



Performance Management Policy and Procedure

DRAFT

Our vision is to enable all to flourish.

Status and review cycle:	Non-Statutory and free review cycle
Responsible group:	The Trust
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Policy Statement

1 The Trust is an organisation with a Christian foundation. The ethos, values and relationships of the Trust, and its associated schools, are central to witnessing to the value of the foundation. The Trust aims to support all staff to flourish through creating a culture of continual improvement and learning. DGAT believes that high performing staff are the cornerstone of educational success that lead to high performing schools with every child being supported to achieve their full potential.

2 Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of all Trust staff teachers, headteachers central team staff and support staff. The framework provides a structure for supporting the continual development of all Trust staff within the context of the Trust and school's plans for improving educational provision for and performance of pupils. DGAT expects all performance management discussions to consider the professional aspirations of all employees.

3 The outcomes of the performance management process are not linked to pay. All staff will automatically increment to the next spine point in September of each year unless they are at the top of the scale/ISR.

4 This policy and procedure applies to all DGAT staff whether permanent or on a fixed term contract with the following exceptions:

- i. Teachers employed for less than one term
- ii. Early Career Teachers undergoing an induction
- iii. Support and central staff employed for less than one term
- iv. Support and central staff within their probation period
- v. Agency or contract workers or volunteers
- vi. Employees subject to the formal capability procedure

For all staff who are in a probation period, once this has been completed appropriate performance management targets should be set taking into consideration the time left in the performance management cycle.

Where a member of staff joins part way through the performance management cycle, appropriate targets should be set taking into consideration the time left in the performance management cycle.

Performance Management Process

5 Performance management in the Trust will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all employees have the skills and the support they need to carry out their role effectively. It will help to ensure that all Trust staff are able to continue to improve their professional practice, develop in their roles and realise their potential. It will also ensure that they are fully meeting all aspects of their current job

description. This will be achieved through a process which, over the year, involves frequent opportunities for learning, reflection, evaluation and experimentation, as well frequent honest feedback, and solution focused coaching as appropriate. All documentation which supports the process is on the Trust website.

The Performance Management Cycle

- 6 The performance management period will run for twelve months, this will be from October to October for teachers and headteachers. For support staff, this includes teaching and administrative support staff, the performance management period will be from December and December. Central team staff performance management period will run from September to September.
- 7 Staff who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year will have their performance managed in accordance with principles underpinning this policy. The length of the period will be determined by the duration of the employment contract. There needs to be flexibility within these cycles which may result in a shorter or longer period of performance management depending on the start or end dates of employment.

The Performance Management Procedure

- 8 The performance management process will remain confidential between the reviewer and employee and employee's line manager (if this is different to the reviewer). The headteacher is expected to access all performance management documents as part of the quality assurance process and as part of the pay progression system for teaching staff applying to move to the upper pay scale. This procedure complies with the revised performance management arrangement for teachers, which came into force in [July 2024](#). While these regulations do not apply to academies the Trust views it good practice to base policy and practice on them.
- 9 Line managers will try to resolve issues of underperformance informally through meetings between the employee and their line manager. However, where this approach has been tried and has failed to achieve improved performance, or if the performance concerns are more serious, formal action under the capability procedure will be considered.

Appointing reviewers/appraisers

- 10 The CEO's review will be led by the Trust Board with the support of an external advisor. All central team will have their review led by their relevant line manager. The headteacher will be appraised by the DCEO and supported by one appointed governor. The DCEO may delegate this responsibility to the relevant Regional Effectiveness Lead for the school. The processes for all performance management is contained within the Performance Management guidance document. Additional

guidance has been provided for the appointed governor and this can be found on the Trust website.

The headteacher will decide who will appraise school staff. All staff with line management responsibilities must undertake compulsory Trust training to ensure that this is delivered in line with the Trust policy. Where the headteacher delegates this role for some or all teachers and support staff, they will moderate a sample of the documents to ensure consistency and compliance with this procedure. In the central team the Head of Governance and People will undertake this sample.

