TYNE &WEAR
LEARNING TRUST

Strategic Plan 2024-27

Updated September 2026

Foreword

It is a privilege to introduce the Tyne and Wear Learning Trust's Strategic Plan. This document sets out our shared ambition for the next stage of the Trust's journey and the practical steps we will take—together—to secure excellent education and wider life opportunities for every child and young person in our care.

Our Trust exists to serve our communities. We are proudly rooted in Tyne and Wear, and we draw strength from the diversity of our schools, pupils, families, and colleagues. Over the past few years, our schools have faced complex challenges: recovering learning and wellbeing after the pandemic, navigating financial pressures, and meeting growing needs in inclusion and SEND. Through it all, our staff have responded with professionalism, creativity, and unwavering commitment. On behalf of the Board, I offer heartfelt thanks to our leaders, teachers, support staff, governors, pupils, families, and partners for their dedication.

This plan was shaped through listening. Listening to pupil voice, to colleagues across roles, to families, and to external partners. It aligns with our statutory responsibilities and the highest expectations of strong trust governance. It balances aspiration with realism, setting clear priorities, milestones, and measures so we can hold ourselves to account and celebrate progress transparently.

Over the life of this plan, we will focus our collective efforts on a small number of high-impact priorities:

- **Excellence in teaching and curriculum:** A relentless focus on high-quality teaching, a rich and sequenced curriculum, strong literacy and numeracy, and effective use of assessment and evidence.
- **Inclusion, wellbeing, and safeguarding:** A culture where every child belongs, feels safe, and can thrive, including strengthened SEND provision, attendance, and early help.
- **People and leadership:** Investment in recruitment, development, and retention so every classroom is led by a great teacher and every school by a strong leadership team.
- **Community and partnerships:** Deepening collaboration with families, local authorities, health and social care, employers, and regional organisations to extend opportunity beyond the classroom.
- **Sustainability and stewardship:** Responsible financial management, estates that are safe and fit for learning, and a commitment to environmental sustainability and digital resilience.
- **Governance and accountability:** Clear roles, intelligent risk management, rigorous self-evaluation, and transparent reporting to our stakeholders.

We approach growth with care. Where we welcome new schools, it will be where the Trust can demonstrably add value and where partnership strengthens the whole. Our aim is not size for its own sake, but sustained excellence and equity for the pupils we serve.

Implementation matters. Each priority in this plan is underpinned by measurable outcomes, phased milestones, and the professional development required to achieve them. The Board will review progress regularly, publish concise updates, and adjust course where evidence demands it. In doing so, we will remain anchored to our values and to the simple proposition that every child, whatever their starting point, deserves an education that opens doors.

Thank you for your continued support and for the trust you place in us. I invite you to read this plan with a spirit of partnership and ambition. Together, we can ensure that Tyne and Wear Learning Trust remains a place where pupils flourish, colleagues grow, and communities feel proud of their schools.

Stephen Wharton
Chair of the Trustees

Introduction

I am pleased to introduce the September 2026 updated version of our Trust Strategic Plan covering the period 2024 - 2027. This plan sets out our long-term strategic objectives including our priorities for the 2026/27 financial year and an evaluation of our performance.

Tyne and Wear Learning Trust is committed to creating outstanding educational settings that promotes educational excellence and enriches the lives of all children in our care. We are staffed by a committed and talented team of teachers, teaching assistants, childcare assistants, office and premises staff, and supported by an active Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies. We believe that a key factor in helping children develop and achieve their potential lies in the genuine partnerships our schools have with families and the wider community.

The trust operates as a cost effective organisation with a business model that delivers value for money, efficiency, effectiveness and growing economies of scale in order to make more resources available for the teaching and learning of our children and ensure they receive an education which offers opportunity, inclusivity and equity.

How we work will matter as much as what we do. We will pursue fewer, bigger, better initiatives; standardise where consistency improves outcomes; and preserve local character where it enhances engagement and success. Implementation will be staged and supported: coaching, and lightweight monitoring that focuses on impact. We will use comparative data intelligently: tracking attainment and progress, attendance, exclusions, staff retention and wellbeing, financial health, and carbon footprint to guide action and to learn quickly.

This plan recognises the realities our schools face: rising complexity of need, recruitment pressures, cost challenges, and the continuing task of recovering and accelerating learning. It also recognises our strengths: committed staff, resilient communities, and a record of improvement when we focus together. We will build on these strengths with humility and determination.

Thank you to every pupil, parent, colleague, trustee, governor, and partner who has contributed to this plan. Together, we will make sure our Trust remains a place where pupils flourish, colleagues grow, and our communities feel proud of their schools.

Ashley Emmerson
Chief Executive Officer

Our Trust Vision

Our Mission Statement is **'United for Excellence in Education.'**

The vision of our trust is to provide an outstanding education, deliver excellence in all we do and ensure we enrich the lives of all children in our trust.

We aim to:

- **Champion Learning**– Providing a rich, broad and balanced curriculum where every child achieves their full potential in an all-inclusive learning environment.
- **Promote Well-Being**– Nurturing and developing the well-being of every child and member of our trust community.
- **Develop our Workforce**– Supporting and developing every staff member with their career aspirations to create an outstanding workforce.
- **Grow Together**– Working collaboratively with children, parents, staff and the wider community to strengthen the Trust for the benefit of all.

Trustees, Governors, staff, parents and pupils aim to work together to ensure this vision is realised through robust planning, organisation, implementation, analysis and self-evaluation.

Our Strategic Aims

Strategic Aim 1: **Outcomes**	**Key Strategic Areas**
All academies are enabled to achieve excellence.	i. To deliver high quality teaching and learning for every child providing an aspirational, inclusive and holistic curriculum.
	ii. To ensure every child regardless of ability, gender, race, age, religion, race or physical challenge, makes good progress, attains high and achieves their full potential.
	iii. To use self-led evaluation to drive school improvement and staff development.

Success Criteria

1. Attainment at all key stages are above national levels across the trust.
2. All groups of pupils make expected or better progress across the trust.
3. All teaching is judged to be good or outstanding across the trust.
4. Self-led evaluation and external inspection to recognise outstanding outcomes across the trust.

Short Term Actions 2024/2025

1. Deliver a full curriculum across each primary school which is broad, balanced and progressive.
2. Ensure all children in the trust receive a good start to early reading and early mathematics.
3. Provide targeted intervention for SEND pupils (lowest 20%).
4. Ensure disadvantaged pupils have equity across the curriculum and are able to access the same opportunities to learning as non-disadvantaged pupils.
5. Staff development is driven through evaluation and targeted. All staff have opportunity to high quality professional development.
6. External monitoring and review inform self-led evaluation and supports school improvement.
7. Develop collaboration within trust schools to support senior and middle leaders.
8. Ensure school self-evaluation is accurate and supports the inspection process for Marine Park Primary school.

