

Performance Management Policy

Date Reviewed: September 2026

Date of Next Review: September 2028

Lead Professional: Trust HR Manager



Polaris
Multi-Academy Trust

Performance Management Policy

1. Purpose of policy and guiding principles

1.1 The Trust strives to be a centre of excellence for learning, and staff and students aim for the highest standards of attainment and behaviour. This policy follows the guidelines set out by the DfE Appraisal and Capability Procedure and by ACAS.

1.2 This policy is a non-contractual policy.

1.3 Performance management is a tool to support the improvement of organisations, by supporting and improving staff members' work, both as individuals and as team members. It places the highest standards of teaching and learning, and professionalism at the centre of our performance agenda. It recognises the key role played by both teachers and support staff, the importance of leadership and management at all levels, which will benefit students, staff and the whole school.

1.4 Performance Management will:

- be integral to school culture;
- include a commitment by all to raising standards;
- provide opportunities for continuous professional development;
- involve all staff in departmental and support planning and thus enhance the on-going sharing of good practice;
- be consistent, equitable and fair;
- be manageable;

1.5 The Trust believes that:

- students will benefit because staff will have a more sharply focused picture of what, with encouragement, support and high expectations, students can achieve.
- staff will benefit because they have the right to expect that their performance will be regularly monitored and assessed, and they will have a proper opportunity for professional discussion with their line manager about their work and their professional development, within the framework of the school improvement plan.

1.6 The purpose of this policy is to provide line managers, senior leaders, local governing bodies and the Trust Board with clear and consistent policy and procedures for a performance management framework, within the context of the school's improvement plan, and individual professional needs. This includes timelines, expected standards, training and monitoring and evaluation strategies.

1.7 This policy sets out where staff are eligible for pay progression.

1.8 Where there is evidence that leads to concern that an employee is consistently failing to reach professionally acceptable standards through lack of capability, then the Trust Capability Policy should be followed.

1.9 Misconduct, wilfully deficient performance, refusal to follow instructions, negligence and other similar situations should be dealt with under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.

1.10 The Head of School has the right to delegate responsibilities to appropriately trained staff, to act as 'line manager'. In the case of the Head of School, the Chief Executive Officer, with consultation with the school's Local Governing Body, will take the role of Line Manager.

1.11 The term 'Line Manager' has been used throughout this policy, this term can be interchanged with 'reviewer' or 'appraiser'.

1.12 This policy applies to all staff in the school, with the exception of:

- staff who are employed on a temporary basis for less than 2 school terms
- support staff within the contractual probationary period should be dealt with in accordance with probationary policy.
- specific guidance is in place for Early Careers teachers (ECT's) undergoing their induction period.

2. Links with other policies or legislation

2.1. This policy links to the appraisal arrangements as set out in the Education (Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations) which replace the Education (Teacher Performance Management) (England) Regulations 2006 (the 2006 Regulations). These came into force with effect from 1 September 2012 for maintained schools and local authorities.

2.2. The school is not obliged to follow this piece of legislation, but to maintain best practice has written this policy in conjunction with the model policies suggested by the Department of Education.

2.3. This policy also links with the Trust's Pay Policy, CPD Policy, Capability Policy and Staff Handbook.

2.4. This policy links to individual job descriptions, person specifications and any national standards of professionalism i.e., teachers' standards, and relevant areas of staff terms and conditions documents.

2.5. All relevant legislation applies, such as the Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act 1998 and all employment legislation.

Performance Management Procedure

1. The performance management period will run for twelve months from 1 September to 31 August.

- Performance management objectives will be set for this period of time.
- Teachers (not ECT's) who are employed during this period will have objectives set from their first date of employment to 31 August, or the end of their fixed term contract of employment, whichever sooner.
- Support staff that complete their probation during the year will have objectives set from the date of completion to 31 August, or the end of their fixed term contract of employment, whichever sooner.
- Review meetings are usually held as follows:
 - Teaching Staff by early October annually, with completed and signed paperwork submitted mid-October.
 - Support Staff by early November annually, with completed and signed paperwork submitted mid-November.
 - Deadlines for teaching and support staff will be circulated by Trust HR on an annual basis usually at the start of the academic year.
- Objective setting meetings should be held at the same time and written objectives provided to employees.
- Mid-year reviews should take place in March and deadline will be provided by Trust HR.

2. Performance management reviewers

- The Head of School will communicate annually who is responsible for reviewing performance, and who will set objectives.
- This will generally be a leader within the subject area or a teacher with additional responsibility (because of safeguarded salary arrangements or additional salary payments).
- Where possible the performance review and person setting and agreeing objectives will be the same. This may not always be possible.
- Generally, a line manager will be responsible for no more than 6 review meetings and 6 objective setting meetings.
- Where teachers have an objection to the Head of School's choice of reviewer, their concerns will
- be carefully considered and, where possible, an alternative appraiser will be offered.

