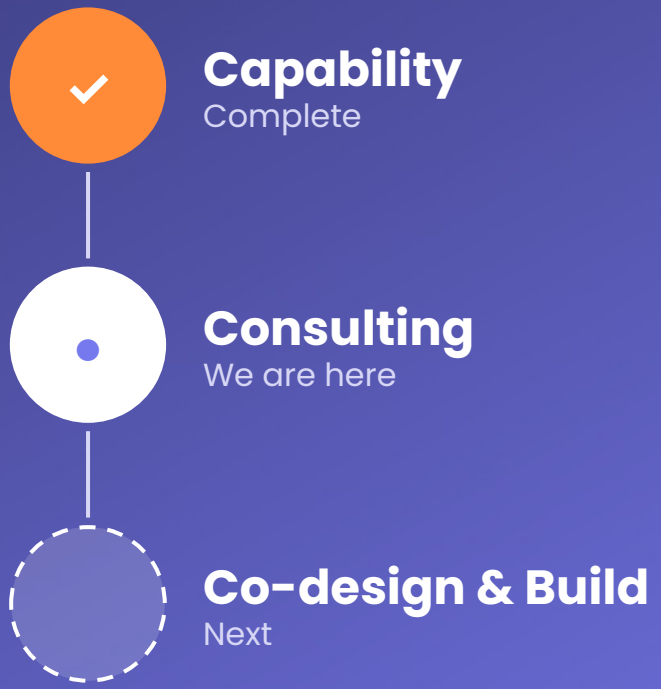
Blended AI Education

A WORKING CASE STUDY · OCTOBER 2026

# Redesigning HR with people and AI

How a growing multi-academy trust is learning how its work really happens, before deciding what AI should do

Project runs September 2026 to January 2027



# The case study on one page

### The challenge

A growing trust that wants HR to stay close to its people

### The starting point

Staff absence takes a lot of time for HR and headteachers

### What we found

The bigger opportunity is the life of a policy, and how people make decisions with it

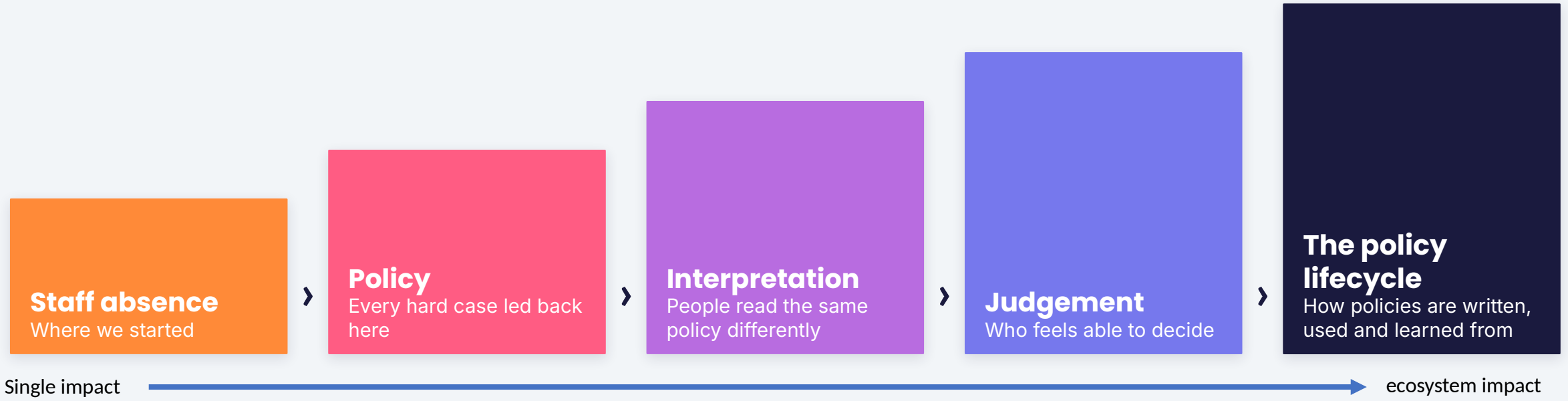
### Where we are

Capability complete. Consulting under way. Co-design & Build next

**The story in one line:** we started with one HR problem, listened carefully, and found a deeper opportunity to support good judgement across the trust.