Short Term Actions 2025/2026

1. Trust policies including Inclusion and Achievement Policy and school specific and accessibility plans written, shared and implemented in each school.
2. Create SEND network group across the Trust and set agenda to raise standards in teaching and learning.
3. Collect and analyse Trust-wide data on attainment, progress, behaviour, exclusions, and attendance, broken down by key characteristics (gender, SEND, ethnicity, EAL, disadvantage). CEO report in Termly Trustees report.
4. Implement, monitor and review individual school SIP actions.
5. Create subject lead network groups across the Trust and set agenda to raise standards in teaching and learning.
6. Implement consistent appraisal cycle to support teaching and learning staff- all staff aware of Trust career pathways.
7. Update, disseminate and implement trust attendance and behaviour policies.
8. Disseminate the Trust culture and ethos through CPD, networks, social media and website.
9. Establish 2 year old provision at 2 primary schools.

Short Term Actions 2026/2027

1. Embed and evaluate the curriculum in each school to ensure it is ambitious, broad and balanced, inclusive and progressive, with clear evidence that pupils know more, remember more and achieve well across all schools.
2. Further strengthen early reading, phonics and early mathematics across all primary schools and early years settings, using Trust-wide monitoring and moderation to ensure consistency, strong outcomes and school readiness.
3. Embed the Trust approach to SEND and inclusion, using the SEND network to share effective practice, strengthen adaptive teaching and ensure SEND pupils, including the lowest 20%, make good progress from their individual starting points.
4. Reduce attainment and progress gaps for disadvantaged pupils through effective use of assessment, targeted support and evaluation of provision, ensuring equitable access to the full curriculum, enrichment and wider opportunities.
5. Use Trust-wide data systematically to drive improvement, analysing attainment, progress, attendance, behaviour and exclusions by key pupil characteristics and using findings to identify priorities, deploy support and hold leaders to account.

6. Strengthen the impact of Trust subject networks, developing leadership capacity and sharing expertise, resources and effective practice to secure consistently high standards of teaching, curriculum implementation and assessment.
7. Embed the Trust appraisal and professional development framework, ensuring professional development is informed by school improvement priorities, self-evaluation and individual development needs, with clear career pathways and succession planning.
8. Strengthen school self-evaluation and improvement planning across the Trust, using peer review, external validation and Trust quality assurance to ensure evaluations are accurate, improvement actions have measurable impact and all schools are well prepared for external inspection.
9. Evaluate and further develop the Trust-wide approaches to attendance and behaviour, ensuring consistent implementation of policy, early intervention and targeted support lead to improved attendance, reduced persistent absence and positive behaviour for learning.
10. Evaluate and strengthen the two-year-old provision established within the Trust, ensuring high-quality early education, effective transition into nursery provision and strong outcomes for children's communication, personal development and early learning.
11. Increase purposeful collaboration and capacity across Trust schools, enabling senior, middle and subject leaders to work across academies, provide school-to-school support and contribute to sustainable Trust-wide improvement.
12. Establish clear Trust-wide measures of teaching quality and pupil outcomes, using moderation, learning reviews and professional dialogue to identify and disseminate highly effective practice and ensure teaching is consistently strong across all academies.
13. Review progress against the 2024–2027 long-term actions and success criteria, identifying achievements, remaining priorities and evidence of impact to inform the Trust's next strategic improvement cycle.

Long Term Actions 2024/2027

1. The full curriculum in each school is reviewed and developed to ensure the delivery of a high quality education that secures high achievement for all pupils.
2. The teaching and learning of early reading are outstanding in each school and early years setting. All children are ‘school ready.’
3. SEND pupils including the lowest 20% of pupils make good progress from their own starting point and reach their full potential, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. At the end of Key Stage 2 SEND pupils are able to confidently continue their learning pathway.

4. Disadvantaged pupils attain a high standard alongside non-disadvantaged pupils. They have equal access to the curriculum and learning opportunities.
5. Each school uses accurate self-evaluation to strive towards outstanding standards. Each school is confident the cycle of school improvement and has the ability to self-improve.

Strategic Aim 2: **Leadership**	**Key Strategic Areas**
To ensure high quality governance and leadership at all levels.	i. To develop a Trust Board that represents the right skill set to drive forward the organisation.
	ii. To secure local Governing bodies that is uncompromising in their ambition to improve outcomes for all pupils.
	iii. To empower Leaders to drive school improvement and set high expectations for all.
	iv. To develop the performance of middle-leaders and build capacity for further improvement within the trust.

Success Criteria

1. The Trust Board consists of seven trustees recognised as being high performing.
2. Local Governing Bodies are established and ensure the delivery of school strategic objectives and promote high standards of educational achievement.
3. Leadership, including Governance, is judged to be outstanding through self-led evaluation and external inspection.
4. The Trust Board are clearly focused on raising standards and securing excellent outcomes for all pupils in the trust.
5. Substantive leadership and well-developed middle-leaders are demonstrating clear progress across the trust.
6. All statutory responsibilities, including safeguarding, health, and safety, continue to be met.
7. The Trust Board continue to challenge and drive financial stability.

Short Term Actions 2024/2025

1. Board Trustees use the AGM to evaluate performance.
2. Scheme of delegation reviewed and updated.
3. Skills audit completed by Trustees and committees established.
4. The Local Governing Body of each is established and skills audit completed.
5. SLT in each school established and mentor scheme established for both Headteachers and Deputy Headteachers.
6. Middle leaders collaborate across the trust to strengthen practice.
7. Statutory responsibilities including safeguarding, health and safety and finance are met in each school.

Short Term Actions 2025/2026

1. Review and update schemes of delegation.
2. Develop a trustee recruitment and succession plan.
3. Strengthen communication between the Trust Board, Local Governing Bodies, staff, parents, and the wider community.
4. Align school improvement plans with MAT wide strategy and strategic plans.
5. Establish MAT-wide leadership networks.
6. Put in place support systems for leaders' professional well-being, recognising the demands of school leadership.

Short Term Actions 2026/2027

1. Embed and evaluate the effectiveness of the Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies, ensuring governance structures provide appropriate challenge, support and strategic oversight and have a clear impact on school and Trust improvement.
2. Implement the Trustee and Governor recruitment and succession plans, using regular skills audits to maintain the appropriate range of knowledge, experience and expertise across the Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies.
3. Review and embed the Scheme of Delegation and governance structures, ensuring roles, responsibilities, accountability and lines of communication between the Trust Board, Local Governing Bodies and school leaders are clearly understood.
4. Strengthen the use of Trust-wide governance information and reporting, ensuring Trustees and Governors receive accurate and timely information on educational outcomes, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding, SEND, disadvantaged pupils, finance and other key performance measures.

