

THE CHARTER SCHOOLS

EDUCATIONAL TRUST

Professional Development & Appraisal Policy

Owner:	C Buchanan	CEO	
Date:	September 2022		
Approved by:	Trust Board	Date:	12 October 2022
Next Review Date:	September 2023		

SECTION A GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Our mission at The Charter Schools Educational Trust (hereafter referred to as the Trust) is to inspire and nurture children and young people in South London to excel, through education that transforms lives. Developing great people who inspire is central to achieving this.
- 1.2. The aim of the Trust's appraisal process is to support and continuously improve the performance and contribution of all members of staff in delivering the very best education for our students, within the framework of our values and ethos.
- 1.3. It is important that staff and line managers engage in this appraisal process and understand the wider expectation we have that they will be fully aligned to the values of the Trust and their individual school/department's values and objectives.
- 1.4. We are passionate about ensuring staff have time with their line managers to think clearly about their career aspirations and what their continuous professional development needs are in meeting both their appraisal objectives, and longer-term goals.
- 1.5. We are committed to a programme of professional learning for all our staff, whatever their role and career aims. The Charter Institute of Professional Development will ensure that the training and development needs of all staff are captured through the appraisal process, by work closely with the professional learning leads in each school and central services team.
- 1.6. We believe that everyone, regardless of their role, comes to work, committed to be the best that they can be.
- 1.7. There are two key characteristics of our approach which are different to approaches used in this Trust in the past.
 - 1.7.1. The appraisal and review process is a continuous cycle. Staff should be meeting to discuss their objectives, their development needs and progress towards both on a 12-weekly cycle i.e. three times per year rather than an annual appraisal or annual and mid-year appraisal.
 - 1.7.2. Appraisal is not primarily focussed on attainment targets. The continuous appraisal and review cycle should be linked to the overall strategic aims of the school/department's development plan, and any other departmental plans, targets, and priorities. It is a given that all pupils and classes will have attainment targets (set using a fair and transparent methodology) and that all staff will strive to achieve these, so these do not need to be replicated in employees' individual written objectives.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy therefore applies to all roles across the Trust – support staff, teachers (including early career teachers), school/department leaders including headteachers, central services teams and the Trust’s Directors including the CEO.
- 2.2. It is mandatory that all school/departments use this model of appraisal and the record keeping process that sits alongside it. It replaces any school-specific systems that have existed previously.

3. Monitoring the impact of the policy

The Board of Trustees will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy on an annual basis, including trends in progression across specific groups of staff to assess its effect and the school’s continued compliance with equalities legislation.

4. Review of policy

This policy is reviewed annually by The Charter Schools Educational Trust. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

SECTION B APPRAISAL PROCESS

1. Appraisal meetings

- 1.1. Line managers will hold planned, diarised, and quality conversations with their direct reports on a 12-weekly cycle. These will be called appraisal meetings and the first will be held in term 1. They sit alongside the routine 1 2 1-line management meetings.
- 1.2. The style and tone of these meetings are not for routine, operational tasks to be discussed. Their focus is on setting expectations and objectives which enable staff to contribute to the overall longer- term objectives and priorities of the school/department.
- 1.3. The first of these meetings will be to review the longer-term aims and targets for the year ahead. These will be in line with the school's priorities. Once these are discussed, short term personal objectives will be set. These are the actions that will be taken which will help to achieve the longer-term aims. These short-term objectives will be reviewed and revised where necessary on a 12-weekly cycle.
- 1.4. In these meetings line managers will also discuss the wellbeing and professional learning needs of the member of staff, as well as their longer-term career aspirations. As we develop our Trust wide leadership development programmes and talent management system, this information will be essential.
- 1.5. It is anticipated an appraisal review meeting would take around 30/45 minutes. The first of these may be longer.
- 1.6. Middle leaders will be given time off timetable if needed for these meetings to happen.
- 1.7. Having regular dialogue with staff and supporting them in their work, is a key requirement of all leaders. It requires a coaching style of leadership, a passion for continuous professional learning and a will to bring out the very best in their staff.
- 1.8. We strive to develop the leadership skills of all our leaders so that they can bring out the very best in people and deal with any concerns swiftly, fairly, and consistently.

2. Long term aims

- 2.1. Each school will set its own priorities and targets for the year. These are mainly detailed in its development plan. Longer term individual appraisal aims should align with these and play a part in achieving them. This will be the focus of the first review meeting of the year.
- 2.2. Even if it is not specifically written down in the school development plan, every member of staff, including all support staff should understand how their longer term aims fit into the priorities of the school.
- 2.3. For Early Career Teachers their appraisal objectives should directly be linked to their Early Career Teacher 2-year Induction programme.

3. Short term objectives

- 3.1. To achieve the longer-term aims, it is advised that up to 4 shorter term objectives be set for each 12-week period. These will help to achieve the school priorities, support staff development against any professional standards/competencies for the role and any other personal development linked to career aspirations and professional learning.

