



Standards Committee Meeting
Tuesday 15 July 2025 at 17:00 – 19:00
via MS Teams

Those Present:		
Naomi Cooper	Director and Chair	NC
Victoria Morris	Director	VM
Rachel Potts	Director	RP
Also Present:		
Warren Carratt	Chief Executive Officer	CEO
Jacky Tattershall	Assistant CEO – Quality Assurance & Improvement	JT
Michelle Smith	HR Manager	MS
Lyndsay Foster	Governance Clerk	LF
Joanne Cliff	Executive Assurance Partner	JC
Apologies:		
Phil Bradley	Director	PB
Richard Webster	Strategic Transitions Lead	RW
No Apologies:		
Colin Bradley	Director	CB

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	Actions
1.1. To receive apologies for absence Apologies were received from PB and RW.	
1.2. To accept apologies for absence Apologies were accepted from PB and RW.	
2. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS	
2.1. Chair to determine any items of urgent business to be considered None.	
3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS	
3.1. Individual Governors to declare any personal, business or other governance interests on any item on the agenda There were no declarations of personal or business interest received.	
4. APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES	
4.1. To approve the minutes of the following meeting: The minutes of the Standards Committee meeting held on 13 May 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.	
4.2. Review of Action Tracker The outstanding actions on the action tracker were reviewed and updated. JC informed the committee that all DSLs will be getting SENSO training in November with a big focus on their statutory duties, as all schools now use SENSO.	
4.2.1 0% Attendance Report JC shared the key points from the 0% attendance report, raised as a line of enquiry at the recent Schools Performance Scrutiny Board. A total of 11 children with 0% attendance were identified, predominantly across schools in Doncaster, with a particular focus on educational neglect. Bader Academy and Coppice School have been particularly involved in addressing these concerns. Updates included: • Child 1: Now accessing 15 hours of virtual school tuition. • Child 2: Previously disengaged, but now open to Early Help support following persistent outreach and involvement from City of Doncaster Council (CoDC). • Child 3: Successfully enrolled at college and completed a positive initial visit. • Child 6: The school is working with the family to rebuild relationships and is liaising closely with Early Help. • Child 7: Making small but positive steps forward; increased parental engagement noted. • Child 5: Difficulties remain; the child was enrolled at school in April and then moved to Africa. Despite this, the child remains on roll due to having an EHCP. Coppice has reported the case as a Child Missing in Education (CME). CoDC	

officers have been asked to investigate further as the child cannot be removed from roll under current guidelines.

Across the Trust:

- There are 11 children recorded with 0% attendance.
- 2 children are now starting to regularly attend Discovery Academy or will be leaving roll in the summer.
- 1 child is listed at Bader but is not yet started placement — they have only attended two transition sessions .
- Current distribution: 1 at Willows, 3 at Bader, 1 at Hilltop, and 2 at Coppice.

Actions are ongoing, with support from local authorities and a focus on ensuring correct processes for children with EHCPs and CME classification.

RP enquired, given that the majority of the 0% attendance cases are based in Doncaster, how similar challenges are being approached in other Local Authorities (LAs) and whether those approaches are proving successful?

JC responded that she is actively involved in wider partnership work, including participation in the Sheffield Safeguarding Sub-Committees. She has also been invited to contribute to the Fourth Partner Work, which commenced last week, where educational neglect is a key focus.

She further explained that:

- Doncaster lacks the traditional Education Welfare Officer (EWO) model that schools typically liaise with.
- Rotherham maintains a more structured approach with dedicated link workers in place.
- Sheffield benefits from a robust inclusion team that works proactively with schools, with the ability to escalate concerns and provide meaningful support.

JC also highlighted a specific case of a child based at Lotus Academy, who is now receiving targeted support from the school's attendance champion. Due to continued non-engagement, the family is being progressed toward a fixed penalty notice, as a formal next step in the process.

VM asked whether there is confidence that all schools are recording attendance in a consistent manner?

JC confirmed that this was reviewed as part of the attendance audit conducted in the spring term, which examined nine different areas of attendance practice, including how attendance is recorded and tracked. The audit revealed inconsistencies across schools.

As a result, JC has been working closely with the Trust and Matthew Sorby to identify and share good practice examples. These examples were presented at the lead network meeting to help schools align their approaches. JC also has the ability to review attendance codes used by schools to ensure they are being applied correctly, which adds an extra layer of oversight and quality assurance.