5. Evaluate the impact of MAT-wide leadership networks, ensuring senior and middle leaders collaborate effectively, share best practice and contribute to improvement beyond their own schools.
6. Develop leadership capacity and succession planning across the Trust, identifying and developing aspiring and existing middle and senior leaders through mentoring, coaching, professional development and opportunities for Trust-wide leadership.
7. Strengthen middle leadership across all schools, ensuring subject and phase leaders can accurately evaluate provision, identify priorities, support colleagues and demonstrate measurable impact on teaching, curriculum and pupil outcomes.
8. Embed a consistent Trust-wide approach to leadership development and appraisal, ensuring objectives are aligned with school improvement plans, the Trust's strategic priorities and clearly defined career pathways.
9. Ensure school improvement plans are fully aligned with Trust strategic priorities, with senior leaders and governors regularly evaluating progress, impact and outcomes and taking timely action where improvement is required.
10. Maintain rigorous oversight of all statutory responsibilities, including safeguarding, health and safety, equality, compliance and finance, through effective Trust-wide monitoring, audit and reporting arrangements.
11. Strengthen financial leadership and accountability, ensuring Trustees, Governors and senior leaders understand their responsibilities and provide effective challenge to support financial sustainability, value for money and the appropriate deployment of resources.
12. Embed effective systems to support leaders' professional well-being and sustainable workload, including access to peer support, mentoring and appropriate professional development.
13. Further strengthen communication and engagement between Trustees, Governors, leaders, staff, parents and the wider community, ensuring stakeholders understand the Trust's vision, priorities and progress.
14. Review progress against the 2024–2027 Leadership long-term actions and success criteria, evaluating the impact of governance and leadership development and identifying priorities for the Trust's next strategic planning cycle.

Long Term Actions 2024/2027

1. The Trust Board is effective and drives the trust vison, ethos and standards.
2. The Local Governing Bodies in each school are well established and drives school improvement and secures high standards.
3. Senior Leadership in all schools is outstanding.

4. Middle Leaders in all school are effective and ensure teaching and learning in all subjects is of a high standard.
5. Outcomes for all groups of pupils including pupils from disadvantaged families and pupils with SEND attain a high standard. All children reach their full potential.
6. All statutory responsibilities including safeguarding, health and safety and finance are met in all schools and all schools operate to a high standard.

Strategic Aim 3: **Operations**	**Key Strategic Areas**
To strengthen the Trust by ensuring future sustainability.	i. To create and maintain a strategic plan that drives measured and systematic growth.
	ii. To deliver balanced budget plans year-on-year.
	iii. To monitor and successfully manage risks
	iv. To deliver high-quality services

Success Criteria

1. The trust has grown to provide an inclusive educational community for 0-11 year olds and families.
2. The trust provides high-quality services not only within the trust but to external partners.
3. Financial plans and forecasts deliver a stable budget position with no deficits within the trust.
4. The trust fully understands the management of risk and has in place effective plans to mitigate and control these risks.
5. The trust develops a rigorous audit process to support improvement.

Short Term Actions 2024/2025

1. Secure 2 year old daycare places in Dunn Street Primary and Whitburn Village Primary.
2. CEO develops collaboration opportunities with other maintained schools, single or small academy trusts.
3. Director of school improvement supports and develops collaboration with other maintained schools, single or small academy trusts.

4. Set a balanced budget for all schools in the Trust- Academy, Daycare, Lettings, Community Lettings, and Community Provision.
5. Review out of school provision in each school and ensure they meet the needs of the community and they are self-sufficient.
6. Develop risk management plan with sufficient mitigation and control.
7. Create Local Governing Bodies in each school and develop Trustees and committees.

Short Term Actions 2025/2026

1. Develop a 3–5 year financial strategy aligned with the MAT's vision.
2. Ensure all budget plans are linked directly to educational outcomes and the Trust's strategic objectives.
3. Implement consistent budget-setting processes across all schools, guided by MAT-wide financial policies.
4. Explore further Early Years funding- Wave 2 SBN for Marine Park primary School.
5. Recruit a Trust Finance Officer to support the CFO in delivering compliance.
6. Review and update MAT-wide Risk Management Policy aligned with the Academy Trust Handbook.
7. Integrate risk management into strategic planning, budgeting, and school improvement processes.
8. Ensure all schools have up-to-date Safeguarding and Health & Safety risk assessments with clear accountability.

Short Term Actions 2026/2027

1. Successfully integrate East Herrington Primary School and Hetton Lyons Primary School into the Trust from 1 September 2026, ensuring effective transition arrangements across governance, finance, HR, estates, safeguarding, IT, curriculum and operational systems.
2. Review and update the Trust's 3–5 year financial strategy to reflect the growth of the Trust, ensuring the financial impact, opportunities and risks associated with the addition of two schools are fully incorporated into future planning.
3. Set and maintain balanced and sustainable budgets across all Trust schools and provisions, including Early Years, daycare, lettings, community provision and the Monument Centre Family Hub, with resources clearly aligned to educational and strategic priorities.
4. Achieve financial and operational efficiencies through Trust growth, reviewing procurement, contracts, staffing structures and shared services to identify opportunities for economies of scale and improved value for money.

5. Strengthen the Trust's central operational capacity to effectively support the increased number of schools, ensuring finance, HR, governance, estates, IT and school improvement services remain efficient, compliant and responsive.
6. Embed a consistent Trust-wide approach to financial management and internal control, supported by the Trust Finance Officer and CFO, with regular budget monitoring, forecasting and reporting to Trustees and Local Governing Bodies.
7. Review and strengthen the Trust-wide risk register following expansion, considering educational, financial, operational, safeguarding, workforce, estates, technological, political and reputational risks, with clear mitigation, ownership and monitoring arrangements.
8. Implement a rigorous Trust-wide programme of internal scrutiny and audit, using findings to strengthen financial controls, statutory compliance, governance and operational effectiveness across all schools and provisions.
9. Ensure all schools have robust and up-to-date safeguarding, Health & Safety, estates and business continuity risk assessments, with clear lines of accountability and appropriate Trust-level oversight.
10. Develop the Trust's Early Years strategy for children aged 0–5, consolidating existing provision and progressing plans for sustainable two-year-old provision at Marine Park Primary School in line with identified community need and available funding.
11. Develop the Monument Centre Family Hub as a sustainable community resource, strengthening leadership and management arrangements, increasing engagement with families and partners and evaluating its impact on community needs.
12. Review wraparound care, lettings, holiday activities and community provision across all Trust schools, including the two new academies, to identify opportunities to increase participation, meet local need and generate sustainable additional income.
13. Develop a Trust-wide estates and capital strategy, incorporating the condition, compliance, maintenance and future investment requirements of all schools, including East Herrington Primary and Hetton Lyons Primary.
14. Continue to develop strategic partnerships and collaboration opportunities with maintained schools and academy trusts, using the expanded Trust's capacity and expertise to provide high-quality school improvement and operational services to external partners.
15. Review progress against the 2024–2027 Operations long-term actions and success criteria, evaluating the impact of Trust growth, financial sustainability, Early Years development, community provision and risk management to establish priorities for the next strategic planning cycle.

Long Term Actions 2024/2027

1. Daycare/Early Years provision (0-5years) is available at Barnwell Academy, Dunn Street Primary, marine Park Primary and Whitburn Village.
2. 2 year old provision is available at Marine Park Primary School.
3. The Monument Centre Family Hub provides community cohesion and is well attended with a good reputation. Employ a Family hub manager to co-ordinate and manage the centre.
4. Increase the number of academies/academy trusts in the collaborative family group for school improvement and financial efficacy.
5. Increase lettings and activities after school and through school holidays, including a summer school to generate further.
6. Review the risk register in light of current political, financial, technological and social landscapes.

Leadership and Governance

As Trustees of a charitable trust, our Trust Board members ensure that they comply with charity and company law.