Consulting

# One question led to a bigger opportunity for impact




**Policies need regular care**
Some name roles that no longer exist. Keeping them current takes time.

**People read them differently**
The same word, such as “exceptional”, can mean different things to different people.

**Use is hard to see**
Once a policy is signed and filed, it is hard to see how it is used.

*When a policy isn’t right, everything built on it becomes shaky.*

# More schools. More staff. One close-knit central team.




*Growing schools, one central team, more questions flowing in*

**What the trust wanted**

To keep growing and keep the close relationships it is known for.

**The first problem it named**

Staff absence. It takes a lot of time for HR and for headteachers.

*More and more questions go straight to HR.*

# Three phases, each one building on the last

## Capability

✓ Complete

**Build understanding**

Leaders and teams learn enough about AI and agents to take part with confidence.

## Consulting

● We are here

**Understand the work**

We listen to the people doing the work, map the service, and find where change will matter most.

## Co-design & Build

Next

**Create what is needed**

We design, test and build agents with the people who will use them.

**Measurement runs through every phase.** Each phase gives us stronger evidence for the next.

PHASE 1 · COMPLETE

Capability

# Capability: shared foundations

## A shared language

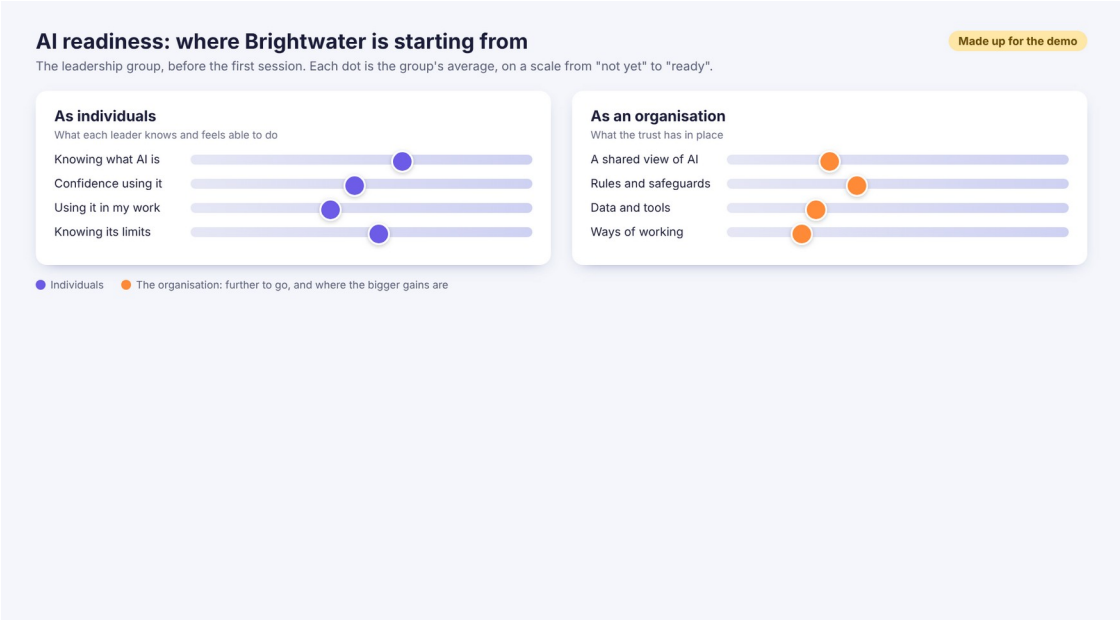
One online session, so everyone meant the same thing when we talked about AI, agents and work.

## Leaders in their own words

A morning with the leaders, where they told us how the trust really works.

## AI readiness assessments

Workforce and organisational assessments show where the trust and the team are starting from.




