

St. Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Academies Trust



**Thomas Becket
Secondary**



**St. Gregory's
Primary**



**St. Mary's
Primary**



**The Good Shepherd
Primary**

Inspired by Christ, to achieve excellence, to serve and to build hope for all

APPRAISAL POLICY FOR SUPPORT STAFF

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DEFINITIONS

In this Appraisal Policy and Procedure, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

- i. "Trust" means the Trust, schools and academies who belong to the St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Academies Trust named at the beginning of this Appraisal Policy and Procedure and includes all sites upon which the Trust undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.
- ii. St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Academies Trust is responsible for the management of the school/academy and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff at the school/academy. The Trust also employs staff working directly to the Chief Executive of the Trust.
- iii. 'Board' means the Board of Directors of the St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Academies Trust.
- iv. 'Chair' means the Chair of the Trust Board or the Chair of the Local School Committee appointed from time to time, as appropriate.
- v. 'Clerk' means the Clerk to the Trust Board or the Clerk to the Local School Committee of the school/academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.
- vi. 'Companion' means a willing work colleague not involved in the substance of the employee's performance under review by this Appraisal Policy and Procedure, or an accredited trade union representative or an official employed by a trade union who will be expected to make themselves available for the periods of time necessary to meet the timescales under this Appraisal Policy and Procedure.
- vii. 'Diocesan Schools Commission' means the education service provided by the diocese, which may also be known, or referred to, as the Diocesan Education Service.
- viii. 'Directors' means Directors appointed to the Trust Board.
- ix. 'Trust Board' means the body carrying out the employment functions of the Trust and such term may include the Trust Board of Directors and/or a Local School Committee of the school/academy.

- x. 'Support staff' means those staff employed within the Trust who are not qualified Teachers.
- xi. Local School Committee Representatives' (LSC) means the Local School Committee representatives/members appointed and elected to carry out specified functions delegated by the Trust in relation to each of the schools/academies, from time to time.
- xii. 'Vice-Chair' means the Vice-Chair of the Trust Board or the Vice-Chair of the Local School Committee of the school/academy elected from time to time, as appropriate.

1. APPLICATION

- 1.1 Subject to Paragraph 1.2 below, this Appraisal Policy and Procedure applies to you if you are an employee or worker at the school/academy employed in your capacity as support staff worker and are not a teacher or Headteacher (hereinafter referred to as an "employee" or "you").
- 1.2 This Appraisal Policy and Procedure does not apply to those employees who are employed under a contract of employment for less than one term and those who are subject to the Trust's Capability Policy and Procedure.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 The purpose of this procedure is to establish a framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of employees and for supporting their development within the context of the Trust's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of the staff of the Trust.
- 2.2 The Trust is committed to ensuring respect, objectivity, belief in the dignity of the individual, consistency of treatment and fairness in the operation of this policy. This commitment extends to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unlawful discrimination throughout the Trust community
- 2.3 Where concerns raised about an employee's performance cannot be resolved through this Appraisal Policy and Procedure, there will be consideration of whether to invoke the Trust's Capability Policy and Procedure.
- 2.4 This Appraisal Policy and Procedure does not form part of any other procedure but relevant information on appraisal, including Appraisal Reports, may be taken into account in relation to other applicable policies and procedures.
- 2.5 An employee is entitled to have access by arrangement to their personnel file and to request the deletion of time expired records in line with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
- 2.6 The Trust delegates its authority in the manner set out in this policy.

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3. APPRAISAL IN A CATHOLIC CONTEXT

- 3.1 Appraisal will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all employees have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively within the context of the Trust's ethos.
- 3.2 Arrangements for appraisal will be conducted in such a way that employees will be secure in the knowledge that their progress and commitment to the Trust are acknowledged.
- 3.3 Appraisal is a time to celebrate achievement wherever possible, as well as for discerning where there is scope for development. Challenge is at the heart of the Gospels. Christ challenged all whom he encountered, each according to their needs and readiness.
- 3.4 The Trust is committed to ensuring respect, objectivity, belief in the dignity of the individual, consistency of treatment and fairness in the operation of performance management as a Catholic Trust. This Appraisal Policy and Procedure offers opportunities to ensure justice for employees and pupils alike and has the potential for the expression of Christian qualities such as honesty, self-knowledge, respect for others and their gifts, recognition of the needs and achievements of others, challenge of self and others, personal growth and openness.