The leadership and management structure of the trust consists of the Trust Board, Local Governing Body, Executive Leadership Team and the Senior Leadership Teams in each school. The aim of the management structure is to devolve responsibility and encourage involvement in decision making at all levels. Accountability and responsibility are set out in the Trust scheme of delegation.

The Trust Board's core functions are strategic planning, setting general policy, reviewing curriculum, budget monitoring, monitoring standards and performance and driving the direction of the Trust.

The Local Governing Body of each school has delegated governance functions from the trustees. These are set out in the trust scheme of delegation. They have a nuanced understanding of how their individual school functions and provide insight to the board of trustees.

The Executive Leadership Team include the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer. The Executive Leadership Team provides strategic and operational oversight to all schools and early years settings and the employees across the trust. They are also responsible for developing opportunities and seeking collaboration with other trust, schools and the wider community.

The Senior Leadership Team in each school includes the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher and any other key individual school leader. They are responsible for delivering the trust vision and aims with a focus on leading school improvement priorities, teaching and learning, securing staff development and pastoral care.

Governance Review

Internal reviews of the structure and effectiveness of governance are carried out annually. To strengthen accountability, a Local Governing Body has been established for each school, with parent and staff governors elected to ensure appropriate representation and effective local oversight.

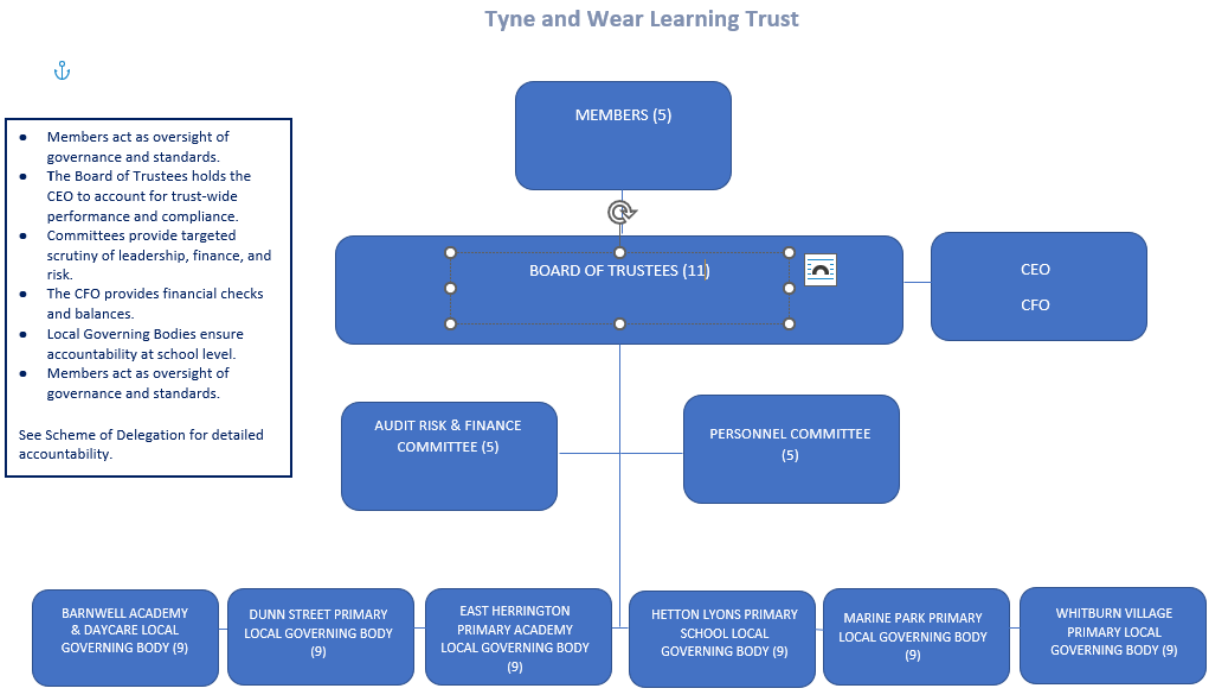
The Trust now has five Members, with no Persons of Significant Control. A rigorous programme of self-evaluation, monitoring and review has been adopted by Trustees and will continue throughout this and the next academic year.

As part of the Trust's planned growth and the integration of the new schools, three Trustees from Balmoral Learning Trust will join the Tyne and Wear Learning Trust Board, bringing the total number of Trustees to 11. This will strengthen the Board's capacity, experience and range of skills, while supporting continuity of governance through the transition.

The expanded Trust Board will undertake an updated skills audit to ensure that its membership provides the appropriate balance of educational, financial, legal, HR, estates, safeguarding and strategic expertise. Committee membership and responsibilities will also be reviewed to ensure that governance arrangements remain effective and proportionate as the Trust grows.

Trustees will continue to provide robust challenge and support to executive leaders, maintaining a clear focus on educational standards, financial sustainability, statutory compliance, risk management and securing the best possible outcomes for all pupils across the Trust.

Current Board Structure and Membership



The September 2024 skills audit identified gaps in the Trust Board's skills and experience, particularly in accountancy, HR and legal expertise. Accountancy and HR experience have since been strengthened. Legal expertise remains a skills gap, and the Trust would welcome Trustees or Local Governors with relevant legal experience.

MEMBERS

The Board members have overall responsibility and is ultimately accountable for the Academy. They will hold to account the Trustees. Powers are delegated from the Board via our terms of reference. This is reviewed on an annual basis.

Mrs Andrea Whitaker-Lindsley

- 20 years' experience as school governor, 12 years of this as vice chair of governors and safeguarding lead.
- Employed with the Department for Works and Pensions for 35 years and experienced in supporting vulnerable families and related safeguarding issues.

- Manage a large team of professional visiting officers with performance related responsibility

Mr Geoff Seagrove

- HMI Inspector
- National Leader of Education
- Successful teaching career and experienced Headteacher of 25 Years
- Headteacher- Dunn Street Primary 1997-2001
- Headteacher (Retired December 31st, 2018) of a large 3 form primary school, Mortimer Primary School from 2001-2018
- Outstanding OFSTED Dec 2012, Teaching School status September 2013
- Lead a successful teaching school in collaboration with Harton Academy secondary school
- Expertise in leadership and management, Maths, English and special educational needs and disability.

Mr Anthony Mills

- A vocational skills expert with considerable experience of working at all levels within the education sector
- competent teacher, assessor and internal verifier
- An excellent understanding of qualification structures, delivery and quality assurance arrangements
- Led two organisations through a change management process to improve efficiency and operation within a work based learning setting
- Experience as an additional inspector with OFSTED and have an excellent working knowledge of the current common inspection framework
- Inspected schools and college in the Middle East region
- Competent engineer

Mrs Nicola Procter

- Trustee at Barnwell Academy and part of the Audit, Finance and Premises committee for 4 years prior to being a member
- Associate Chartered Accountant
- Trained at top 10 accountancy firm, specialising in audit, accounts and taxation of owner managed and not for profit entities
- Group Financial Controller. Responsible for financial reporting and planning

Ms Emma Reay

- Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions at Newcastle University
- 25+ years' experience working in Higher Education
- Responsible for the strategic leadership of Newcastle University's UK Recruitment, widening participation, undergraduate and postgraduate admissions teams (home and international)
- Committed to equality of opportunity, supporting schools and colleges as part of the levelling-up agenda, and with progression to Higher Education
- Expertise in measures to support fair access, and is responsible for all access-related regulatory requirements, including the University's Access and Participation Plan (APP)
- Chair of the Northeast Raising Aspirations Strategy Group, Chair of the NE UniConnect Strategy Group and Chair of the national Realising Opportunities Management Group.
- Serves on the Russell Group's Admissions and WP Committees
- Prior representative on OFFA's Access Agreement Steering Group.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Trustees are responsible for strategic planning, setting general policy, adopting an annual development plan, reviewing curriculum, budget monitoring, making major decisions about the direction the Trust. Their responsibilities are detailed in the trust schemes of delegation.