*Example: a readiness picture, made up for Brightwater*

**Meeting the team where they are**

PHASE 2 · WE ARE HERE

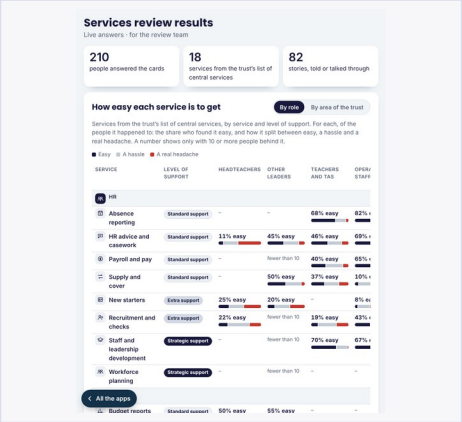
Consulting

# Mapping the policy lifecycle

## 1 — Done

### Stories & workflows

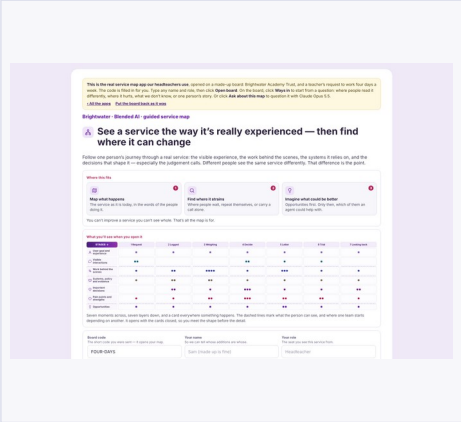
What people told us




## 2 — Done

### Service map

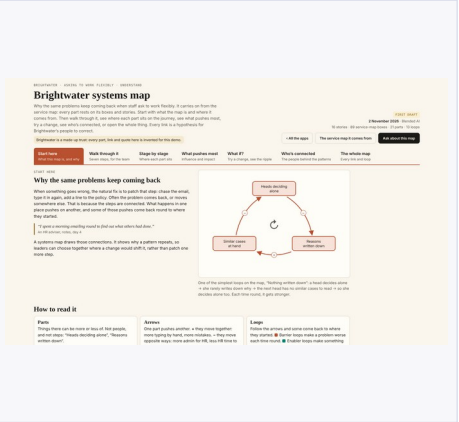
How the work really happens




## 3 — Done

### Systems map

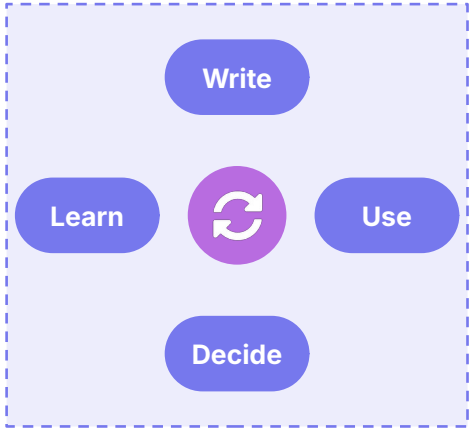
What influences what




## 4 — In progress

### Policy lifecycle

Where support will matter most



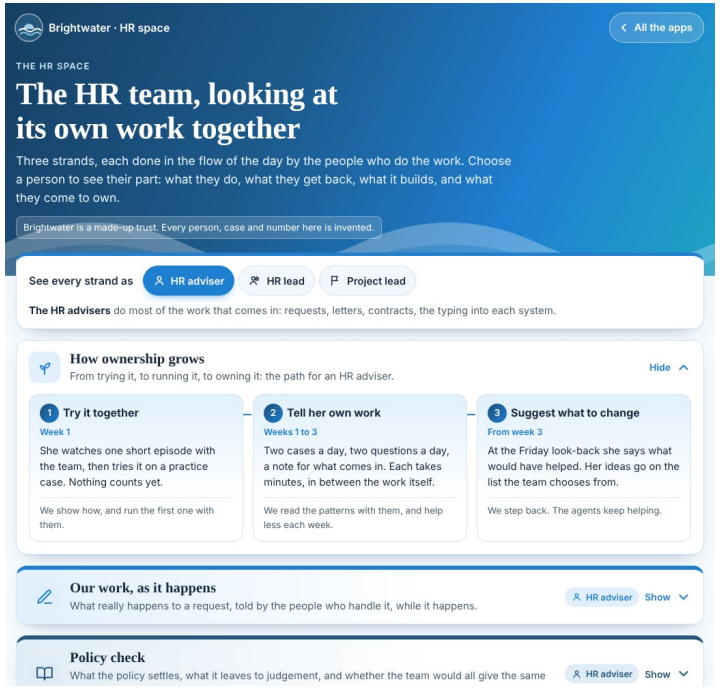

*The team talks and draws how the work really happens. Agents write the first draft. The team corrects it and goes deeper.*

PHASE 2 · WE ARE HERE

Consulting

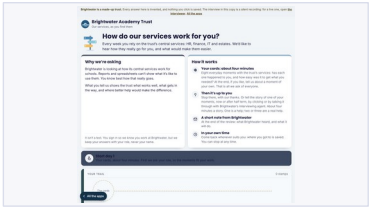
# Consulting: learning in the flow of work

The people doing the work know it best. They share as they work, and AI agents turn what they share into evidence we explore together.