4. Capability concerns

- 4.1. We realise that from time to time there will still be a need to formalise any serious areas of underperformance through the Trust's capability policy, but this should only be where the continuous cycle of review and support isn't working despite all the best efforts of the line manager and leadership team and is having a detrimental impact on teaching and learning, service delivery or other colleagues' morale.

5. Expectations

5.1. School/department leaders will:

- 5.1.1. Share the School Development plan with all staff and ensure there is a high level of understanding and engagement.
- 5.1.2. Have 12-weekly appraisal meetings with their direct reports, which set out and then review the objectives of the individual, and any support they may need in achieving them. These meetings will be recorded on the appraisal proforma and stored electronically and centrally by the HR administrator in each school.
- 5.1.3. Agree objectives that are linked to the school/department development plan, student outcomes and any other relevant department/subject area plans and priorities and are SMART in nature (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timebound).
- 5.1.4. It is a given that staff will strive to achieve student targets as part of their roles and responsibilities, but there is no need to duplicate all student attainment targets in a member of staff's objectives. However, there may be a need to pay attention to a particular group of students who are in danger of underachieving e.g. DISAD / SEND.

- 5.1.5. Engage in Trust's talent management system and leadership development programmes as they develop across the Trust.
- 5.1.6. Take time to discuss individuals' career aspirations and professional learning needs and jointly agree the best way of supporting these, including any resources/budget requirements.
- 5.1.7. Conduct the meetings in a coaching style – supporting the individual to identify what the key actions are and how they are going to achieve them. They should therefore be focused, and solution driven, with the individual coming away from the meeting motivated to succeed and willingly taking ownership of their own development.
- 5.1.8. Encourage staff to self-reflect using the professional standards and competencies of their respective role and discuss this at the meetings.
- 5.1.9. Be open to quality assurance of the process by the Principal and Trust central services Directors, including timeliness, quality of objectives and record keeping, access to professional learning opportunities and analysis of pay decisions.

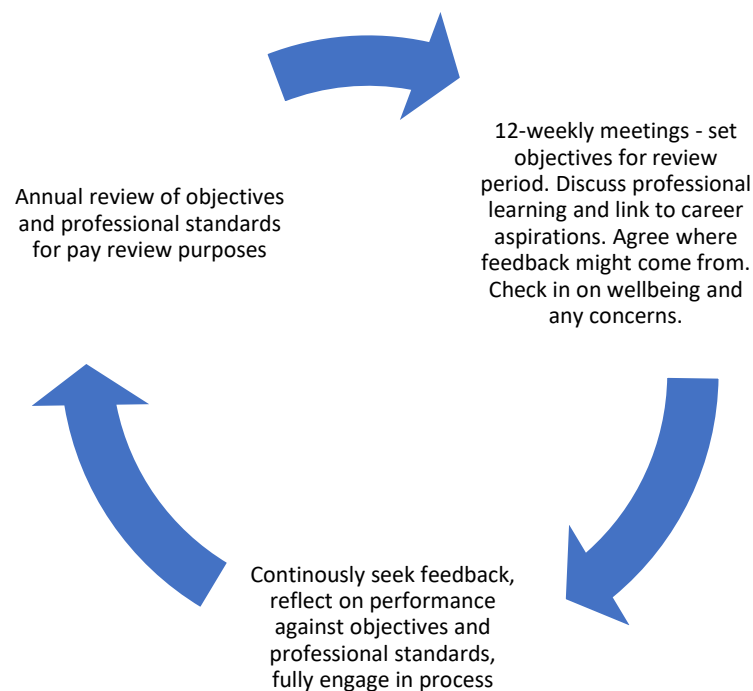
5.2. All members of staff will:

- 5.2.1. Read the published School Development Plan prior to the appraisal process – typically at the beginning of the autumn term. They should ask questions if they are not clear on any aspect of the plan and how it applies to them and their role.
- 5.2.2. Personally commit to engaging in the process and come to the meetings with their own thoughts on stretching objectives and development areas and how they are performing against their professional standards.
- 5.2.3. Self-reflect on the professional standards and competencies (including job descriptions) for their role and how they feel they are doing against them - this will not be measured or judged but will be the starting point for any discussion.
- 5.2.4. Come to the meetings ready to discuss career aspirations and professional learning needs.
- 5.2.5. Actively seek real-time feedback from colleagues on their performance and behaviours. This will include lesson observations (where relevant) and 360 feedback.
- 5.2.6. Continuously seeks ways to improve their performance and personal contribution, in the knowledge that they are not expected to 'prove' their worth but bring the best version of themselves to work, move out of their comfort zone and strive to continuously improve in all aspects of their role.
- 5.2.7. Be ambitious, creative, inquisitive, open to feedback and new ideas, reflective and live our values of aspiration and achievement, personal responsibility, self-discipline, and mutual respect.

