

CEO and Executive Pay Policy

Date reviewed: September 2025

Date of next review: September 2026

Lead professional: Chair of the Board



Polaris
Multi-Academy Trust

1. Purpose of Policy and Guiding Principles

The purpose of this document is to provide the Multi Academy Trust with a policy and procedure that set out how the Trust Board of Directors will take decisions on pay, for the Trust Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The Trust Board of Directors will use this policy to assist with the recruitment, retention and recognition of executive employees whilst recognising that decisions about pay should be fair, justifiable, open, objective, accountable and within agreed policies and procedures.

This policy clarifies how the Trust will apply salary and remuneration to the CEO, how it will use any discretionary powers, a timetable for annual pay reviews and identifies where responsibility lies for decisions on pay.

This document also outlines the procedure for appeals against pay decisions.

The CEO will be employed on either the statutory provisions of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) or the 'Burgundy Book'.

All pay-related decisions are made taking full account of Trust development and improvement plans.

Any safeguarding of salaries will be applied in accordance with individual, relevant terms and conditions of employment.

2. Links with Other Policies or Legislation

This policy links with terms and conditions of employment for all staff, underpinned by the Employment Rights Act 1996.

This policy links with the Trust Pay Policy.

This policy links with the Performance Management policy and guidance.

All employees will be treated equally and consistently, in accordance with the Equality Policy.

All pay related decisions are taken in compliance with current employment legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.

3. Provisions

3.1 Job Descriptions

The Trust Board of Directors will ensure that each member of the Trust Executive Team is provided with or, has access to, their job description in accordance with the staffing structure agreed by the Board.

Job descriptions will identify key areas of responsibility, functions, and post specifications.

Appropriate differentials will exist between posts in the trust, recognising accountability, responsibility, line management requirements and overall impact on outcomes.

Job descriptions and the CEO pay scale will be reviewed periodically, and where there are any significant changes to the job descriptions, the impact on remuneration will be considered, in consultation with the employee.

3.2 New Appointments / Determining Pay and Remuneration

Where a new appointment is being appointed to the Trust Executive Team, and before any recruitment is undertaken, the CEO will consider pay arrangements in place for current and/or previous incumbents, along with the statutory provisions of the School Teachers' Pay and conditions Document (STPD); National Joint Council (NJC) for local government services, current market forces and external benchmarking.

In arriving at a total remuneration package, the skills and experience of the candidate and their current remuneration package will be also considered, in recognition of the need to secure the best candidate.

The basic pay may be based on an agreed pay scale. The pay scale will be determined by the demands of the market and the size and successful growth of the Trust.

3.3 Annual Pay Reviews

The Trust Board of Directors will ensure that pay for the Trust Executive Team is reviewed taking into consideration the statutory provisions of the School Teachers' Pay and conditions Document (STPD); National Joint Council (NJC) for local government services, current market forces and external benchmarking.

The Trust Board of Directors will form an Executive Performance Management Subcommittee to carry out the CEOs annual performance review. The subcommittee will make a recommendation to the Trust Board of Directors of the outcome of the review for their consideration. The CEO will in turn, review the performance of the executive team.

Pay progression for the executive team and is not automatic and any pay progression decisions will be linked to performance and performance management.

Pay and performance reviews are with effect from 1 September and no later than 31st December each year. Within one month of the pay review, the Trust Board of Directors will provide a written statement to the CEO and the CEO will provide individuals on the Executive Team with a formal letter stating what the new salary or any other financial benefit will be, detailing how this has been arrived at.

Reviews may take place at other times of the year to reflect any changes in circumstances or job description that may affect the structure of the annual pay / financial benefits in place.

4. Performance Related Pay

In accordance with the Trust Performance Management Policy, the performance management period will run for twelve months from 1 September to 31 August.

Objectives and targets will be set and agreed annually, focused on Trust strategic plans.

Decisions relating to pay progression (as detailed above) will be made with reference to the performance against the agreed targets for the previous academic year.

In line with Academies Financial Handbook, provisions will be made under the contract of employment to revise salaries where the financial position of the trust deteriorates due to poor management. This ensures that the Trusts has the flexibility in the employment contract of the accounting officer to make downward adjustments if appropriate.

5. Appeals

Where an Executive is dissatisfied with a pay decision, this should in the first instance be discussed informally with the CEO and if the CEO is dissatisfied, the Chair of the Board.

If unresolved then the Executive may choose to pursue this formally by submitting a letter of appeal within 10 days of the notification of the pay decision or the informal discussion with the Chair of the Board as referred to above. Appeal letters should be submitted to the Clerk to the Trust Board of Directors.

Grounds of appeal should be based on one or more of the following:

- Incorrectly applied any provision of the relevant terms and conditions of employment
- Failed to have proper regard for statutory guidance, such as Teacher Standards
- Failed to take proper account of relevant evidence
Took account of irrelevant or inaccurate evidence
- Failed to consistently apply the Executive Pay Policy or the associated Performance Management Policy
- Was biased or otherwise unlawfully discriminated against the employee.

Any appeal should be heard by a panel of three members of the Board or local governing body who were not involved in the original decision, normally within 20 working days of the receipt of the written appeal notification and give the member of staff the right to be accompanied and make representations in person.

Where a member of staff from a school within the Trust is a governor on an LGB, they cannot be considered to be part of an appeal panel.

Employees who are dissatisfied in relation to their pay have a statutory right to raise a formal complaint about that decision, which is termed a “grievance”. The process defined within this section meets the statutory requirements for raising a “grievance” and therefore an issue raised as a pay appeal cannot then be raised again under the Trusts formal Grievance Procedure.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The Role of the Chief Operating Officer

The CEO will ensure that the executive pay policy is reviewed annually by the Board of Directors

6.2 The Role of the Directors

Directors will review and approve the pay policy.

Directors will appoint an Executive Performance Management Subcommittee that determine and review the pay of the CEO.

Directors will ensure that awards are made fairly and without discrimination or bias.

Directors will monitor, evaluate and review policies in line with statutory and best practice guidelines.

6.3 The Role of the Employee/other Staff

The CEO will ensure that the Executive Performance Management Subcommittee is co-ordinated and occurs each year on behalf of the Trust Board of Directors.

The CFO will advise on policy and equal pay considerations and ensure all paperwork relating to Executive pay reviews are held on file.

The CFO will monitor pay decisions, in line with budget planning and monitoring.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Trust Board of Directors will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy on a regular basis, including trends in progression across specific groups to assess its effect and the Trusts continued compliance with equalities legislations and monitoring of the gender pay gap. The outcome of the decision of the Executive Performance Management Subcommittee will be reported to the Board AGM annually.