**The Co-design Hub**

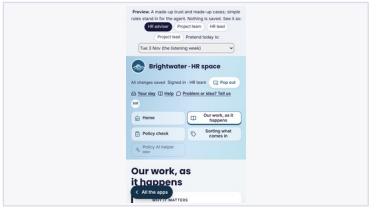
One home for the project, in place of long email chains



STAFF

### Policy Interview Agent

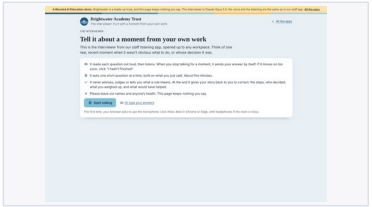
Talks with staff about how policies work for them.



HR TEAM

### HR Workflow Agent

Captures what happens to a question as HR deals with it.



HEADTEACHERS

### Headteacher Decision Reflection Agent

Helps heads think through how they make hard decisions.

**Captured alongside everyday work, with very little time taken away from it.**

Consulting

# What we have learned so far

**78%** **of leader stories**

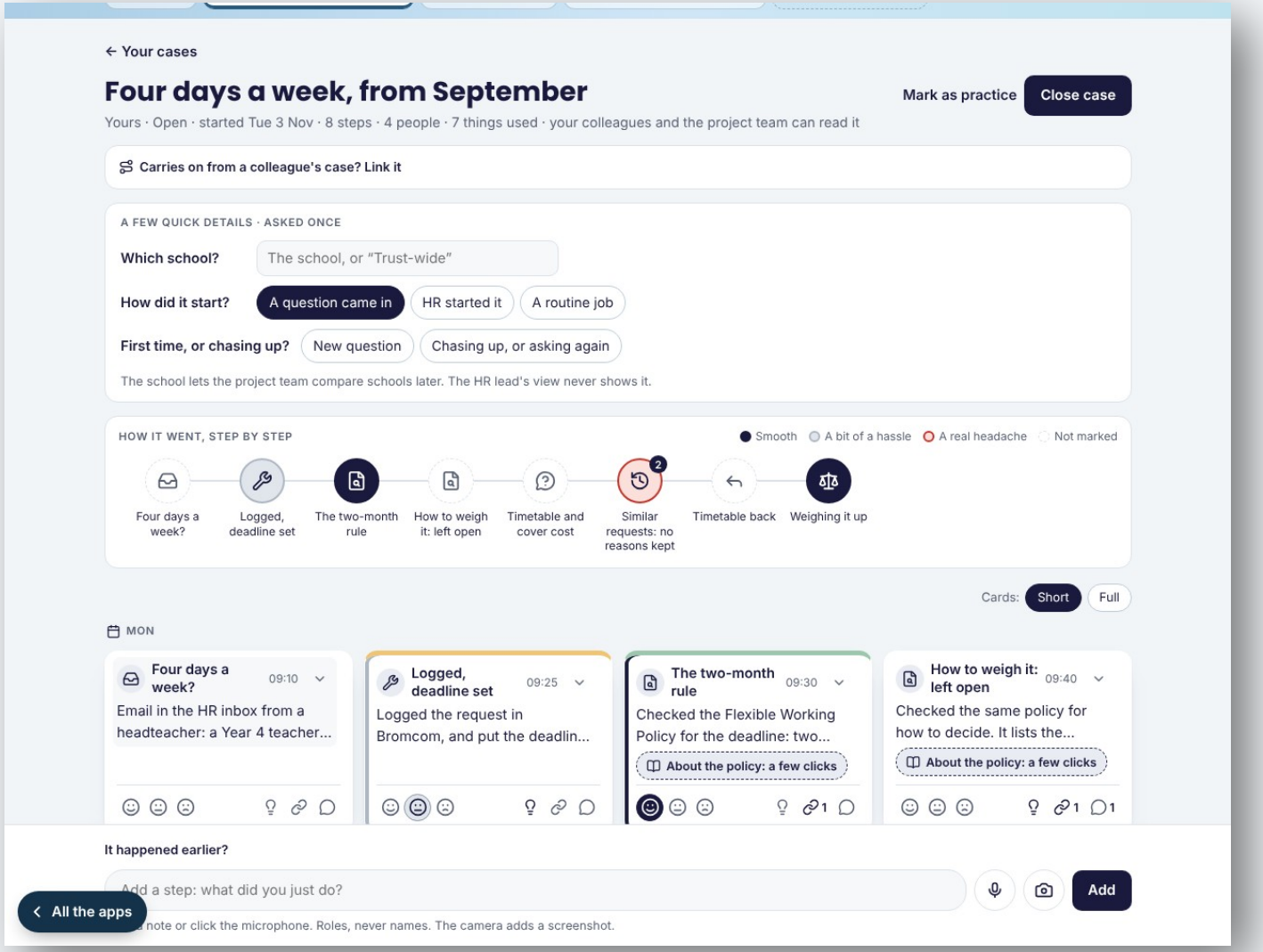
focused on cases where the policy can't easily be applied and the resulting impact of creating overly rigid policies

