



Truro and Penwith
Academy Trust

Professional Growth Policy

Review Summary

Approved By:	Trust Board
Approval Date:	May 2022
Last Review Date:	May 2022
Next Review Date:	May 2025

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Growing Great People

'Growing great people' is the Truro and Penwith Academy Trust's professional growth policy. It puts our staff, together with establishing, improving and maintaining the very highest standards of education at its very heart.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Our aim at Truro and Penwith Academy Trust is to always improve, to always get better; to continually grow as great people. All TPAT employees see themselves as learners; they are empowered to make decisions, be creative, to lead and to grow. The quality of our daily work throughout our Trust is of paramount importance and our employees are the Trust's greatest asset.
- 1.2 Our professional growth processes exist to ensure that all TPAT employees are able to be the very best they can be, leading to improved organisational performance as seen in improved outcomes for our students.
- 1.3 This policy sets out our high expectations and framework for a clear and consistent approach to professional growth so that our employees may genuinely grow and succeed as trusted and valued professionals. It assumes, unless evidence suggests otherwise, that employees within TPAT are meeting their appropriate professional standards and/or the requirements detailed in their job descriptions.
- 1.4 This policy sets out the whole Trust approach to professional development and growth and replaces all existing performance management policies.
- 1.5 In this policy:
 - The CEO is the Chief Executive Officer of the Trust
 - The Chair of the LGB is the Chair of the Local Governing Board of the school
 - The PEL is a Primary Executive Lead
 - The coach is a designated employee within the Trust
 - The coachee is any employee of the Trust

2. Diversity Policy Statement

- 2.1 The Trust willingly accepts not only its legal responsibilities and those detailed in the Equality Act 2010 but also wishes to embrace best practice in all areas of its work in order to secure equality of both treatment and outcome for all.
- 2.2 The Trust is therefore committed to ensuring that no-one is treated in any way less favourably on the grounds of personal differences such as race; national, ethnic or social origin; gender (including reassigned gender); sexual orientation; religious belief; age; disability; marital status; caring responsibilities or political or other personal beliefs.
- 2.3 We will implement all necessary action and training to ensure that the commitment of the Trust with regards to equality of treatment and outcome are fulfilled and will regularly monitor and review progress made in this respect.

- 2.4 We will ensure that employment and development opportunities are available to those who are, or who become, disabled on an equal footing with those without a disability, adapting jobs wherever possible to make them accessible.

This statement should therefore be applied in accordance with this policy.

3. Purpose

- 3.1 We want to help and support our employees to become the very best version of themselves so that our pupils/students benefit from the best possible provision. We also want to ensure that our employees feel able to make the next steps in their career but we also wish to create a culture within TPAT that encourages them to stay and grow with us.
- 3.2 Professional growth within the Trust has several purposes;
- To build and enhance expertise, and secure continuous growth and improvement
 - To enable reflection on strengths and successes, and areas for further growth
 - To recognise and promote a culture of professionalism
- 3.3 Effective professional development is an essential part of securing effective performance. It requires both an individual desire and willingness to continually develop and a shared commitment from our employees to support and collaborate with one another.
- 3.4 Mutual respect pervades all relationships working together to enhance professional learning and practice and collaboration; collegiality and a sense of team identifies how all employees work together. Employees co-operate with each other and are not in competition with each other – they are part of a team that ensures TPAT schools are the best they can be offering quality education to every child.
- 3.5 This policy is designed to change the way we view accountability and continuous professional development. Professional growth within TPAT is ‘done with’ our employees, not ‘done to’ them. The challenge is to always improve, to always get better.
- 3.6 **This approach means focusing on:**
- Employees carrying out self-reflection to help focus on key expectations
 - Employees having joint ownership of their commitments and goals which are detailed in their own professional growth plan
 - Regular progress ‘check ins’ with their coach
 - Empowering line managers and leaders to provide coaching and support to employees to become the very best versions of themselves at work
 - The opportunity for employees to reflect in an ongoing way.