VM asked whether the 15 hours of provision is classed as a part-time or full-time timetable? JC explained that it is recorded as a reduced offer, which must be submitted to the local authority and is subject to tracking. In the spring term, there were 197 students across the Trust on reduced provision, and this number has now decreased to 158. Of those, 42 are based at Kenwood. This issue was discussed during the recent Heads Away Day, where the importance of tracking and reviewing these timetables in detail was emphasised. NC asked about the acronym used with Child 1 and wider agencies specifically, what PAFSS stands for? JC confirmed that PAFSS is Doncaster's version of Early Help.	
4.3. Matters arising from the Minutes MS shared that she had a meeting with Sarah Mulhall and Sam MacDonald to discuss the current imbalance between Level One and Level Two Teaching Assistant (TA) positions at Hilltop and Kelford. They plan to meet again in the Autumn term to explore transitioning some Level One TAs into Level Two roles. This approach aims to maintain the "grow our own" model seen at Kelford while also creating a more balanced structure between the two schools. Additionally, they intend to evaluate the higher-level roles and consider potential changes to job descriptions. NC added that while consistency in TA roles across different schools is important, the way these roles are experienced can vary depending on the setting. She also noted that when staff move between schools, it may be influenced by differing expectations rather than just the formal role definitions. VM asked is there a matrix their using currently? MS confirmed a career structure with all duties and responsibilities is used but there are lots of crossover of roles. VM stated would need clarity with a bank of staff in the trust. MS informed the majority of bank staff are at the bottom scale, but need to look at putting 2 bandings in place for separating new/younger staff. MS praised the ECT programme with a 95% retention. There's an 80 / 20 split where 80% are female and 20% male, nationally they are 89%. NC asked if it's largely comparable with other trusts? MS stated that Nexus MAT currently pays above the national minimum wage, and there are no other trusts in the area that are like Nexus MAT, in terms of its configuration and size.	
5. ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED	
5.1 CSIF Delivery Plan JT gave an overview of the report and explained that it's a summary of the impact of the work and the quality assurance and improvement teams for schools have done. RP acknowledged the strength of the report, noting that while some areas are still in progress, others are already shaping the focus for the coming year. She asked about the process for moving forward?	

JT explained that during the Heads Away Day, all school improvement plans are reviewed collectively. Priorities then form the basis for the new delivery plan. JT highlighted that key areas such as Maths, ICT, Reading, and Writing represent the next phase of implementation. The Director Development Day will outline the School Improvement Plan (SIP) timeline. JT also emphasised the importance of research-driven activity in schools, with a focus on key pillars such as CPD, depth of learning, and fostering a sense of belonging among children—principles that will underpin all future initiatives.

NC asked why the Read Write Inc. phonics programme has been a particular focus and investment for the trust?

JT explained that while each school has the agency to choose its own Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme, the majority of schools within the trust have adopted Read Write Inc. As a result, Michelle Hill, the Early Years Reading and Phonics Lead, is working closely with Ruth Miskin to develop a tailored Trust Package.

VM commended the team for their excellent work and asked about the progress of internships and employment opportunities?

JT responded that while it's a challenging and gradual process, significant efforts are being made. Progress depends on building partnerships with external agencies, which requires working at their pace. The trust is planning to recruit a job coach to support students in undertaking internships. Additionally, there is an entry-level qualification being developed for students in Key Stage 4 who may struggle to achieve a Level 2 qualification, serving as a pre-internship pathway.

The CEO acknowledged that some schools within the trust require additional support and highlighted the positive impact of initiatives like Steam Street at Abbey School and its connections with local employers. There have been recent discussions with Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) about the trust becoming a provider to facilitate internship placements. Additionally, talks are underway with Sheffield City Council to explore integrating a Key Stage 5 (KS5) offer that aligns with the trust's commercial initiatives. These efforts aim to strategically position and develop provisions that harness partnerships, promote interaction, and deliver targeted support where it is most needed.

NC asked about the level of family engagement with the opportunities offered through the family hubs initiative?

JT explained that the work is still in its early stages. Currently, Craggs has the most established links, primarily because it is a mainstream school and family hubs have been set up in localities, while Coppice is also involved. Other schools are being signposted to family support workers with guidance from Emma Bellamy at the Trust. The CEO added that there is likely to be future government alignment around early intervention and EYFS support through the family hubs model.

NC asked about the percentages shown on the grid relating to non-compliance?

JT explained that the graph breaks down the layers where the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are positioned, alongside explanations for self-assessment requirements. These include areas such as evidence uploads, director and governance responsibilities, and training access. JT noted that some schools were unsure who had

accessed training, but there were no concerns regarding operational practice—indicating the issues were more about systems and processes. The CEO confirmed that PB had not raised any concerns regarding section 5.5 on Safeguarding. JT noted that while reviewing evidence, it's likely that much of it is available but may be stored within different departments, which can affect visibility. The CEO added that the term "compliance" used in the graph under section 3.15 might be more misleading than helpful, especially considering that Ofsted inspections have consistently found all schools across the trust to be effective in safeguarding practices. ACTION: JT to update report wording from on section 3.15 from compliance. NC thanked everyone for all the hard work that's gone into the reports.	ACTION: JT 27/10/25
5.2 Standards Committee Report Document shared prior to meeting for information and discussed under 5.1	
5.2.1 Pupil Premium Strategy 2023/24 Evaluation and 2024/25 Plan A document was shared prior to the meeting for information. JC provided an overview of the report, noting that Endeavour now has a Pupil Premium strategy in place. However, due to the school's newly developed website, the strategy has not yet been published online. JC confirmed that all schools are using the Department for Education (DfE) framework for their strategies. RP stated that it feels like there is a general theme of a lack of impact and questioned what has been done so far and what the expected outcomes are? JC confirmed that she would like to see significantly more evidence of impact across schools. She noted that some schools, such as North Ridge, have demonstrated strong and effective practice. However, she acknowledged that wider impact needs to be clearly shown across all areas. To address this, JC shared that moving forward all Executive Assurance Partners (EAPs) will be working more closely with schools. to deliver more meaningful results. VM asked whether it feels like pupil premium funding has been used more as extra funding rather than being targeted effectively. The CEO clarified that although pupil premium is intended to address disadvantage, the context is different in special schools. The usual proxies for disadvantage and top-up funding in special schools don't align exactly with those used for mainstream settings. As a result, the rationale behind how funding is used needs to be interpreted in a way that is most impactful whilst still meeting grant conditions. While it may be true that not all pupils in special schools feel the full direct benefit of pupil premium funding, the CEO emphasised that all pupils will still receive a high-quality and personalised education. NC asked about the Craggs summary report, specifically questioning why the "high quality teaching" column does not appear directly related to deprivation, and inquired how the funding is being used? JC responded that a recent deep dive revealed Pupil Premium children at Craggs are not	