4. THE APPRAISAL PERIOD

- 4.1 The Appraisal Period will run for twelve months from September 2019 to September 2020.
- 4.2 Employees who are employed on a fixed-term or temporary contract of less than one year will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning this Appraisal Policy and Procedure. The length of the Appraisal Period will be determined by the duration of their contract of employment.
- 4.3 Where an employee starts their employment at the Trust/school/academy part-way through the usual Appraisal Period, the CEO or Headteacher shall determine the length of the Appraisal Period for that employee with a view to bringing his/her Appraisal Period into line with the Trust's usual Appraisal Period (as per Paragraph 4.1 above) as soon as possible.
- 4.4 Where an employee transfers to a new post within the Trust/school/academy part-way through an Appraisal Period, the CEO or Headteacher shall determine whether the Appraisal Period should be re-set and whether the Appraiser should be changed.

5. APPOINTING APPRAISERS

- 5.1 An Appraiser will be appointed by the Headteacher to appraise an employee of the school/academy or, in the case of the central Trust, the CEO.
- 5.2 The Appraiser will set employee objectives in accordance with Paragraph 6 below.
- 5.3 The Appraiser, through the Headteacher and/or Trust Board, may seek advice from other external advisers including, but not limited to, the Diocesan Schools' Commission.
- 5.4 Where it becomes apparent that an Appraiser appointed by the CEO or Headteacher will be absent for the majority of the Appraisal Period, the CEO/Headteacher may perform the

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duties of the Appraiser or delegate those duties to another teacher for the duration of the absence.

- 5.5 Where an employee has a reasonable objection to the choice of Appraiser, their concerns may be carefully considered and, where it can be reasonably accommodated, an alternative appraiser may be offered.

6. SETTING OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 Appraisal objectives should reflect the Catholic identity and mission of the Trust and the values it proclaims¹ and Appraisers are expected to explore the alignment of such objectives with the Academy's priorities and plans, working at all times to ensure that the Catholic ethos is developed and maintained.
- 6.2 The Appraiser and the employee will seek to agree the objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change. The Trust operates a system of moderation to ensure that all Appraisers are working to the same standards. Targets will be moderated across the schools/academies and the Trust to ensure that they are consistent between employees with similar experience and levels of responsibility. Should the objectives not be agreed, a record of the employee's relevant comments shall be added to the appraisal documentation but the final decision on allocation of objectives rests with the Appraiser.
- 6.3 The objectives set for each employee will, if achieved, contribute to the Trust's plans for improving educational provision and performance and improving education of the pupils at the schools/academies. This will be ensured by quality assuring all objectives through the monitoring cycle against the school improvement plan.
- 6.4 Objectives, where met, should contribute to improving the progress, development and well-being of pupils at the school/academy as understood in relation to the Catholic nature of the Trust and so include the academic, spiritual, moral, social, emotional and cultural development of each pupil.
- 6.5 In accordance with Paragraph 5, the employee's objectives will be set by the Appraiser before, or as soon as reasonably practicable after, the start of each Appraisal Period and the employee will be informed of the objectives and standards against which their performance will be appraised in that Appraisal Period.
- 6.6 The objectives will be Challenging, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the employee's role and level of experience.
- 6.7 The Appraiser may take into account the Trust/School/Academy's work/life balance strategy and the effects of an individual's circumstances, including any disability, when agreeing objectives.
- 6.8 Following discussion between the Appraiser and the employee, set objectives may be revised by the Appraiser in accordance with the needs of the Trust/School/Academy and the employee, and any such revision(s) to set objectives will be recorded in writing.

¹ Such values should include the principles of Catholic social teaching in respect of justice for all, the needs of the whole person, respect for the individual and the community and the preferential option for the poor.

