

Elliot Foundation Academies Trust Appraisal Policy

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Related policies and documents

- Appraisal Guidance
- Teacher Standards - Teacher Standards
- Classroom Observation Protocol
- Capability Policy
- Pay Policy

Definitions

- Where the word 'Trust' or 'TEFAT' is used in this document it refers to The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust.
- Where the term 'CEO' is used it refers to the Chief Executive Officer.
- Where the word 'Governing Body' or term 'LGB' is used it refers to the Local Governing Body of an individual academy within the Trust.
- Where appropriate, local procedures and practices to implement Trust policies will be published by TEFAT head office or the individual academies.

Vision and Values

Vision

The Elliot Foundation was created as a safe place for children and teachers where all are nurtured to achieve beyond even their own expectations. Our motto, "Where children believe they can because teachers know they can" reflects our conviction that raising expectations for all children and teachers is at the heart of a successful and inclusive society.

Values

For children

We help children to discover themselves and aspire beyond any limitations that their context might appear to place upon them. We help them understand that they can be, 'Heroes of their own lives' building the foundations for healthy and successful lives.

For schools

In addition to the essential functional skills of reading, writing and mathematics, children need to learn how to learn and to believe that they can continue to do so. They must also possess the critical thinking skills to sift fact from fiction to be able to think for themselves, freely and creatively.

For success

To thrive, whatever their chosen path, children need confidence, curiosity and commitment. We will nurture these attitudes across all their learning experiences

For communities

Children at Elliot schools will be raised with an awareness of the world around them and their role in shaping a better future through volunteering and contributing in their communities.

1. Policy statement and objectives

- 1.1. The Elliot Foundation Academies Trust (TEFAT) is committed to providing high quality teaching and learning. Our aim is to provide opportunities for every child whatever their ability and it is through our workforce that we hope to achieve this. Each employee will be given support to help them develop to their full potential in their job and in turn this will help improve outcomes for our young people.
- 1.2. The Trust is committed to continually developing and improving performance, guiding our employees through their careers with us. Having an effective performance management process in place is one of the ways we can support our employees and deal with performance matters as they arise. This involves effective day-to-day supervision, carrying out appraisals, providing development opportunities and operating a fair and reasonable capability process. We understand that managing and improving performance not only helps the employee but also the Trust as a whole and ultimately the children and each academy community.

2. Scope and principles

- 2.1. In the development of this policy, consideration has been given to the impact on protected characteristics under the Equality Act and the work / life balance of employees.
- 2.2. It identifies the process to be used for the assessment of the overall performance of employees and for supporting their development within the context of the Trust's and academies' plans for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of employees in their respective roles.
- 2.3. The policy and approach to employee appraisal will be supportive and developmental, designed to ensure that all employees identified by the policy have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It will be instrumental in ensuring that all employees are able to continue to improve their professional/employment practice and to develop in their respective roles.
- 2.4. The policy comprises the following sections:
Part A applies to the appraisal of teachers, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (*ie* NQTs) and those who are subject to TEFATs capability policy.
Part B of the policy, applies to the appraisal of support staff employed by TEFAT **except** those on contracts of less than one year, those undergoing probation and those who are subject to the TEFATs capability policy.
- 2.5. Where staff take a period of planned leave such as maternity or paternity leave, the appraisal process should be agreed with the staff member prior to leave being commenced.

- 2.6. Where an employee is not covered by this policy as set out in 2.4 above (Part A and B), then performance will be managed through the probation process (where applicable) and regular supervision and feedback in line with the principles underpinning this policy.
- 2.7. A separate policy sets out how under performance will be managed (Capability Policy).
- 2.8. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time following consultation with staff and recognised trade unions.

