

Trust Board Report to Parent/Carers

Welcome to the Trust Board report for 2025/26. This is our annual summary report to parents and carers and we hope that you find it informative. Our role as Trustees is to work alongside the Executive Leadership of the Trust to ensure that TEACH Poole complies with all legal and statutory requirements, and is a well-managed and effective organisation, with clear strategic aims and vision. We work together to carry out the core functions of governance, which are as follows;

- **Strategic Leadership**
- **Accountability and assurance**
- **Strategic engagement**

Our work is very varied, and managed through Main Board meetings and various targeted committee meetings.

Children come first in every decision we make in the TEACH Trust, and we take pride in our inclusive, professional and welcoming ethos. Below is a summary of some key successes and challenges over the past year,

Areas of Success for TEACH Trust.

- **Pupil Attendance.** Thanks to the diligence of our staff, and the strong support of parents, pupil attendance at Teach Trust remains above the national average. Good attendance is essential if a child is to make good progress. Trustees receive regular updates on attendance at our termly committee meetings. Our particular thanks go to Lesley Specterman, Home Liaison Officer, and Mandy Bates, Attendance and Welfare Officer.
- **OFSTED inspections / Quality of Education.** Since September 2025 Ofsted have introduced a new 'framework' for the inspection of schools. This has received mixed reviews, as the new framework was meant to reduce the pressure and stress on schools and Headteachers, and, unfortunately, that's not been everyone's experience. Change is always a challenge. Ad Astra Infants was inspected in April 2026 under this new framework, and the report describes a fabulous school. Clare Tantrum, Headteacher, and the Ad Astra staff and Trustees were all very pleased with the report. We pride ourselves that our 4 schools remain good and popular schools, and the Annual Parent Questionnaires echo this, with high levels of parent satisfaction. Trustees make regular visits to the 4 schools as part of their 'Learning Visits' agenda, and visits always have a focus (writing, pupil behaviour, inclusion, spelling etc). These visits evidence what great schools we have in our Trust, and Trustees are always impressed by what they observe and learn. I believe parents can be very confident in the quality of the education their child is receiving, and will continue to receive, as they progress through their primary years at TEACH Trust.
- **New Roofs.** The new roofing works at Canford Heath Infants and Canford Heath Juniors have now been successfully completed. No more leaky classrooms!! Thanks must go to all the Site team who worked so closely with the contractors to bring this project to completion.
- **Educational Outcomes** Educational Outcomes at TEACH remain high and above the national average. More details can be found on each schools' website, with the 2025/2026 outcomes being made available in the coming autumn term.
- **Support for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).** Our 2 new purpose-built units based at Canford Heath Infants and Canford Heath Juniors, built to support pupils with assessed Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN), are now fully

operational and delivering excellent support, as judged by a recent external monitoring visit by Local Authority Officers. Applications for places at the Bases are submitted through the EHCP process and via BCP council. Trustees thank the SLCN staff and Mrs Natalie Brown, TEACH Inclusion leader, for all their hard work making these units such a success.

- **School satellite provision** Canford Heath Junior School continues to provide two satellite units for Winchelsea Special School, which successfully supports the special education of approximately 25 children on the Canford Heath Junior School site.
- **Financial Audit Report.** Once again, our Finance Team excelled themselves. Our Auditors, HWB based in Southampton, gave the TEACH Trust accounts another clean bill of health, which, we are told, is exceptional. The Trustees give particular thanks to Karen Wischhusen, our Chief Finance Officer, for her excellent and diligent work. Through considered action and foresight our finances remain reasonable, despite significant pressures on each individual school's budget.

Areas of Challenge for TEACH Trust

- **Funding.** Maintaining high quality educational outcomes is never easy for primary schools in Poole. It is worth reporting that Primary age pupils in the Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch area have the lowest funding per pupil of anywhere in the country. We are literally at the bottom of the national funding table. To give an example, each primary age pupil in BCP currently receives an annual sum of £5393, whereas, for comparison, a primary age pupil in Hackney, London, receives £7654. If TEACH Trust was to receive the same funding, as those in Hackney, the Trust would receive an additional £3.4 million a year. Imagine the additional teaching support and provision we could do with that extra money! Schools are not funded equally, meaning children are not funded equally. This is not a fair system, in my opinion, and places additional pressure on our teachers and support staff to meet the increasing demands of delivering high quality education to children in society today. I doubt this will ever change, as Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch are viewed as very affluent areas, and allocated funding accordingly. However, I think parents should at least know of such discrepancies.
- **Increased expectations re. Inclusion following the Governments publishing of the recent 'White paper'.**
Parents may be aware that the Government recently published a 'White paper' on how they seek to respond to the increasing numbers of children with Special Educational needs. Significant changes are being proposed, not least a change in the way children could be assessed in pursuit of an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP). An aspect of this is the desire by the government for all schools to become more inclusive, and for fewer SEND pupils to be placed in external special needs provision, such as in specialist schools where children are often required to be transported by taxi away from their local area, or even to residential settings many miles away from their home. To this end, schools are being encouraged to create their own 'in house' specialist provision. TEACH Trust are already way ahead in this respect, with specialist on site provision in the form of our Speech and Language bases, and staff receiving expert advice from the staff at the onsite Winchelsea Satellite Base.

As always, more detail about the work of the Trust, particularly around Finance, will be found in the Annual Report, which is published on the Trust website each Autumn term.

I take this opportunity to thank Mrs Carter, our CEO, all TEACH staff, and all Trustees for their commitment to our Trust and its vision, and my particular thanks go to Mrs Clare Tantrum, who is leaving TEACH to take up a new Headteacher post in Weymouth. She has been an exceptional leader at Ad Astra, and her contribution to TEACH Trust has been noteworthy.

Finally, I wish all parents and carers a lovely summer with their families. Thank you for reading this report.

Val Arbon– Chair of the TEACH Trust and on behalf of the TEACH Trust Board-July 2026

For more general detail/information on TEACH, please see our Trust website <https://www.teachpoole.com/>