**40%** **of the HR service map**

Relies on judgement calls from the HR Team

**75%** **of the policy service map**

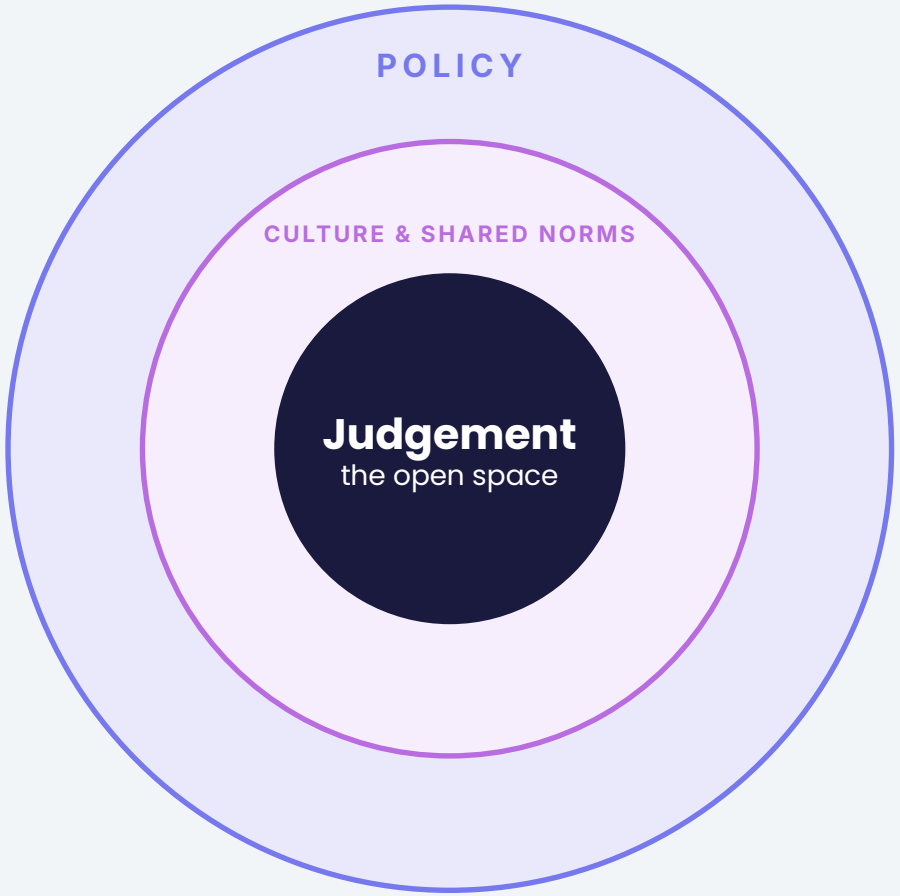
is about understanding which policy needs to be applied (30%), how to make sense of a policy (15%), decide, and justify my decision (20%)