Setting Objectives

- 12 The headteacher's objectives will be set in consultation with the DCEO/Regional Effectiveness Lead and the appointed governor. A copy of the headteacher's performance management will be held centrally in a confidential file by the DCEO.
- 13 Objectives for all other staff will be set prior to, or as soon as practicable after the headteacher's performance management at the start of their appraisal cycle. The objectives set for individuals will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-Bound (SMART) and will be appropriate to the role/position held and the level of experience. The objectives will also consider any professional or career aspirations as well as any relevant pay progression criteria, ie moving to or within the upper pay scale (See pay policy). The reviewer and employee will seek to agree the objectives but in the unlikely event that this is not possible, the reviewer will have the final decision and determine the objectives. As the performance management period progresses it may be necessary to revise the original objectives if circumstances change.
- 14 Under normal circumstances there will be a maximum of three objectives set in any one period, the number of objectives set will consider the difficulty and complexity of the objectives. However, for teachers, who are found not to be meeting standards at the appropriate level for their career stage additional objectives may be given as required to ensure that the most appropriate support can be provided.

Teaching Objectives

- 15 The objectives set for each teacher are intended to contribute to the school's plans for improving the educational provision and the performance of the school. The objectives set will be in line with the school's own improvement objectives as defined in the school development plan. All reviewers should therefore refer to these documents prior to setting any objectives.

Reviewers will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in the context of roles, responsibilities, and experience, consistent with the school's strategy for achieving a work/life balance for all staff.

Objectives set will also take account of guidance from unions and the DfE which states that, “Objectives will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound and will be appropriate to the teacher’s role and level of experience. Objectives and discussions will not be based on teacher generated data and prediction, or solely on the assessment data for a single group of pupils.” Suggested phrasing for these targets is contained in the performance management updated paperwork for teachers. For teachers and headteachers, referring back to the professional standards will support identification of next steps.

For teaching staff this link will be made:

- i. By ensuring that there are improvements in specific elements of their practice.
 - ii. By considering the wider contribution to the work of the school.
 - iii. By ensuring that the professional development objective (all teachers with paid leadership responsibilities) addresses a key development priority on SDP – with reference to any leadership standards.
- 16 The ‘Teachers’ Standards’ as set out in the school teachers pay and conditions document (STPCD), will be the benchmark for reflection, review, and evaluation in order to enable further growth and development. For headteachers the ‘Headteachers Standards’ will be the starting point. A set of career stage expectations is also set out for teaching staff and these are contained within the accompanying Performance Management Guidance and broken down into the relevant phases of a teacher’s career.
- 17 There will be a clear relationship between the objectives set and the planned programme of support put into place. The line manager will work with the reviewee to establish the objectives and timelines, taking into account the teacher’s circumstances. This may include any medical conditions, well-being support or disabilities protected by equality legislation.

Reviewing performance

- 18 Performance management is a supportive process which is used to inform continuing development. The Trust aims to encourage a culture in which all staff take responsibility for their professional growth through reflection, evaluation, professional dialogue and coaching as well as appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to the school’s improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs of the individual. This is a “live” process which will be reflected on and referred to frequently throughout the cycle and not just limited to the mid-term review discussion. To ensure that growth is continuous, and progress is ensured, staff are expected to engage with professional support where appropriate.

Teaching Observations

19 The Trust believes that observation of classroom practice through drop ins and monitoring of other responsibilities is important as a way of assessing teachers' performance to identify any particular strengths and areas for development. Lesson dips within DGAT have two key purposes :

- To help the teacher being observed become even better
- To learn from the teacher being observed

Within the Trust formal lesson observations are not considered to be an effective mechanism for supporting genuine growth in individuals' performance. The Trust uses drop ins as a way of reviewing and evaluating performance for teaching staff. All drop in observations will be carried out in a supportive and co-operative atmosphere. Reviewers will always behave with professionalism, integrity, and courtesy in alignment with the Trust core principles of dignity and respect.

It is important in our Trust that any method of assessing staff performance does not add to workload, or negatively affect well-being.

20 The length and frequency of drop in observations will vary depending on the specific circumstances of the teacher, and the overall needs of the school. The headteacher, or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards, may 'drop in' to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained. Staff are expected to support and learn from their colleagues both within their school or within the wider DGAT family. Therefore, throughout the cycle, opportunities to observe colleagues with the explicit purpose of learning from them will be made available as appropriate. This will enable staff to identify possible next steps in their development based on the learning gained from this valuable opportunity. Professional collaboration is essential for continual improvement.