3. Objective setting

- Performance management will be robust and rigorous. Objectives will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each performance management cycle.
- The objectives set will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound. (SMART). They will be based on numerical student outcomes and standard of teaching, as well as being appropriate to the individual's role and level of experience. They will also take, into account any professional aspirations or development.
- All the objectives set will be linked to the school improvement plan and curriculum area (or year team) improvement plans. All the objectives set will, if achieved contribute to improving student outcomes (academic and pastoral), the school's education provision, reputation, and performance.
- The line manager and individual will seek to agree the objectives, but, if that is not possible, the line manager will determine the objectives.
- For teaching staff only, objective setting for teachers will refer to the standards against which teacher's performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. These are the national Teacher's Standards introduced by the Department of Education from September 2012.
- There are no such standards in place for support staff, but objective setting for support staff will refer to key points in their individual job descriptions and targets within the school improvement plan.
- Objectives will be recorded on the individual's annual performance management review form.
- Performance management objective setting statements need to be completed, signed and submitted to the HR department annually in October for teaching staff and November for support staff, or within 1 month of starting a new role/employees start date.
- There is shared responsibility with line managers and employees to submit this paperwork on time. Where staff do not submit paperwork by the provided deadlines then this may impact on the individual's pay progression.
- Where a teacher starts their employment at the school part-way through a cycle, the Head of School or, in the case where the employee is the Head of School, the Chief Executive Officer shall determine the length of the first cycle for that teacher, with a view to bringing their cycle into line with that of other teachers as soon as possible.

4 Reviewing performance

4.1. Types of Review

Performance will be reviewed throughout the year through various methods, including but not limited to the following:

- Lesson observation and/or learning walks (teachers)
- Work scrutiny
- Data assessment
- Quality assurance checks (mainly support staff)

4.2. Support and training

- 4.2.1. Performance management is intended to be a supportive process which will be used to inform continuous professional development. The school aims to foster a culture in which all staff take responsibility for improving their performance through appropriate professional development.
- 4.2.2. Equally it is the responsibility of the individual to focus their efforts, skills and knowledge to undertake their role to the best of their ability and all staff are expected to access a range of support provided by the school, and this is detailed in the school's CPD calendar and policy.
- 4.2.3. Professional development will be linked to school improvement plans and ongoing individual professional development needs and priorities.

5 Feedback

- 5.1. Individuals will receive constructive feedback on their performance partway through the performance year and as soon as practicable after an observation has taken place, or when other information/evidence has come to light. (For example, after a review cycle or the completion of a project).
- 5.2. Performance and development priorities should be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year in interim meetings which take place twice a year (including the annual assessment).
- 5.3. Line managers will make comments, challenge and support and provide constructive feedback on an individual's performance with the aim of providing regular feedback and support.
- 5.4. Feedback will highlight any areas of strength as well as areas for development. Where there are concerns about any aspect of an individual's performance the line manager will meet the individual to:
 - give clear feedback to the individual about the nature and seriousness of the concerns

- give the individual the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns
 - agree any support (e.g. coaching, mentoring, structured observations), that will be provided to help address the concerns
 - make clear how, by who and by when, progress will be reviewed
 - explain the implications and next steps, if no – or insufficient – improvement is made.
- 5.5. This meeting is a management meeting, and as such there is no legal right for the individual to be represented by a colleague or trade union representative.
- 5.6. Notes should be taken at this meeting for the benefit of both parties, and to record the salient points of the actions agreed.
- 5.7. When progress is reviewed, if the line manager is satisfied that the individual has made, or is making, sufficient improvement the process will continue as normal. Any remaining issues will be discussed and addressed through the usual performance management process.

6. Transition to capability procedures

In a minority of case, where the line manager will be unsatisfied with the progress made towards the identified improvements. In this case the individual will be advised in writing that the performance management procedures will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the school's capability procedure. Please see the Trust Capability Policy for further information.

7. Annual Assessment

- 7.1 At the end of each performance management year the line manager will assess individual performance against the objectives agreed at the start of the cycle.
- 7.2 The line manager and individual will meet to discuss the performance review and record the outcomes of the meeting and discussion on the individual's planning and review statement.
- This record will include:
- details of the individual's objectives for the period in question;
 - an assessment of the individual's performance in their role against the objectives, their responsibilities and any relevant standards (teachers);
 - an assessment of the individual's training and development needs and any actions that should be taken to address them;
 - a recommendation on pay progression (where relevant).
- 7.3 It should be noted that performance against objectives will be on the basis of the performance criteria set at the beginning of the cycle. Significant progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective, even if the performance criteria have not been met in full, will be assessed favourably.

- 7.4 This assessment of performance, training and development will inform the planning process for the next performance management cycle.