*An HR workflow: one question, step by step, with sticking points flagged*

Consulting

# Boundaries come from culture as well as policy




**Policy sets the boundaries**
The written rules. They protect what the trust must protect.

**Culture and shared norms shape them too**
“How we do things here.” Often unwritten, and just as powerful.

**Judgement fills the open space**
The person closest to the case, using full context, decides.

When policies and culture come together, **decisions feel clearer and safer, and policies can stay simpler.**

Consulting

# Today vs. What is possible with AI agentic architectures

## TODAY WITHOUT AGENTS

1. Only the policy to help decide
2. Deciding feels exposed
3. Passed to HR, who lack the context

**Result**
More rules.
Fewer chances to build judgement.

*Deciding alone feels risky, so the case goes to HR.*

**A hard case arrives**

## WHAT COULD BE POSSIBLE WITH AGENTS

1. Shared culture, guidance and colleagues
2. Reasoning is valued, as well as the outcome
3. The person closest to the case decides

**Result**
Good practice becomes shared habit.

*Good practice spreads because people choose it, not because they are told to.*

**Which way a case goes depends on the support around the person facing it.**

WHERE IT IS GOING

# An Agentic Architecture leading to HR QI Ecosystem

1

**Policy Hygiene & Guidance Agent**

Cleans the policy and creates the guidance on how to use the policy. It continuously learns based on feedback from moderation.

2

## Triage & Decision Support Agent

Agent answers questions using the policy. If it requires interpretation, the agent supports the user to make a decision. If complexity thresholds are met, it is routed to HR

3

## Agent-supported moderation of Policy decisions

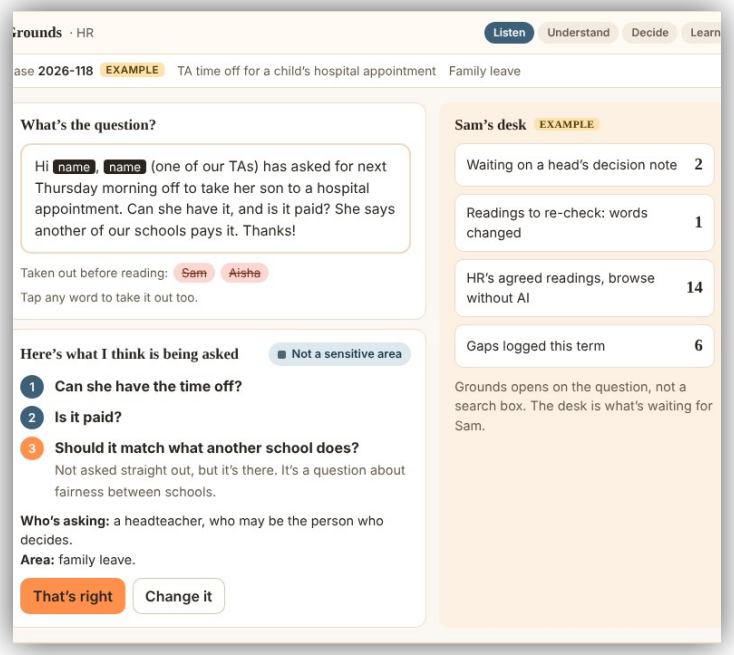
Heads compare how they made real decisions. They have someone to think with. Good thinking gets noticed.

POLICY ASSISTANT

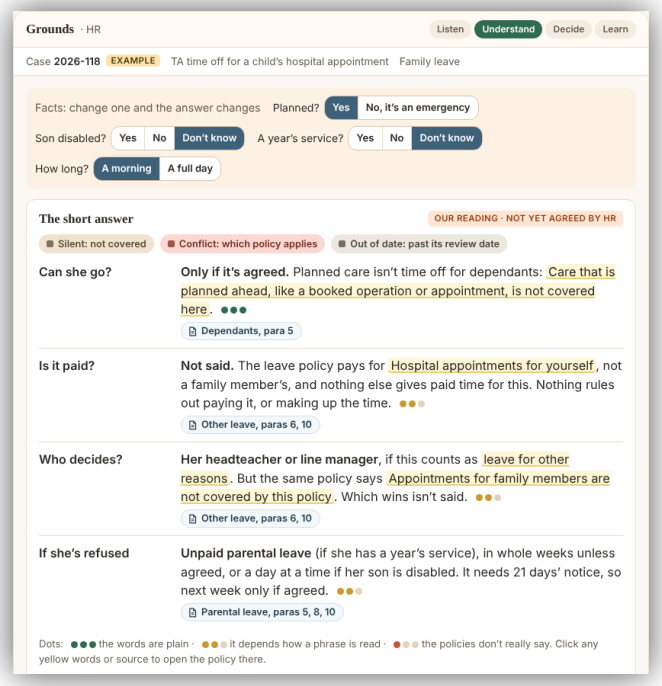
Many questions reach HR that could be settled closer to the work.