Mr Stephen Wharton (Chair of Trustees)

- Chair of Trustees at Barnwell Academy
- School governor for 9 years
- 35+ years' of working within the Water Industry delivering programmes of work.
- 20+ years' experience of managing and leading a team of 30 professionals
- Qualifications include a 1st class honour degree in leadership and management at Northumbrian Water
- Director of the property management company Right to Manage

Mrs Donna Hargrave (Vice Chair)

- Early Help worker supporting the Safeguarding of children and the troubled families' projects in Sunderland
- Experienced early Years worker supporting families within Children's Centres
- Trustee at Barnwell Academy and part of the Personnel Committee

- Safeguarding Governor for Barnwell Academy

Kevin Bainbridge MSc BSc MCIOB CMaPS (Appointed by Academy Members)

- Associate at WSP UK LTD.
- CDM Technical Lead for water and asset design.
- 20 years' experience in construction industry covering health and safety, design and project management
- Chartered construction manager
- Certified Member of the Association for Project Safety (APS)
- Chartered Member of Chartered Institute of Building (C10B
- Nebosh National Certificate in Construction Health and Safety
- Nebosh National Certificate in fire safety and risk management
- BOHS P405 in Management of Asbestos in Buildings
- MSc in Project Management
- HND & BSc in Architectural Technology
- Currently studying for NEBOSH National Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety

Mrs Victoria Barkess (Appointed by Academy Members)

- Trustee at Barnwell since November 2023
- 25 years working in Finance
- Worked with in all areas of the profession training up to accountant.
- Current position Management Accountant

Mrs Carol Palmer (Appointed by Academy Members)

- Trustee of TWLT
- Retired after over 30 years of primary teaching across all year groups including Early Years as well as management experience
- Was a governor and vice chair of the Blue Skies Federation
- Served as a staff governor when teaching in Sunderland LEA
- MA in Education
- B Ed (Hons) in Primary Education, Outdoor and Environmental Studies 2:1
- PGCE Primary Maths, specialist maths teacher
- NPQH

Mrs Jacki Gilmore (Appointed by Academy Members)

- Retired after working as a civil servant for HRMC.
- Extensive experience of Governance
- Chair of Governors of the Blue Skies Federation of schools

Mrs Deborah Brown (Appointed by Academy Members)

- Primary School Teacher 1994 -2000
- Literacy Consultant Newcastle LA 2000 -2001
- Sunderland LA Literacy Consultant 2001 to2004
- Deputy Headteacher 2004 —2007
- Hartlepool LA School Improvement Adviser 2007 - 2013
- School Literacy Champion 2013 - 2015
- Self-employed education consultant 2013 - 2017
- Trustee of Balmoral Learning Trust 2016-2026, Chair and Vice Chair roles
- Chair of performance and standards
- Governor at Hetton Lyons Primary School

Mr Simon Snowden (Appointed by Academy Governors)

- Global Product Training Strategy Lead for Volvo Cars and its affiliate partners
- Responsible for the strategic development and global deployment of product training initiatives across four key regions: Europe, the Americas, Latin America, and APeC, with strategic oversight for China
- Financial oversight and responsibility for projects with budgets of between £1m and £10m
- 4 year term as Governor and Vice Chair of Governors at East Herrington Primary Academy
- Link governor for Curriculum and Pupil Premium
- March 2025 – Sept 2026: Director on the board of Balmoral Learning Trust

Mr Paul Sandersfield (Appointed by Academy Governors)

- Employed as a full-time ICT Director for a housing group in Northumberland
- Responsible for the ICT provision for 650 staff
- Lead transformational projects and efficiencies
- Worked in the public sector starting in audit and moving to ICT
- Worked with risk management, cybersecurity and GDPR
- Governor at East Herrington for 4 years
- Director at Balmoral learning Trust for 4 years

Mrs Ashley Emmerson *(CEO, Accounting Officer- Ex Officio)*

- Headteacher at Barnwell Academy (Sept 2015- Dec 2024)
- Outstanding Early Years Ofsted Nov 2021, Outstanding Primary School Ofsted June 2023
- 25+ year successful teaching career with 20 years in senior leadership positions
- Within Senior Leadership positions involved in many successful OFSTED inspections resulting in 1 school awarded Beacon Status and 2 school Outstanding, 2 Early Years Outstanding and teaching school status
- Extensive experience of education pedagogy including planning, curriculum and assessment

- Proven success in strategic school development, fostering cross school collaboration, mentoring and coaching staff
- Senior Leader of Education (SLE) specialising in Early Years providing school to school improvement and support
- Passionate about Early Years and inclusion. Skilled in engaging all stakeholders including the local and wider community
- Provided a range of teaching and learning CPD for school direct trainees, teachers and leaders
- TRA panellist (DFE)
- Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Education 2:1 (BA Hons)
- Post Graduate Diploma in Professional Studies Education- Curriculum (PgDip)
- NPQEL

Mr Chris Nellist (CFO/ Associate Trustee)

- Extensive experience of Senior Leadership and School Business Management including primary, secondary and sixth form phases
- Other sector experience includes working within the fields of project management, business development, change management and sales/marketing.
- Consultancy work to support schools with financial and operational management.
- Member of Institute of School Business Leadership.
- Member of a regional Financial and Operational Leaders network.
- CIPFA Level 7 Diploma in School Financial and Operational Leadership.
- Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration and Finance.
- CIMA certificate level in Business Accounting.

The Board has delegated the day-to-day responsibility to the CEO, as accounting officer, for ensuring financial controls conform with the requirements of both propriety and good financial management and in accordance with the requirements and responsibilities assigned to it in the funding agreement between Tyne and Wear Learning Trust and the Secretary of State for Education.