8. Performance management outcomes and links to pay review periods

- 8.1 The outcome of the performance management cycle will be confirmed in writing, along with confirmation of any pay progression.
- 8.2 In the event of an unsuccessful performance management cycles the affect on pay progression will be discussed with the individual by their line manager and confirmed in writing. The individual will also be made aware if their performance will be managed under the school's capability policy and procedure.
- 8.3 Those eligible for increments are those staff who:
- have completed their induction/probationary period
 - have been successful in the annual performance management process
 - are not in any formal procedures.

8.4 Teachers

- Successful performance management periods will be rewarded with pay progression from 1 September annually.

8.5 Support staff

- Salaries for non-teaching staff should be reviewed annually before the 1st April, and annual pay increments will be awarded on 1st April.
- The performance management year runs from 1 September – 31 August. Performance management reviews are undertaken by 10 October. When performance is reviewed in October the outcome of these reviews will not determine the pay increment that will be paid in April.
- The employee would usually move one point along the salary range of their evaluated role.
- The school requires completed, signed paper records of reviews to be submitted by 25 October annually, or within 1 month of the end of the performance management cycle. This is to ensure that the necessary payroll and administration procedures can be completed.
- The responsibility of retaining and submitting performance reviews is the individuals. Where staff do not submit paperwork by these deadlines then this may impact on the individual through the disciplinary policy.

9. Appeals

- Where an individual wishes to raise an appeal against any of the information recorded in their performance management records (planning and review statements), details of this process

are covered in the Trust's Pay Policy.

10. Periods of leave

- 10.1 If during the performance year, there is a period of long-term absence (i.e. sickness absence or maternity leave), then the line manager will review performance based on the time that the individual was in work. It may be necessary to rearrange observations as part of this review (teachers only).
- 10.2 Once the individual returns to work, objectives will need to be set for the remainder of performance management cycle.

11. Change of role during the performance management year

- 11.1 If an individual changes their role or responsibilities between September to May of the performance management year the line manager for the role they are leaving will conduct a performance review for that period of the year.
- 11.2 The line manager for the post they have moved to will set and agree objectives for their new role. These may be broadly the same, dependant on the change in role.
- 11.3 If an individual move's role in June – August, then the performance review will be the review used for that performance year. Objectives set for the new role will be the objectives for the forthcoming performance management cycle.
- 11.4 The performance management cycle does not begin again in the event of a change in leader/manager.

12. Roles and responsibilities

12.1 The role of the Head of School

- The role of Head of School is to ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently across the school.
- The Head of School, with the assistance of other Senior Leadership colleagues, will review capability information, including the effectiveness of this policy, and report performance outcomes which have an impact on pay progression to the Local Governing Body and/or Directors Pay Committee.
- The Head of School will be made aware of pay decisions and recommendations that may have been affected by this process.
- The Head of School will allocate who will review and set objectives for employees.
- The Head of School will annually moderate a sample of the performance management staff review documents and provide feedback and guidance to the line managers.
- The Head of School will annually moderate a sample of the performance management staff

objective setting documents and provide feedback and guidance to the line managers, who in turn will feedback to the relevant staff.

13. The role of the Board of Directors

- 13.1. The Trust Board will approve this policy and is committed to ensuring that this policy is applied consistently and fairly.
- 13.2. Inform all staff of the policy which has been adopted.
- 13.3. The Board will ensure there is a Directors Pay Committee in place to enable the LGB to have an overview of the quality of moderation
- 13.4. The Board will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in secure place for the required period of time and then destroyed.
- 13.5. Board will monitor, evaluate, and review policies in line with statutory and best practice guidelines, including equality legislation.
- 13.6. The Chief Executive Officer will set and review the Head of School's annual Performance targets in consultation with the Local Governing Body.

14. The role of Senior Leaders

- 14.1. The Senior Leadership Group (SLG) is responsible for ensuring that professional, effective guidance is provided to line managers.
- 14.2. The SLG will monitor how the performance management policy has been used and report to the Headteacher at the interim and end on the performance management cycle.
- 14.3. The SLG will ensure there is 'one to one' support for line managers in this area of people
- 14.4. management.

15. The role of the employee/other staff

- 15.1. The Trust will ensure that it delivers sufficient training to line managers to deliver this policy.

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 16.1. This process will be treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Head of School, the LGB and the Board of Directors (through the Directors Pay Committee) to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the systems. For example, the Head of School and/or an appropriate member of the senior leadership group may review the documents and records taken during the process.
- 16.2. The Head of School is required to report to the Local Governing Body on an annual basis a

summary of performance management outcomes and related pay decisions.

- 16.3. This policy should be reviewed every two years to ensure compliance to legislation, school needs, national and local terms of employment and good practice.
- 16.4. Any reviews to this policy will be in consultation with staff, including representatives of unions and associations recognised by the Trust.