LOOKING AHEAD

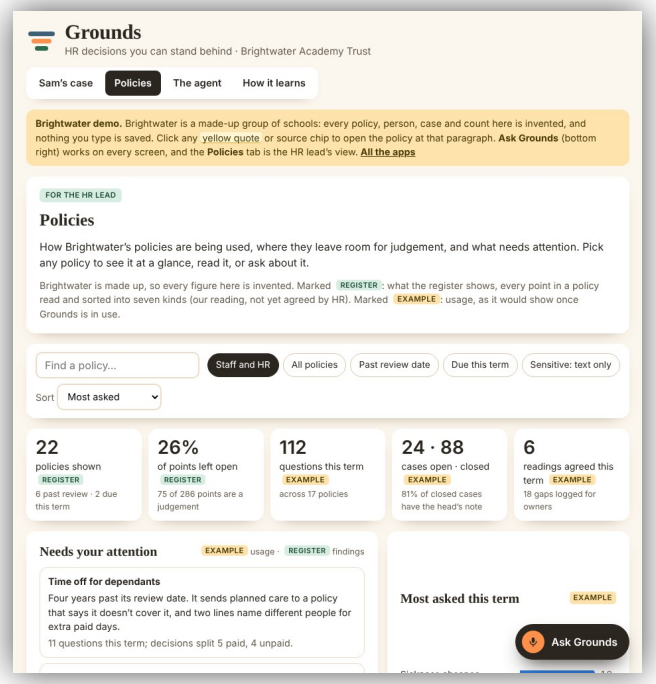
# First draft of the Policy Assistant based on the evidence so far




**1 Understands the question**
Works out what is being asked and which part needs judgement




**2 Shows the evidence**
Points to the policy wording and similar past decisions




**3 Gives HR the overview**
Shows which policies need attention and when they are due for review

**Something tangible for the team to explore, while the Consulting findings shape what we co-design and build.**

HOW WE WILL KNOW

Consulting

# Measurement is built in from day one

As the trust grows, the central team can stay focused on the work that needs it most.

### HR's workload

How many questions reach HR, and how many did not need to

MEASURE
**Number of questions**

### Decisions closer to the work

How many decisions headteachers make, instead of HR

MEASURE
**Number of decisions by headteachers**

### Time released

How many hours HR gets back, and what they do with them

MEASURE
**Hours HR spends**

### Staff experience

Do staff feel decisions about them are fair and consistent?

MEASURE
**Staff satisfaction**

### Agent capability

How the quality of work improves as people and agents work together

MEASURE
**Reflection on collaboration**

**We are counting now, during Consulting.** This sets the baseline, so we can show what changes after Co-design & Build.

# A light commitment, with people at the centre

PEOPLE

## Project team to lead it

Someone at the top, the head of the service, the service team and headteachers who speak for schools.

TIME

## Short, focused sessions

One morning together. After that, about an hour at a time. Each group of staff is asked for one thing.

SAFEGUARDS

## Rules agreed first

A data agreement before any tool is used. People make every decision. Policy wording stays the same during the trial.

**We work with the trust.** It works because the trust's own people shape it.

FOR YOUR TRUST

# Start with one service. Learn deeply. Build what matters.

**1**

## Capability

Give people the understanding and confidence to take part

›

**2**

## Consulting

Learn from the people doing the work and map the system

›

**3**

## Co-design & Build

Design, test and build what the evidence shows is needed

›

**4**

## Measure & learn

See what changed, and use it to decide what comes next

**We help trusts understand how work really happens, and build AI that strengthens their people, their culture and their decisions.**

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