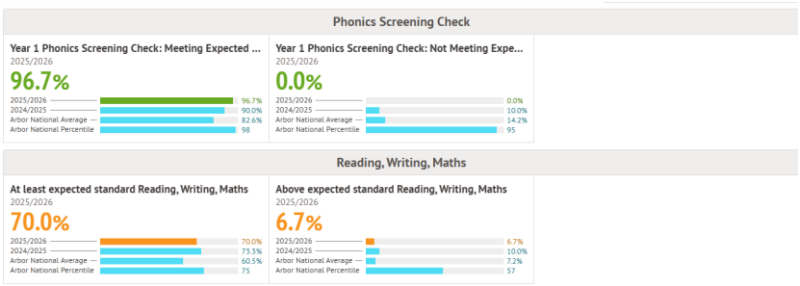
Achievement

Achievements and performance objectives achieved 2025-2026:

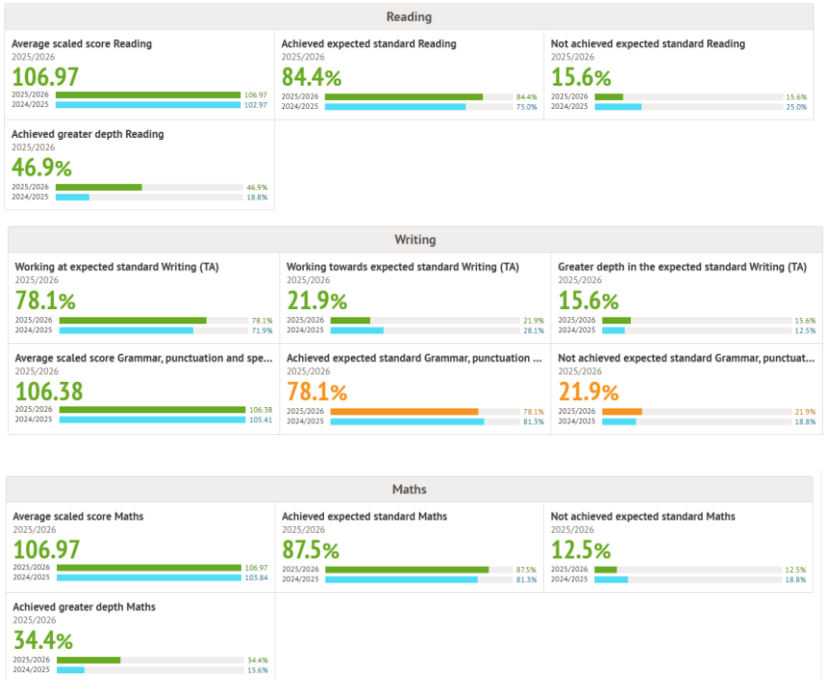
Performance – Headlines 2025/26

Barnwell Academy

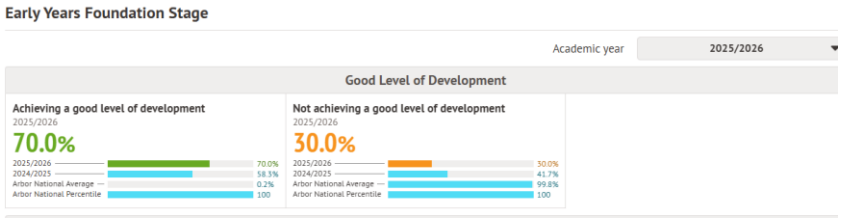
Key Stage 1



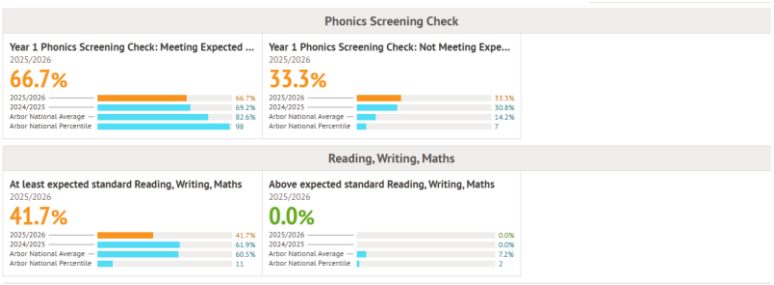
Key Stage 2



Dunn Street Primary



Key Stage 1



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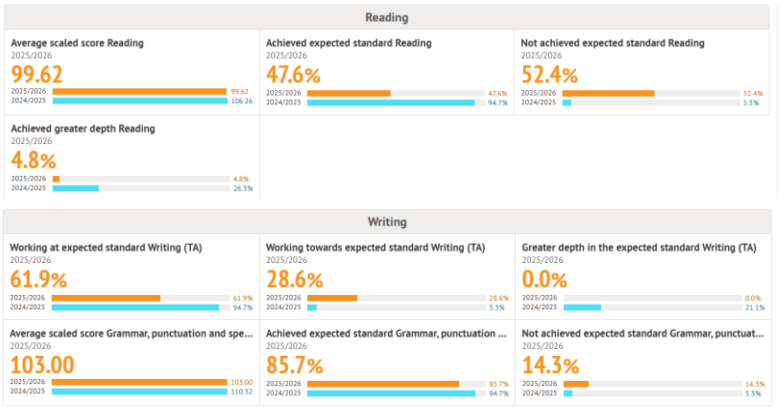
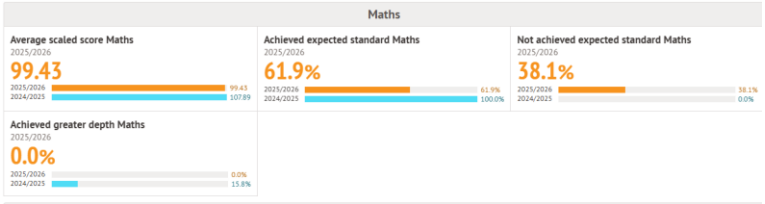
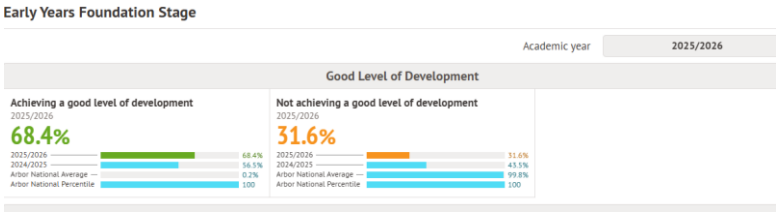
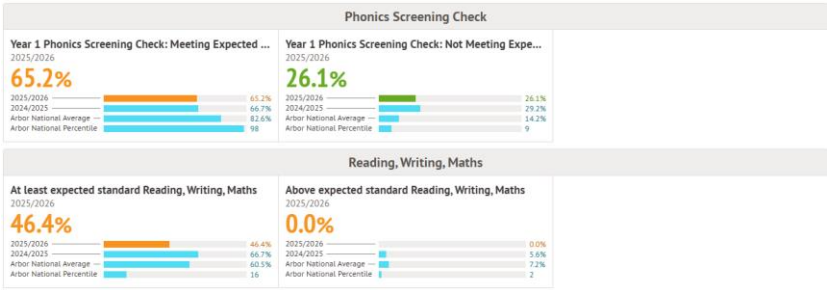