3. Part A - Appraisal for Teachers

- 3.1. **Development and support** - TEFAT encourages a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching and extending their depth of knowledge through appropriate professional development. In addition our appraisal process is used to inform and decide continuing professional development which improves performance. Agreed professional development will be linked to academy improvement priorities and where possible to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers. The Trust is committed to supporting appropriate and reasonable development which not only assists the teacher in their teaching but also leads to improvements in performance across the academy.
- 3.2. The Teachers' Standards will be used to inform the setting of the teacher's performance management/appraisal objectives. The standards will be used as a framework against which the teacher's performance is assessed and not as a checklist, with the assumption being that the Teachers' Standards are being routinely met unless evidence suggests otherwise.
- 3.3. Where teachers are eligible for pay progression¹, the assessment of performance throughout the cycle against the performance criteria specified will form the basis on which the recommendation is made by the appraiser. A successful appraisal review should lead to a recommendation for pay progression.
- 3.4. All appraisal activities will take place within the teacher's directed time, but not within a teacher's PPA time.

¹ This includes all teachers not on the top of their scale on mainscale, upper pay scale and leadership group and those eligible to apply for threshold progression

4. The appraisal period

- 4.1. The appraisal period will run for 12 months from September to August. Teachers who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year but more than one term will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of the period will be determined by the duration of their contract.
- 4.2. The length of the appraisal period, and as a consequence, the appraisal objectives set, will be adjusted to take account of relevant absences such as those relating to pregnancy, maternity, disability or other matters covered by the Equality Act 2010.
- 4.3. Where a teacher starts their employment at an academy part-way through a cycle, the Principal or, in the case where the employee is a Principal, the Regional Director, shall determine the length of the first cycle with a view to bringing it into line with the cycle for other teachers as soon as possible.
- 4.4. Principals and teaching staff will have their appraisal process completed by 31 October. Regional Directors should aim to complete the Principal's appraisal in advance of other staff being appraised.

5. Appointing appraisers

- 5.1. All Principals will be appraised by the Regional Director and a member of the local governing body or Executive Principal in the case of a federation.
- 5.2. Where an Executive Principal or Principal believes any of the appraisers are unsuitable to act as their appraiser, they may submit a written request to the Director of HR for that person to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request. Their concerns will be carefully considered and, where appropriate and possible, an alternative appraiser will be appointed. The final decision of appraiser is with the Director of HR.
- 5.3. The Principal of the academy will decide who will conduct the appraisal for each teacher, which will include a pay recommendation for those teachers eligible for assessment. This will normally be the employee's line manager or other suitably senior member of staff. All appraisers will be qualified teachers with relevant experience and who have received suitable training / guidance.
- 5.4. Where there are partners or family members working in the same academy, the Principal must ensure that appraisal of such staff is undertaken by a suitable person who does not have a conflict of interest.
- 5.5. Where a teacher believes their appraiser is unsuitable to act as their appraiser, they may submit a written request to the Principal for that person to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request. Their concerns will be carefully considered and, where appropriate and possible, an alternative appraiser will be appointed. The final decision of appraiser is with the Principal.

- 5.6. Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser appointed by the Principal will be absent for most the appraisal cycle, the Principal may perform those duties himself or delegate those duties to another suitable individual for the duration of the absence.

6. Planning meeting

- 6.1. The planning meeting is an important event in setting expectations and objectives for the appraisal period and should take place during directed time (not PPA) in a quiet environment which is likely to be free from interruptions. The success criteria and forms of evidence which will inform the eventual review of the objectives should be agreed and an indication of where classroom observation will be used to assess success.

7. Setting objectives

- 7.1. Objectives for each teacher will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. No more than 3 objectives should be set for each teacher and they should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound (SMART). They should also be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience. Objectives will not be set based on pupil outcomes alone and will be fair and reasonable and take account of any relevant circumstances such as working hours, disabilities and anticipated absences.
- 7.2. The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives and a note of the teacher's objections recorded.
- 7.3. Objectives may be discussed and revised by mutual agreement if circumstances change during the appraisal period.
- 7.4. The objectives set for each teacher will, if achieved, contribute to the academy's plans for improving educational provision and performance and improving the education of children at that school. The Principal of the academy together with the senior leadership team will be responsible for quality assuring objectives set across the whole academy against the academy's improvement plan.
- 7.5. Objectives and success criteria should be set such that satisfactorily meeting them will support a recommendation for pay progression for eligible teachers. Consideration should be given to pay progression where significant progress towards targets has been made, and/or extenuating circumstances outside of the teachers control have prevented them from meeting targets (see Pay Policy for further details).