7. REVIEWING PERFORMANCE

Development and Support

- 7.1 Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform the employee's continuing professional development. The Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all employees take responsibility for improving the Trust through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to the Trust/School/Academy's improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual employees.
- 7.2 Account will be taken in a review meeting of where it has not been possible for employees to fully meet their objectives because the agreed support has not been provided.

Informal Action

- 7.3 An employee's line manager may identify concerns on an informal basis at any time about any performance falling short of the standards expected.
- 7.4 An employee's line manager may also provide informal advice and appropriate support which may include training, coaching, mentoring, counselling, monitoring, working in a professional learning community, learning and development opportunities, supervision, occupational health, arrangements for observation of lessons taught by teachers at the school/academy or elsewhere or discussing practice with advisory teachers or other support staff members.
- 7.5 Informal action could include establishing the expectations that the school/academy and/or the Trust Board has of the employee and what support may be provided to help the employee to meet those expectations.
- 7.6 Informal action may be recorded in writing and may be referred to at a later stage as evidence that an informal approach was attempted and the success or failure of such an approach.

Alternative Action

- 7.7 There may be a situation where the employee's line manager and/or the Appraiser considers that a recent promotion or job change has been a contributory factor in any unsatisfactory performance and that informal action has been, or is unlikely to be, effective.
- 7.8 The line manager/Appraiser may offer the employee the option of taking a voluntary demotion as an alternative to proceeding with action under this Appraisal Policy and Procedure, specifically Paragraph 7.12.

Observation/Monitoring

- 7.9 The Trust believes that observation of work practice is important both as a way of assessing employee performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development as well as gaining useful information which can inform school/academy improvement more generally.

7.10 All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion. Observation will be agreed in advance giving appropriate notice and feedback provided within 48 hours of the observation.

Feedback

7.11 Employees will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will include discussion with the employee, highlighting their areas of strength and areas that need attention and will determine any appropriate action required.

7.12 Where there are concerns about any aspects of the employee's performance these will be addressed at a meeting between the Appraiser and the employee. At such meeting the employee will be notified of the Appraiser's concerns about the employee's performance, the action required to bring the employee's performance to the standard expected and the timeframe for so doing. The employee's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and a reasonable time given for their performance to improve. This will depend on the circumstances but will usually be for a period of between 6 and 8 working weeks, with appropriate support as agreed at the meeting held in accordance with this Paragraph 7.12 in order that the aim of recovering and improving performance can be achieved.

7.13 When progress is reviewed at the end of the review period in accordance with Paragraph 7.12, if the Appraiser is satisfied that the employee has made, or is making, sufficient improvement, the appraisal process will continue as normal. Where the Appraiser finds that insufficient, or no, improvement has been made, then paragraph 8.6 will apply.

8. ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

8.1 Employees performance will be formally assessed in respect of each Appraisal Period.

8.2 This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year at interim meetings (which may be in person or via telephone, email or other appropriate medium) which may take place once every two terms.

8.3 The employee will receive, as soon as practicable following the end of each Appraisal Period, a written Appraisal Report. The employee will have the opportunity to comment on the Appraisal Report in writing. This Appraisal Report does not form part of any formal capability or disciplinary procedures. However, any relevant information from the appraisal process may be taken into account by those responsible for taking decisions about capability.

8.4 The Appraisal Report will include:

- (a) Details of the employee's objectives for the relevant Appraisal Period;
- (b) An assessment of the employee's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and any relevant standards;
- (c) An assessment of the employee's training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- (d) A recommendation on pay where that is relevant;
- (e) A space for the employee's own comments

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(f) A note of any concerns and actions taken to resolve them

8.5 A review meeting will take place to discuss the content of the Appraisal Report and any further action required, including setting a period for review of performance, and to inform objective setting for the next Appraisal Period.

Transition to capability

8.6 If the Appraiser is not satisfied with the employee's progress following the review period in accordance with Paragraph 7.12 or the Annual Assessment, the employee will be notified in writing that this Appraisal Policy and Procedure will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the Trust's Capability Policy and Procedure.

