.

17. Remuneration Committee (RemCom)

17.1 Update from Chair of RemCom

Impact statement with the Board papers. Executive Pay Policy to be reviewed by the Board. CEO pay awards have to be approved by the DfE in due course.

18. Trust Board Governance

18.1 Link Director Reports

Included in the Board pack.

Q. Do Directors have trouble arranging visits? Not easy, attending an LCB meeting is not always easy. Chair of the LCB reviewing the report takes time.

Q. If an IAB is in place, what should the Link Director do? Speak to the Chair of the IAB.

18.2 Lead Director Reports

Statutory grants to E&S. Estates report.

ALN SG report.

Review next term and should be available for a MAT inspection.

18.3 Scheme of Delegated Authority (SoDA)

SoDA updates approved

The Board approved the updates to the SoDA.

18.4 2026/27 Meeting Dates

Shared with the Board.

19. Policies

HR policies. All reviewed by SELT prior to this meeting. No feedback from JCC meetings despite having two meetings scheduled. Extension for feedback via email was given but nothing received for the policies on the agenda.

19.1 Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy

The Board approved the Policy

The Board approved the updates to this Policy.

19.2 Allergy Policy

To be approved by Chair's Action

Process agreed for this policy approval.

19.3 Attendance Policy

Attendance Policy questions to be reviewed by KB and shared with the Board

Q. List of 12 responsibilities for Directors, are they reported to the E&S Committee? Attendance Lead Director sits on the E&S Committee; attendance is a focus at meetings.

Q. Section 12.4 - Trust Expectations - Over what period is this considered? Monthly, Termly or Yearly?

Q. Section 13 - In section 9.11 the wording is "celebrating strong attendance and improvement sensitively" so why is it different here?

Q. Section 13 - what adjustments are made for SEND pupils?

Q. Section 14 - Mental Health and EBSA, and Medical Needs - why is "reasonable adjustments" not an option for these pupils?

Q. Section 15 - Over what reference period is persistent or severe absence considered?

Q. Section 16 - What happens where schools fail to meet their expectations?

KB and ZB will pick up in SELT and share with the Board.

19.4	**Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** 1. Director of Ed needs updating please in Key Personnel 2.Safeguarding Policy - Page 12 - What methodology do the LCB use to "test internet filtering" Page 12 - Does the DSL really have greater responsibility for safeguarding than the Head and/or Exec Head? Page 15 - Final bullet of section 6 - "Plymouth CAST requires all employees in nursery, First or Primary schools to complete the disclosure form" - What is a First school? Page 19 - Section 10 - Where is the bullying detail held, and how is it shared with the local CAST Board, and how is it escalated to Board for our awareness across the Trust? Page 21 - section 12 - Who reviews the radicalisation risk assessments, and how frequently? Do we have a central record of the current numbers of risk assessments in place, and where is this reported? Page 23 - section 15 - final sentence needs punctuation between the final five words, and why are they in capitals? Page 23 - Female Genital Mutilation - Why is there no requirement to record this on CPOMS? Page 24 - Honour based abuse - Why is the acronym (HBV), rather than HBA? HBV continues to be used from this point Page 24 - Honour based abuse and Forced Marriage- Why is there no requirement to record these on CPOMS? Page 26 - Shouldn't the reference to "Devon County Council's virtual school head for children in care" be localised for the relevant local authority? Or does Devon work for all the authorities covered by CAST? Page 27 - Children Missing Education - in the first sentence need to change "others" to "other" Please can we change "we need to have at least two up to date contact numbers for parents/carers" to "we need to have at least two up to date contact methods for parents/carers" to protect lone parents, victims of domestic abuse and others without support of another adult. Many people no longer have a landline number, so we need to modernise our contact requirements please. Page 32 - first bullet - need to change "preferably one of the being the DSL or DDSL" to "preferably one of them being the DSL or DDSL" Page 33 - Sexual Harassment - need to change "outsdie" to "outside" Page 38 - Section 28 - Where is the recognition that the child may be targeted by adults, or because of the LGBTQ+ status of their parent/carer? Page 39 - change instances of "singlesex" to "single-sex" Page 48 - change Director of Education contact details Page 52 - Coercion - Shouldn't the reference to Devon's protocol be localised for the relevant local authority? Or does Devon work for all the authorities covered by CAST? Page 71 - change Director of Education contact details	To be shared with the Board for approval following KB and LP meeting

Safeguarding Policy - KB and LP meeting on Tuesday, approval by email on Wednesday, out to schools on Friday. The Board was happy with this approach.

19.5 Whistleblowing Policy

Q. Whistleblowing Policy - Thank you for adding the description of the graphics.

Q. Reference to who to report to and is V-C, link works but no means of contact. RCF will amend.

The Board approved the Policy.

RCF to amend the V-C contact

Board approved the Policy

19.6 Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy

Q. Section 11.2 - Please can this section be reworded? The Trust has a statutory responsibility for all staff, not just Heads and Exec Heads! It may delegate the responsibility to others, but that doesn't remove the statutory responsibility. RCF will address the wording and also apply to 10.2 to align.

Q. Pages 16 to 31 need descriptions of the pictures, so that they can be understood by screen readers please

The Board approved the Policy.

RCF to address the wording

19.7 Executive Pay Policy

Q. Final page need descriptions of the pictures, so that they can be understood by screen readers please

Reviewed by RemCom, good feedback and built into the Policy.

Q. External advisor to review executive leaders from next year? Yes.

The Board approved the Policy.

The Board approved the Policy

19.8 Neuro-Diversity Policy

Q. Shouldn't the policy name state that it's a policy for staff only? Yes will update.

Q. Section 3.2 - Need to change "equality" to "equity", as the policy is specifically to treat those with neurodiversity in a different manner to their neurotypical colleagues. Will update.

Q. Section 10.4 - The individual needs to know what the meeting is regarding, and that it's a method of potential support rather than for punitive measures! Will clarify.

Q. Section 12.1 - I can't access the passport as I don't have permission! Who does have permission to view?

Overall it's a great policy and very welcome - thank you

The Board approved the Policy.

RCF to update as per the minutes

The Board approved the Policy

19.9 Recruitment Policy and Procedures

Q. Page 21 - Flowchart needs a description for screen readers please. RCF will update.

The Board approved the Policy.

RCF to update

The Board approved the Policy

19.10 Pay Policy - Teachers

Q. 7.2 - What happens when national pay award hasn't been agreed? How can we notify by 30th November? Need a policy in place, will have to redraft and bring back to Board, caveat where agreed.

Q. Pay chart needs a description for screen readers please Appendix 1 - needs a description for screen readers please.

The Board approved the Policy.

RCF to bring back to the Board

The Board approved the Policy

20. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair 2026/27

20.1 Election of Chair

LP confirmed that JA had put his name forward to stand as Chair.

JA left 15.01

The Board unanimously approved JA as Chair for 2026/27.

JA returned 15.02

LP confirmed JA had been appointed as Chair.

20.2 Election of Vice-Chair

LP confirmed that RO had put her name forward to stand as Vice-Chair.

RO left 15.02

The Board unanimously approved RO as Vice-Chair for 2026/27

RO returned 15.03

LP confirmed that RO had been appointed as Vice-Chair.

ZB presented RO with flowers for her work as Chair.

ZB thanked KB on behalf of the Board and SELT, for his work and commitment during his time at Plymouth CAST.

21. Close of Meeting - 15.05pm