achieving as well in reading. As a result, next year's focus will be on targeting reading improvement, using the funding to support all students not just those eligible for Pupil Premium where it's needed most. She added that Craggs also invests heavily in enrichment activities aimed at improving attendance, safeguarding, and behaviour strategies for families. JT confirmed that while the summary may seem broad, the full plan includes more detailed layers that clarify the targeted use of funding. JC left the meeting at 17:34.	
5.3 HR Scorecard A brief overview of the report was given, covering up to 30 June 2025, and the report was screen shared during the meeting. There has been a slight increase in staffing numbers by 10, though it's common for more staff to join during the summer period. MS reported that attendance has dropped across the schools in the Trust. Work is ongoing with some schools to provide support with attendance. Abbey has shown a dip, but this isn't a concern due to the known absence of a staff member who recently had surgery. Overall, while the schools are currently below the national average in attendance, the central team's attendance remains strong, with less than 1% absence recorded monthly. RP asked whether the reasons behind mental health and anxiety-related absences had been analysed? MS responded that it is difficult to pinpoint exact causes. However, HR works proactively with schools at an early stage to explore what support can be offered. Staff are also signposted to the Westfield counselling service for additional mental health support. RP asked about the top 4 and bottom 4 results from the Pulse survey and whether any feedback had been received? MS explained that the survey results have been submitted and are due to be reviewed at the Scrutiny Board. Overall, the feedback is generally positive. Some schools were affected by seasonal illness, which impacted results. The survey noted that staff feel the Trust does enough to address sickness. Additionally, ideas from the Staff Parliament are being considered as part of a "happiness plan," which aims to tackle persistent low attendance among staff. MS informed maternity has gone up but we now offer split parental leave, looking to colour code to show more will liaise with Matthew Sorby at the Trust. ACTION: MS to liaise with Matthew Sorby to colour code the parental leave figures. MS informed that staff turnover remains stable at Craggs, Willows and Lotus. However, there has been an increase in staffing at Bader, Coppice, Discovery, North Ridge, and Pennine View. MS will look into how many staff have moved internally within the Trust. ACTION: MS to liaise with Matthew Sorby to look at internal transfer data and retention.	ACTION: MS 27/10/25 ACTION: MS 27/10/25

NC asked how much work the Trust does with the appropriate bodies regarding ECT? MS informed that she doesn't usually have direct dealings with this, as it's mainly handled by Headteachers. JT added that Claire Garbutt at the Trust typically works with the appropriate body, although such involvement is very rare.	
5.4 Happiness Plan MS discussed the 2024/25 plan and introduced new initiatives, including the EVC's for pension contributions, which will first take place in August. The electric hybrid car scheme may be something to consider in the future. The golden ticket incentives were not well received and were taken to staff parliament last week for alternative ideas after the summer. The CEO discussed how well the staff parliament continues to run, noting that while there is mainly a variation in pay between boroughs, the Trust remains competitive.	
5.5 Annual Safeguarding Statement of Assurance Document shared prior to meeting for information. CEO informed it is due to go to safeguarding committee to review. If agreed it will go to full board next week for approval.	
5.6 MAT Dashboard Document shared prior to meeting, it will be updated next meeting.	
5.7 Risk Register Reported for information. No changes proposed or requested.	
5.8 Minutes of the Schools' Performance & Scrutiny Board meetings. Document shared prior to meeting for information.	
5.8.1 Spring Term 2025 Document shared prior to meeting for information.	
5.8.2 Summer Term 2025 Document shared prior to meeting for information.	
6. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS	
6.1. To consider any other urgent business agreed by the Chair None.	
7. CONFIDENTIALITY	
7.1. To consider the confidentiality of any items discussed during the meeting All discussed.	
7.2. To consider any areas of risk discussed in the meeting None.	

8. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS	
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Monday 27 October 2025	5 – 7 pm	MS Teams
Tuesday 23 February 2026	5 – 7 pm	MS Teams
Tuesday 15 June 2026	5 – 7 pm	MS Teams

Minutes approved by Trust Board of Directors

CHAIR	SIGNATURE	DATE