9. APPEALS

Employees have a right of appeal against any of the entries in the written Appraisal Report and a separate right of appeal against a decision to invoke the Trust's Capability Policy and Procedure made in accordance with Paragraph 8.6 above. If an appeal relates to a decision about pay, the employee is referred to the Trust's Pay Policy and Procedure.

9.1 An appeal in accordance with Paragraph 9.1 must be made in writing to the Trust HR Manager and lodged within 10 working days of receipt of the Appraisal Report or the letter confirming that the Trust's Capability Policy and Procedure will be invoked.

9.2 Your appeal letter must set out the grounds of your appeal in detail.

9.3 The Appeal Meeting will normally be held within 20 working days of your appeal letter being received by the Trust HR Manager.

9.4 The Appeal Manager will be the Headteacher (or CEO), excluding where the Headteacher (or CEO) is the Appraiser.

9.5 The Appeal Manager will confirm the outcome of the Appeal Meeting in writing to you within 5 working days of the date of the Appeal Meeting. The decision of the Appeal Manager is final and there will be no further right of appeal. The outcomes of the Appeal Meeting are that:

- (a) the Appeal Manager may uphold the entries made in the Appraisal Report and/or the transition to capability proceedings in accordance with Paragraph 8.6; or
- (b) the Appeal Manager may uphold the employee's appeal and overturn the decision of the Appraiser. Where such appeal relates in whole or in part to entries in the Appraisal Report, the disputed entries shall be referred back to the Appraiser for reconsideration.

9.6 Where an appeal is against entries in the Appraisal Report and a decision to invoke the Trust Capability Policy & Procedure under Paragraph 8.6, the appeals will be heard together.

10. COMPANION

10.1 Where a meeting is held under Paragraphs 7.12 or 9 above, you may be accompanied by a Companion (see definition).

10.2 You must let the person appointed to hold such meeting under Paragraphs 7.12 or 9 above know who your Companion will be at least one working day before the meeting.

10.3 If you have any particular reasonable need, for example, because you have a disability, you can also be accompanied by a suitable helper.

10.4 Your Companion can address the meeting in order to:

- (a) put your case;
- (b) sum up your case;
- (c) respond on your behalf to any view expressed at the meeting; and
- (d) Ask questions on your behalf.

10.5 Your Companion can also confer with you during the meeting.

10.6 Your Companion has no right to:

- (a) answer questions on your behalf;
- (b) address the meeting if you do not wish it; or
- (c) prevent you from explaining your case.

10.7 Where you have identified your Companion and they have confirmed in writing to the relevant person appointed under Paragraphs 7.12 or 9 that they cannot attend the date or time set for the meeting, the relevant person will postpone the meeting for no more than five working days from the date set by the school/academy to a date or time agreed with your Companion provided that it is reasonable in all the circumstances. Should your Companion subsequently be unable to attend the rearranged date, the meeting may be held in their absence or written representations will be accepted.

11. TIMING OF MEETINGS

The aim is that meetings under this procedure will be held at

- 11.1 need to be held when you were timetabled to teach;
- 11.2 exceptionally be held during planning, preparation and administration time if this does not impact on lesson preparation;
- 11.3 be held after the end of the Academy day;
- 11.4 not be held on days on which you would not ordinarily work;
- 11.5 be extended by agreement between the parties if the time limits cannot be met for any justifiable reason.

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12. VENUE FOR MEETINGS

Any meeting held under Paragraph 7.12 or 9 may be held off the Academy site to minimise any distress to the employee.

13. ASSISTANCE

Where matters fall to be decided under Paragraphs 7.12 and 9, the Diocesan Schools Commission may send a representative to advise the Academy.

14. REVIEW OF THIS PROCEDURE

This policy and procedure has been developed utilising a template produced in September 2013 and amended in June 2016 and again in May 2018 by the Catholic Education Service (CES) for use in Catholic Voluntary Academies in England following consultation with the national trade unions. It may be adapted, as appropriate, for use in joint Church academies subject to the approval of the CES on referral by the relevant Catholic diocese. This procedure will be reviewed by the CES in readiness for the academic year 2019/2020.