Marine Park Primary



Key Stage 1



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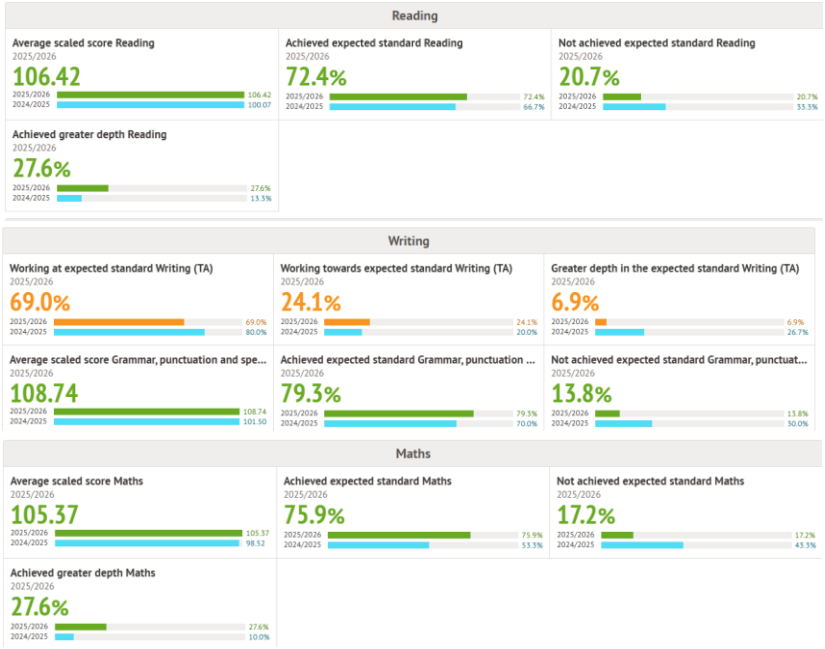
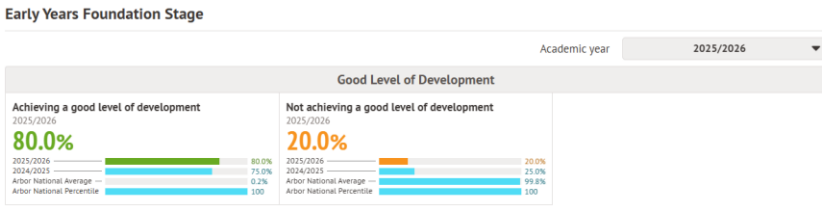
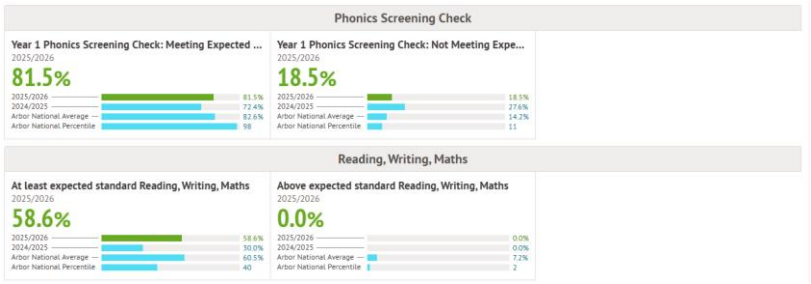


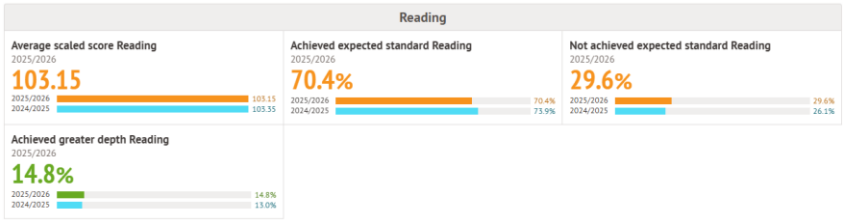
Whitburn Village Primary

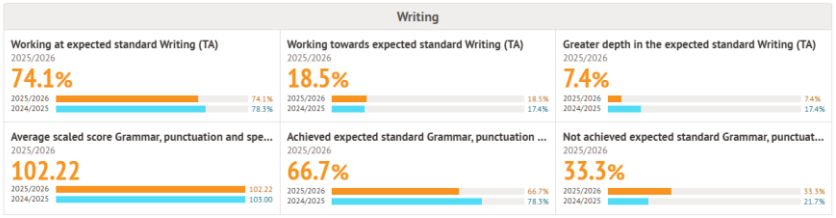


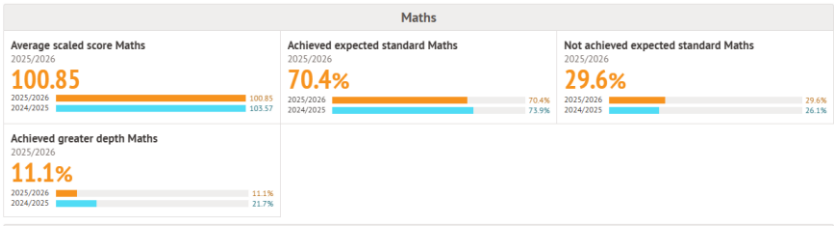
Key Stage 1



Key Stage 2



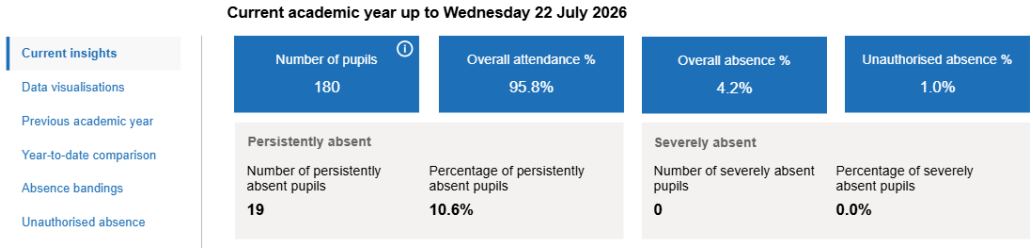




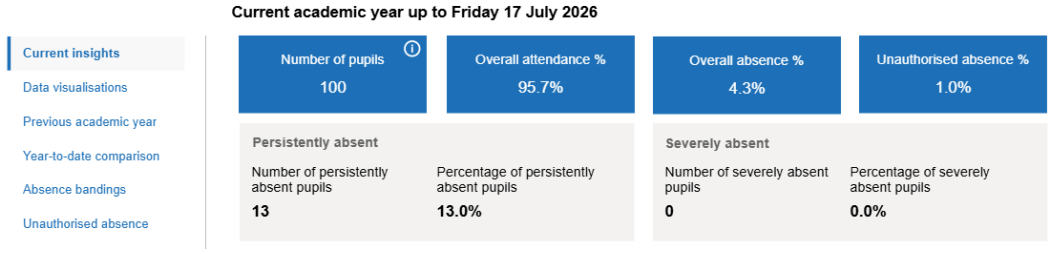
Attendance

Tyne and Wear Learning Trust believe promoting regular attendance is key to ensuring that children have the best possible start in life and are well-prepared for future educational and career opportunities. Regular attendance is crucial for a child's academic achievement, social development, and overall well-being. Regular attendance ensures that children receive consistent instruction, which is vital for mastering foundational skills in English and Maths. It also provides opportunities for social interaction, helping children develop essential social skills and build friendships.