8. Reviewing performance

- 8.1. **Feedback** - staff will receive constructive and developmental feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after an observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Oral feedback will be given, wherever possible, within 24 hours and written feedback within 5 working days.

- 8.2. Feedback should highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention. Often this can resolve issues without the need for any formal action. The process will be as supportive as possible and where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance such that, if not rectified, could lead to capability procedures, the appraiser, senior leader or Principal will meet the teacher to:
- give clear feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns within a reasonable timescale;
 - give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
 - find out if there are any issues (including issues outside work) that are affecting the teacher's performance which the appraiser can assist with or provide support;
 - make clear what improvements need to be made by the teacher and how this can be achieved;
 - agree any support (for example coaching, mentoring, structured observations, training, observing other teaching etc), that will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
 - make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress either by setting new and clear objectives which will be assessed during the review period or by revising current objectives, allowing sufficient time for improvement; the amount of time for this should reflect the seriousness of the concerns. This will be an informal review period;
 - explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made during the informal review period i.e. the application of the capability policy.
- 8.3. This meeting can happen at any time during the appraisal period and does not have to wait until the annual assessment. It is a supportive meeting, and designed to address issues early to avoid the matter escalating, giving the teacher the opportunity to improve. At the meeting, the appraiser will be required to present evidence collected which indicates that the teacher's performance is not up to the required standard. The teacher will be given 5 working days notice of the meeting and may be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. If the employee or their trade union representative is unable to attend the meeting for a valid reason, they should confirm this to the person conducting the meeting at the earliest opportunity and an alternative date should be arranged. This will normally be within five working days of the original date proposed by the employer.

- 8.4. Although this is part of the informal process, a note of the meeting will be made and a copy given to the teacher so that they are clear about the support they will be given and what improvements, including review timetable, need to be made. The note of this meeting does not constitute a formal warning and as such, will not form part of the employee's formal record or be referred to in future reference requests. The length of the informal review period will be determined by the appraiser based on the individual circumstances of the situation but it should not be unduly long. During the informal review period, regular meetings should take place to ensure progress is being made.
- 8.5. At the end of the informal review period when progress is reviewed, if the appraiser is satisfied that the teacher has made, or is making sufficient improvement, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through that process. If performance is improving and the appraiser feels that further time is required to monitor improving performance, the appraiser can decide to extend the informal review period but it should not be unduly long. If insufficient improvement is being made including only partial meeting of targets, then the process set out below under paragraph 12 'Transition to Capability' should be followed. It will be for the appraiser to decide which procedure will be followed.

9. Annual assessment

- 9.1. At the end of the appraisal cycle a formal review meeting will be held during which the appraiser and appraisee will discuss achievements, any areas for improvement and professional development activities. On the understanding that the planning meeting is a separate process, this meeting may be combined with the planning meeting for the next annual cycle.
- 9.2. The appraisal planning record will provide a focus for the review meeting. The purpose of the review meeting will be to:
- assess the extent to which the appraisee has met their objectives;
 - determine whether there has been successful overall performance in confirming the appraisee continues to meet the relevant professional standards;
 - if necessary, identify the need for additional support, training or development and how this will be met.
- 9.3. Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period.
- 9.4. 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 process as set out in paragraph 8 above.

- 9.5. The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of the appraisal period and no later than 31st October, a written appraisal report. The teacher will be able to add their own comments to the report in writing. The appraisal report will be a summary of the performance during the year and set out what the teacher's development needs are for the next year. In particular, the report will include:
- details of the teacher's objectives for the appraisal period in question;
 - an assessment of the teacher's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards;
 - a summary of the observation findings;
 - an assessment of the teacher's professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
 - a recommendation on pay where that is relevant; and
 - a space for the teacher's own comments.
- 9.6. The assessment of performance and of professional development needs from each individual appraisal will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period for the whole academy.
- 9.7. The outcome of the appraisal review at the end of the cycle will form the basis of any pay recommendation. The recommendation on pay is made by the appraiser to the Principal before being referred to the Pay Committee of the local governing body. Please refer to the Pay Policy for further details.