4. Scope

- 4.1 The operational management and oversight of the implementation of this policy is for the Local Governing Board and the Headteacher in all schools, and centrally by the CEO.
- 4.2 This policy applies to all TPAT employees (including central team) but excludes;
- Agency workers
 - Employees who are employed on a fixed term contract lasting less than a term
 - Those undergoing separate recognised induction programmes i.e. ECT’s

5. Principles

- 5.1 As TPAT employees we are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in our daily work and conduct.
- 5.1.1 For our Headteachers and teachers, the Head/Teachers' Standards define the minimum level of practice expected of teachers from the point of being awarded qualified teacher status (QTS). These standards also set out a number of expectations about professional growth and development which are inherent in this policy.
- 5.1.2 For our teaching assistants, the teaching assistant standards set out in the Growing Great People Toolkit Resource 2
- 5.1.3 For all other employees, the key skills and attributes set out in their job descriptions and person specifications
- 5.2 Effective, and genuinely continuous, professional growth
- has a focus on improving pupil/student progress
 - builds and enhances knowledge and expertise to bring about changes in practice
 - has a narrow, yet significant, focus
 - acknowledges that knowledge and expertise is domain specific
 - recognises that novices and experts learn differently
 - recognises that one size does not fit all
 - focuses on what works, challenges existing assumptions and is, therefore, evidence-informed
 - involves collaboration with colleagues
 - is sustained over time and includes frequent opportunities for learning; experimentation and practice, reflection and evaluation, honest frequent feedback and solutions-focused coaching.
- 5.3 Professional growth is underpinned by regular self-reflection, joint ownership of growth commitments and goals, regular coaching conversations through progress 'check ins' and regular ongoing feedback.
- 5.4 As long as Trust Teachers continue to meet their relevant professional standards positively and proactively and engage in the process of professional growth, pay progression will be automatic to the top of the main pay scale pay range (up to M6) and not linked to any mechanism of traditional 'performance management'. We expect our employees to progress up the pay range annually as the norm. Beyond pay point M6, the expectation is that teachers will follow the threshold process detailed within the Trust Pay Policy to move onto and within the Upper Pay Scale.
- 5.5 The expectation is that the professional growth process will be both continuous and cyclical. The preliminary meeting should take place as early as possible in the Autumn Term and by the end of October. There is an expectation that each cycle will be reviewed once the professional goal has been achieved. New cycles could begin within the same academic year.
- 5.6 All Meetings will take place within directed time for teachers and within contracted time for support staff, or as agreed. They will not take place during a break or during PPA time.
- 5.7 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Growing Great People Toolkit.

6. The Coach

- 6.1 A coach might not be the individual's Line Manager; it could be someone with specific expertise in an area requiring development.
- 6.2 As part of this approach a coach must be positively and proactively engaging with the relevant training and have agreed a coaching arrangement with the coachee (employee).
- 6.3 The professional growth process for Headteachers and Executive Headteachers will be carried out by the CEO and Chair of the LGB. For Primary Headteachers, the Director of Education or Primary Executive Lead may deputise for the CEO.
- 6.4 The professional growth process for the Trust Central Team will be carried out by the CEO, or it will be delegated to the Director of Education, the Director of Human Resources or the Director of Business and Finance as appropriate.
- 6.5 The professional growth process for the CEO will be carried out by the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

7. Process of Professional Growth

- 7.1 As a solutions-focused organisation, we help our employees build on their strengths. The Trust is committed to developing a professional culture which drives quality assurance from within; an enabling process rather than an imposed 'top-down' one.
- 7.2 In order for our process of professional growth to be successfully undertaken the following four steps need to be taken:
 - 7.2.1 **Stage One Establishing a Starting Point:** This is a preliminary meeting between coach and coachee to establish a starting point, coachees will receive the Growing Great People (GGP) Toolkit to assist them to carefully reflect on their current context, standards and practice to establish the most beneficial focus for professional growth. This self-reflection will enable individuals to summarise what they are best at, what their strengths are and what future growth areas are and their development needs.

Headteachers should use the Headteacher Standards and Teachers should do this using the Teachers' Standards. Other employees should reflect against the requirements in job descriptions.
 - 7.2.2 **Stage Two Professional Growth:** A focus for growth will be discussed at this meeting. Challenging goal(s), with clear timescales and robust success criteria will be agreed at this meeting. A Professional Growth Plan is recommended for use by coaches.
 - 7.2.3 **Stage Three Research, Practice and Check ins:** These sessions are meant as light touch check-ins to focus on learning and development. However, this is an ongoing process and a Professional Growth Log should be maintained
 - 7.2.4 **Stage Four Reflection, Review and Sharing:** This is the final stage of the process and may take different forms depending on the coachee. Using the Professional Growth and Review template and questions in GGP Toolkit Resource 7, the coachee will reflect on their successes and growth and share with their coach.
- 7.3 Where an employee starts their employment part way through an academic year, or where an employee works part time the goals should be realistic. For new employees the line manager shall in discussion with the employee, ensure that they complete their self-reflection as part of the induction process and the initial meeting with their coach should have taken place as part of the Probation process. This will form part of the probation expectations.