6. Self-evaluation against professional standards or competencies

- 6.1. There is a set of professional standards or competencies for most job roles in the Trust.
- 6.2. For teachers, these are the published national professional standards for teachers. For Headteachers, the Headteacher standards will be used and for other roles including support staff the individual job description should be used.
- 6.3. Their purpose is to help individuals to reflect on their quality of practice and what they could do to improve it. It will not be used to grade anyone in any way but will facilitate discussion in the appraisal meetings.

7. Continuous review cycle



Although the cycle is continuous, with no overall grading or numeric assessment, line managers will be expected to complete an annual review proforma which summarises the year's performance, based on the termly appraisal meetings and the outcomes of pupils. This will be used to inform the Headteacher and SLT members in recommendations for any pay progression. Pay decisions should not come as any surprise to the individual and should be shared with them once made by the Headteacher, so they understand the rationale.

8. The paperwork – record- keeping

- 8.1. The proforma for the review meetings will be provided by school HR administrators and will be made available on school intranets. Line managers will be responsible for completing it on a 12-weekly cycle.
- 8.2. On an annual basis, in preparation for the Pay Committee meeting, line managers will be required to complete the annual review section of their forms and submit to the Headteacher and school HR lead for review before final salary recommendations are put forward. This does not require an additional meeting but should be a summary of the continuous review meetings and outcomes over the year. This should be completed by 30th September each year.

9. Feedback

- 9.1. Feedback is an important element of this process. Staff will actively seek feedback in real time on their performance as things happen.
- 9.2. Feedback can range from:
 - Emails/exchanges from colleagues, students, parents, school/department leaders, and other colleagues around the Trust.
 - Lesson observations/learning walks
 - Formal 360 feedback process using accredited material
- 9.3. It is not intended this just becomes a “wheelbarrow” of evidence, but useful, relevant, and real-time feedback to record against objectives which helps staff to continuously develop.
- 9.4. Feedback can sometimes be difficult to give or accept. We encourage all colleagues to give regular feedback which is timely and constructive, without damaging anyone’s self-esteem. In receiving feedback, time should be spent reflecting before deciding how or if to act upon it. It is sometimes useful to speak to others to help you reflect. If you have a coach or mentor, this is a perfect area for discussion. As part of this process we therefore encourage staff to consider a mentor or coach.

10. Individual pay decisions

- 10.1. The Trust’s pay policies can be found on the Trust Website (there are separate ones for teachers, support staff and Executives).
- 10.2. At the beginning of the Autumn term, middle and senior leaders will be expected to complete the annual review summary form and send to the headteacher in order for this to be considered by the school/department remuneration committee who should meet by 31st October. This is not the full appraisal document. Any pay recommendation will be communicated separately to the appraisal document and should not be disclosed to the individual at this stage.

- 10.3. Pay decisions made by the committee will not be based solely on the appraisal outcomes but they will contribute to it. Where individuals are on their respective pay scale will also affect decisions.
- 10.4. These pay decisions, particularly at senior leader level may be moderated by the CEO as part of quality assurance of the pay policy.
- 10.5. The pay review of Headteachers and senior Central Services Directors will be agreed by the Trust Pay Committee, based on the recommendations of the CEO, in discussion with the Chairs of LGB's where applicable.
- 10.6. No pay award is automatic. However, in some roles (teachers on the main scale, support staff on the main support scale) a pay increment is usually awarded each year for staff who are performing effectively i.e. meeting their targets, working to the expected professional standards and competencies, and engaging fully in the appraisal cycle.
- 10.7. If a member of staff is not awarded a pay increase this should not necessarily be taken as a sign of under- performance.
- 10.8. In other roles (teachers at the top of the main scale or already on the upper pay range, support staff on the management scale, all staff on the leadership scale) a pay increment is only awarded when there is evidence of a consistently high standard of performance in all aspects of the role.
- 10.9. Teachers seeking to move on to or along the upper pay range will need to demonstrate evidence of strong performance over a number of years. Further details of threshold arrangements and progression along the upper pay scales can be found in the Teachers Pay policy.
- 10.10. The Trust's central services will produce annual data on pay progression, submitted to the Trust Pay Committee by the end of the Autumn term.

11. Complaints

- 11.1. If a member of staff is unhappy with the way their appraisal has been carried out, they should first discuss the matter informally with their line manager. If this does not resolve matters they may make representation to a member of the SLT or Headteacher/Director who should aim to resolve the matter informally.
- 11.2. Ultimately, individuals may decide to use the Trust's grievance procedure to formally register their complaint or the appeal process in the pay policy if it relates to a pay decision.

12. Confidentiality

- 12.1. The appraisal process will be treated in confidence. The only persons who will have access to the records are the line manager who conducted the appraisal, the Headteacher/Central Services team Director and members of the pay committee if requested, to support a pay decision.
- 12.2. In some circumstances the CEO and HR Director may request to see an appraisal record for a specific reason such as a complaint/grievance.
- 12.3. The Professional Development lead in each school will be able to have a summary of the professional development needs for all staff across the school/department.