10. Monitoring & evaluation

- 10.1. During the appraisal period, each teacher has a responsibility for their own professional development. Although not mandatory, they may wish to provide specific evidence of their progress throughout the year in order for them to identify any particular strengths or areas for further development at the interim and annual review meetings. The appraiser will discuss progress towards objectives based on any pre-agreed success criteria, along with any other evidence the teacher wishes them to take account of and make an assessment in the appraisal report.
- 10.2. In addition, a range of evidence should be considered by the appraiser in relation to the teacher's overall performance as part of the academy's quality assurance processes. Evidence may include but is not limited to:
- lesson observations
 - work scrutiny
 - planning scrutiny
 - learning walks
 - tracking data of pupil's progress
 - progress of individuals/groups
 - evidence of meeting relevant standards
 - assessment of TLR
 - other appropriate evidence

- 10.3. The Principal will report to the local governing body each year on the operation of the Appraisal Policy including any representations or appeals.

11. Observation

- 11.1. The Trust recognises the importance of carrying out observation of classroom practice as a means of assessing teacher performance to:
- identify strengths, so that the appraiser can give positive feedback and praise and to enable good practice to be shared;
 - identify areas for development; and
 - gain useful information which can inform improvements across the academy more generally.
- 11.2. All observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion and in accordance with the TEFAT Classroom Observation Protocol.
- 11.3. It is expected that each teacher will be involved in a lesson observation three times per academic year (up to 3 hours duration in total) for the purposes of appraisal.
- 11.4. Teachers who have responsibilities outside the classroom may also have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

12. Transition to capability

- 12.1. Performance management is an ongoing process. If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress, despite the informal support provided in accordance with section 8 above, this will be discussed at a meeting with the employee in accordance with paragraph 8.5 above. The employee will be notified in writing that the purpose of the meeting is to consider whether the appraisal process should no longer apply and instead, their performance should be managed under the capability procedure. The teacher will be given 5 working days notice of the meeting and may be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. Please refer to the Capability Policy for further details.

13. Part B –Appraisal of Support Staff

- 13.1. **Development and support** - TEFAT encourages a culture in which all support staff take responsibility for improving their work and extending their depth of knowledge through appropriate training and professional development. In addition our appraisal process is used to inform and decide continuing professional development which improves performance.
- 13.2. Agreed training and professional development will be linked to Trust/academy improvement priorities and where possible to the ongoing development needs and priorities of individual support staff members. The Trust is committed to supporting appropriate and reasonable development which not only assists the employee in their work but also leads to improvements in performance across the Trust/academy.

14. The appraisal period

- 14.1. The appraisal period will run for 12 months from September to August.
- 14.2. The length of the appraisal period, and as a consequence, the appraisal objectives set, will be adjusted to take account of relevant absences such as those relating to pregnancy, maternity, disability or other matters covered by the Equality Act 2010.

15. Appointing appraisers

- 15.1. **School based staff**
The academy Business Manager/other senior manager decided by the Principal will be appraised by the Principal. The Principal in consultation with this manager will decide who will appraise other members of support staff.
- Central staff**
Directors will be appraised by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO in consultation with Directors will decide who will appraise other members staff.
- 15.2. Where there are partners or family members working in the same team/academy, the CEO/Principal must ensure that appraisal of such staff is undertaken by a suitable person who does not have a conflict of interest.
- 15.3. Where a member of support staff believes their appraiser is unsuitable to act as their appraiser, they may submit a written request to the CEO/Principal for that person to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request. Their concerns will be carefully considered and, where appropriate and possible, an alternative appraiser will be appointed. The final decision of appraiser is with the CEO/Principal.