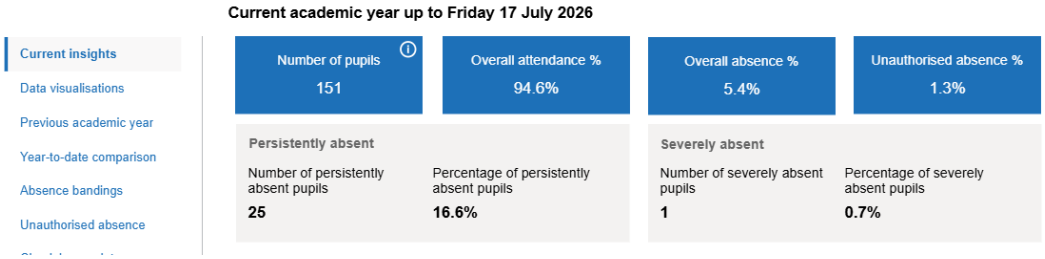
Barnwell Academy



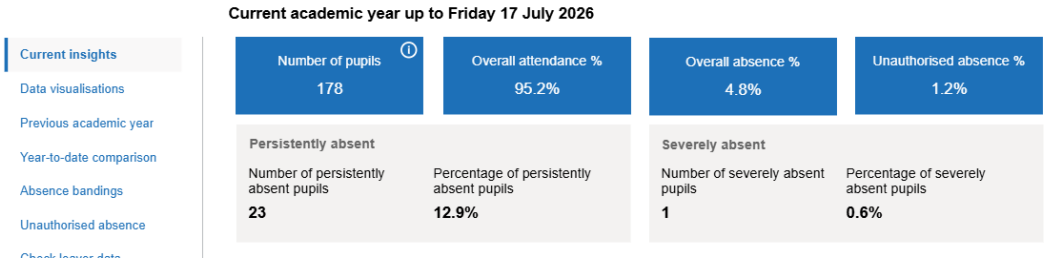
Dunn Street Primary School



Marine Park Primary School



Whitburn Village Primary School



Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the term used to describe the procedures; actions and activities that ensure our pupils are across the Trust are safe and free from harm.

Tyne and Wear Learning Trust fully recognise the contribution it can make to safeguard the children and support the pupils in its care. There are three main elements to the Trust's safeguarding procedures:

Prevention:

- Providing pupils with information, advice and guidance about their own personal safety.
- Encouraging pupils to create an open culture to discuss and debate the issues that threaten our safety and well-being.
- Providing a safe, warm comfortable environment
- Developing an awareness of the potential harm surrounding our ever developing technological world such as online media.

Protection:

- Protect pupils from neglect, physical, emotional, or sexual abuse.

- Prevent radicalisation.
- Ensure all pupils are free from bullying or harassment.

Support:

- Develop and maintain an ethos which promotes a positive, supportive, and secure environment which gives all pupils a sense of value and self-respect.
- Develop a well-trained, responsive, and knowledgeable staff whose role it is to respond appropriately and in accordance with Safeguarding procedures and policies.
- Liaise with external agencies and professionals to secure support for pupils and their families.

All staff employed across the Trust has a responsibility to safeguard pupils. This means staff should:

- Attend all mandatory health and safety, equality and diversity and safeguarding training.
- Become familiar with school policies and procedures linked to safeguarding.
- Become familiar with statutory and non-statutory guidance related to Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Report any safeguarding concerns, following their own schools' procedures for reporting.
- Deliver a broad and balanced curriculum underpinned by the social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development of pupils and explore some of the subjects covered by safeguarding.

Financial Commitment

The following table below shows a summary of our current financial situation.

TYNE AND WEAR LEARNING TRUST
Summary Financial Position

	2024/25 £'000	*Projected* **2025/26** £'000	*Projected* **2026/27** £'000	*Projected* **2027/28** £'000
Income				
DfE Funding	3,839	4,884	10,280	9,968
Local Authority Grants	973	1,314	2,005	2,005
Generated funds	334	262	524	524
Other Income	10	72	1,171	171
Total Income	5,156	6,532	13,980	12,668
Expenditure	5,123	6,033	12,339	12,085
In year Surplus / Deficit (-)	33	499	1,641	583
Reserves balance	783	1,282	2,923	3,506

Note: 2026/27 figures include transfer of Balmoral Learning Trust into TWLT

The summary indicates a robust financial position, underpinned by prudent budget planning and effective management. The Trust is financially well-positioned to invest strategically in capacity building as opportunities present themselves.

Recruitment and Retention

Tyne & Wear Learning Trust will recruit and retain excellent staff by offering a clear, values-led employee value proposition and an inclusive, efficient hiring experience. We will use high-quality, safer-recruitment processes and standardised adverts to widen the field, build year-round talent pools (ECTs, TAs, SEND, leaders), and prioritise local training partners and flexible roles to reduce agency reliance. Every new staff member will receive a structured 6 week induction with a mentor, while ongoing development is anchored in instructional coaching, mentoring, subject/phase networks, and transparent career pathways. To retain high quality staff, we offer a supportive appraisal cycle with intelligent workload reviews, wellbeing support and visible recognition. Through planned succession planning we will grow internal leaders, and data dashboards will track vacancy rates, 90-day retention, annual retention, and internal promotions so we can act early. The outcome is a stable, motivated workforce that delivers excellent outcomes for pupils and sustains the trust's growth.

Growth Strategy

Tyne & Wear Learning Trust will pursue measured, quality-first growth that strengthens outcomes for children and creates sustainable career pathways for staff. We will prioritise partnerships and academy collaboration within our local footprint to preserve community identity, applying clear entry criteria (values alignment, educational potential, safeguarding maturity, financial sustainability, estates readiness) and robust due diligence. Each integration will follow a 90-day compliance and baselining plan, a 12-month improvement and inclusion plan, and a transparent governance and reporting procedure. Success will be evidenced through improved pupil outcomes, stronger attendance and inclusion metrics, staff retention and internal progression, procurement efficiencies reinvested in classrooms, and positive stakeholder feedback.

Risk Management

The trust members and senior leadership team review risk termly. The most recent risk management plan was carried out by the Executive Leadership Team in June 2026 and subsequently ratified by the Board.

Our full risk management plan can be requested to view or viewed on the Tyne and Wear Learning Trust website. The plan presents current risks that could have minor, major or critical impact on the operational and financial aspects of the trust.

We believe many other schools will also be facing many of these risks and working together collaboratively will help to mitigate the impact of them going forward.

Future Risks

The Board of trustees is committed to ensuring they are up to date with changes in political, economic and educational and technological landscapes. This will predict future risk and enable the trust to mitigate those risks accordingly.

Join our Multi Academy Trust

Tyne and Wear Learning Trust have been formed with the aim of building a network of schools where high standards of teaching and learning are consistently delivered. Our approach to collaboration is based on mutual respect and the belief that each school retains its individuality, while benefiting from the collective strength of the trust. What makes Tyne and Wear Learning Trust stand out is our commitment to:

- A child-centred, inclusive approach to education.
- High-quality professional development for staff at all levels.

- Strong governance and support structures.
- Collaborative working between schools, where knowledge and expertise are shared to drive continuous improvement.

For schools considering a partnership, or simply want to learn more about our Trust, please contact us for a chat. We welcome contact with schools in the North East and are always keen to work collaboratively to share thoughts and ideas.

If you would like to see or know more, then please do not hesitate to contact the CEO, Ashley Emmerson, for a conversation on 0191 500 8707 or by emailing a.emmerson@tyneandwearlt.co.uk