21 Teachers (including the headteacher) who have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have those responsibilities observed/assessed throughout the review period.

Feedback

22 Providing people with feedback on progression against targets increases the chances of those targets being reached. Trust staff, including central team, can expect constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after any teaching observation or when other evidence is available. Feedback and the subsequent conversation after an observation is where learning takes place, and also where any next steps are agreed. It may be appropriate to amend the performance management documents in light of such discussions. When written

feedback is given it will highlight areas of strength as well as areas that need some attention.

Concerns about performance

- 23 Where there are concerns about any aspects of performance the reviewer will meet the member of staff formally to:
- i. Give clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns.
 - ii. Give the member of staff the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns.
 - iii. Agree any support (e.g. coaching, mentoring, structured observations), that will be provided to help address those specific concerns.
 - iv. Make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress (it may be appropriate to revise objectives, and it will be necessary to allow sufficient time for improvement).
 - v. Explain the implications and process if no or insufficient improvement is made, and any implications for pay progression if relevant.
- 24 When a member of staff has not met their performance management objectives, unless there are exceptional circumstances which have prevented them from successfully completing these, the reviewer will discuss the reasons for this with the reviewee. The reviewer will also discuss that a move to an informal support plan may be appropriate.
- The progress of staff will continue to be monitored as part of the informal support process and a reasonable time given for performance to improved. This will depend upon the circumstances but in line with the Trust's capability policy will be between 4-10 weeks. An appropriate action plan will be drawn up and support will be agreed so that performance can be improved. The reviewer will meet with the reviewee regularly to assess progress and ensure that the agreed support is being provided.
- 25 When progress is reviewed, if the reviewer is satisfied that the member of staff has made, or is making, sufficient improvement, the performance management process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through that process.

Transition to capability

- 26 If the member of staff demonstrates continued underperformance and has not responded to support provided within the performance management process, the staff member will be notified in writing that the performance management system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the Trust's capability procedure. They will be invited to a formal capability meeting in accordance with this policy.

- 27 All staff have the right to appeal any entry in their written performance management documentation. This should be undertaken in accordance with the Trust’s “Grievance Policy”. If the Grievance Policy is invoked, the process can be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance.

Evidence collection

- 28 The range and level of evidence collected for performance management and pay determination purposes for upper pay scale progression will always be proportionate and minimise workload. It will be agreed during the beginning of the review process and noted in the review documentation.
- 29 Performance Management is a supportive process which is used to inform continuing professional development. The Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all staff take responsibility for improving their performance through appropriate professional development such as peer to peer observation. Professional development will be linked to Trust and school improvement priorities as well as the needs and priorities of individual staff. Account will be taken in the review meeting of where it has not been possible for staff to fully meet their performance criteria because the support recorded in the review documentation has not been provided.

Annual Assessment

- 30 All Trust staff performance will be formally assessed in each performance management period. This assessment is the end point to the annual performance management process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year. The documents used for assessment of staff include opportunities to record mid-term reviews and updates.
- 31 Employees will receive a written performance management report. This will be as soon as practicable following the end of each performance management period. They will have the opportunity to comment in writing on it. Teaching staff will receive their written performance management reports by the 31 October. For support staff, this will be 31 December.
- 32 The performance management report will include:
- i. Positive aspects of the employee’s work in the previous year
 - ii. Details of the objectives for the performance management period in question.
 - iii. An assessment of the members of staff performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards.
 - iv. An assessment of the staff member’s training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them.
 - v. Details of a discussion on wellbeing and workload as well as career progression/aspiration.

- vi. Targets missed through no fault of the employee will be given consideration and included.
 - vii. A recommendation on pay where that is relevant.
- 33 The assessment of performance, training and development needs will inform the planning process for the following performance management.

Retention of Records

- 34 All written performance management records will be retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed. In schools this is the responsibility of the headteacher and in the central team, the Head of Governance and People.

Other Related Policies

Capability Policy

Grievance Policy

Pay Policy

School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document

Other Related Documents

Performance Management Guidance, Process and Proformas