16. Setting objectives

- 16.1. Objectives for each member of support staff will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. No more than 3 objectives should be set for each staff member and they should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound (SMART). They should also be appropriate to the individual's role and level of experience. The objectives will be fair and reasonable and take account of any relevant circumstances such as working hours and anticipated absences.
- 16.2. The appraiser and staff member will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives and a note of the individual's objections recorded.
- 16.3. Objectives may be discussed and revised if circumstances change during the appraisal period.
- 16.4. The objectives set for each staff member will, if achieved, contribute to the Trust's/academy's plans for improving educational provision and overall business operation of the organisation/school.

17. Reviewing performance

- 17.1. **Feedback** - support staff will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year. Feedback should highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention. Often this can resolve issues without the need for any formal action. Where there are concerns about any aspects of the employee performance the appraiser will meet the employee to:
 - give clear feedback to the employee about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
 - give the employee the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
 - find out if there are any issues (including issues outside work) which are affecting the employee's performance that the appraiser can assist with or provide support;
 - make clear what improvements need to be made by the employee and how this can be achieved;
 - agree any support (for example coaching, mentoring, training), which will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
 - make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress either by setting new and clear objectives which will be assessed during the informal review period or by revising current objectives, allowing sufficient time for improvement; the amount of time for this should reflect the seriousness of the concerns. This will be an informal review period;
 - explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made during the informal review period ie the application of the capability procedure.

- 17.2. This meeting can happen at anytime during the appraisal period and does not have to wait until the annual assessment. It is a supportive meeting, and designed to address issues early to avoid the matter escalating, giving the employee every opportunity to improve. At the meeting, the appraiser will be required to present evidence collected that indicates that the employee's performance is not up to the required standard. The member of staff may be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative.
- 17.3. Although this is part of the informal process, a note of the meeting will be made and a copy given to the employee so that they are clear about the support they will be given and what improvements, including the review timetable, need to be made. The length of the review timetable will be determined by the appraiser based on the individual circumstances of the situation. During the informal review period, regular meetings should take place to ensure progress is being made.
- 17.4. At the end of the informal review period when progress is reviewed, if the appraiser is satisfied that the employee has made, or is making, sufficient improvement, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through that process. If performance is improving and the appraiser feels that further time is required to monitor improving performance, the appraiser can decide to extend the informal review period. If insufficient improvement is being made including only partial meeting of targets, then the capability process set out below should be followed. It will be for the appraiser to decide which procedure will be followed.

18. Annual assessment

- 18.1. Each member of support staff will have their performance formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period.
- 18.2. 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 process. To ensure further support for support staff, an interim appraisal meeting may take place at the mid-point of the cycle. At this meeting, performance will be reviewed and progress towards objectives will be noted. Any concerns will be noted and an appropriate support plan will be put in place for the remainder of the cycle. The support plan will set out what improvement is required and what support will be provided.

- 18.3. The support staff members will receive as soon as practicable following the end of the appraisal period and no later than 31st October, a written appraisal report. The individual will be able to add their own comments to the report in writing. The appraisal report will be a summary of the performance during the year and set out what the individual's development needs are for the next year. In particular the report will include:
- details of the personal objectives for the appraisal period in question;
 - an assessment of performance against objectives or relevant standards;
 - an assessment of the support staff training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them.
- 18.4. The assessment of performance and of training and development needs from each individual appraisal will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period for the Trust/academy.

19. Monitoring & evaluation

- 19.1. During the appraisal period, each member of support staff has a responsibility for their own professional development. Although not mandatory, they may wish to provide specific evidence of their progress throughout the year in order for them to identify any particular strengths or areas for further development at the interim and annual review meetings. The appraiser will discuss progress towards objectives based on any pre-agreed success criteria, along with any other evidence the individual wishes them to take account of and make an assessment in the appraisal report.

20. Transition to capability

- 20.1. Performance management is an ongoing process. If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress, despite the support provided, this will be discussed at a meeting with the employee in accordance with paragraph 17 above. The employee will be notified in writing that the purpose of the meeting is to consider whether the appraisal process should no longer apply and instead, their performance should be managed under the capability procedure. The employee will be given 5 working days notice of the meeting and may be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. Please refer to the Capability Policy for further details.