- 7.4 Where an employee moves to a new post, within the Trust, part way through an academic year, the original coach should carry out a check in before they start the new post so that feedback is as complete or up to date as it can be. These will then be reviewed in alignment with the new role at the Trust.
- 7.5 The professional growth plan may need to be adjusted due to the impact of an individual's circumstances such as returning from a period of extended absence.

8. Professional Growth Plan

- 8.1 Every coachee has the responsibility of creating a final version of the 'Professional Growth Plan' based on reflection and discussion. This clearly demonstrates a commitment to improvement, growth and development.
- 8.2 This requires reflection on current work and then subsequent build of expertise through a sustained, focused 'enquiry' approach with frequent purposeful practice, reflection and review.
- 8.3 This individual and unique plan will identify what we hope we will learn or do differently, and the approaches to achieve this; content *and* process. The 'professional growth plan' also requires our employees to identify how they will know they have been successful.
- 8.4 In the 'professional growth plan' a clear goal(s) is set by each employee based on the previous self-reflection process with a focus on what to change or develop further. In agreeing goals, coaches need to be aware of and reflect on the priorities and strategic aims of the school.
- 8.6 Employees who set and monitor their own goal(s) are those who will continue to grow as professionals. Our professional learning must be driven by an individual's motivation to become even better rather than being told what to do. The focus for this bespoke plan will, however, be chosen within parameters and our employees are expected to connect their work to the class taught, subject or school, phase, team, function and or TPAT priorities.
- 8.7 The 'professional growth plan' is a 'live' document. The expectation is that it is reflected on and referred to frequently, adjusted where appropriate, always forming the basis of continuous professional growth.
- 8.8 To ensure that growth is continuous and progress ensured, TPAT employees are expected to engage also with any appropriate professional support.
- 8.9 The final version of the professional growth plan details the growth focus:
- What the commitment to grow is
 - What success will look like and defining timeframes
 - How the individual will learn to do this
 - The dates for progress check ins and completion
- 8.10 This focus is then sustained over a significant amount of time and all employees are required to engage in opportunities for learning and experimentation, reflection and evaluation, feedback and coaching.
- 8.11 It is intended that professional growth and learning, rather than just being confined to meetings in specific times and places, will become embedded into everyday work practices.
- 8.12 Employees will regularly reflect on the progress of their 'professional growth plan' and any changes in practice through regular subject or phase or team 'check ins'.

- 8.13 This sustained development work may be presented to subject or phase or team colleagues at the end of the cycle for the benefit of reflection and sharing effective practice.
- 8.14 All employees are also required to engage fully with any whole school or function/trust professional growth priorities.

9. Professional Development Support

- 9.1 Professional development support will be available for all TPAT employees so that they can continue to grow as great people and professionals. This support can take many forms; dialogue, conversations and co-planning, lesson drop-ins, mentoring and coaching, analysis, feedback and observation.
- 9.2 TPAT employees are expected to create partnerships with others with the professional expertise to support their professional learning and generate information about their progress so that they can monitor and adapt their learning.
- 9.3 Employees are expected to support and assist colleagues through structured opportunities to reflect by reviewing their progress and effectiveness. The role of any employee when supporting a colleague is to push and challenge thinking so that each person becomes an adaptive expert who is capable of continually reflecting on, and expanding, the depth and breadth of their individual expertise.

10. 'Check ins'

- 10.1 Progress 'check ins' are frequent, light-touch meetings between an employee and their coach with a focus on learning, development and progress. Half termly, or more frequent, meetings are desirable, though not essential. They typically last approximately 15 minutes and do not need to be formal.
- 10.3 Progress 'check ins' may be combined with other professional meetings so that professional growth maintains a high profile.

11. Feedback

- 11.1 Feedback is an essential part of the improvement process. Providing people with feedback on how they are doing against their goals increases the chances of those goals being reached.
- 11.2 During the course of the year all employees are required to receive frequent feedback on their professional growth focus to build and enhance expertise and secure continuous growth and improvement. Feedback could come from anyone, internally or externally, who has the relevant expertise and who is working with the coachee on achieving their development goals.
- 11.3 TPAT employees are required to seek this frequent feedback at least once per term, or more frequently if required, through the check in process. Following each check in the coachee will update completed professional growth log. Oversight of progress made towards achieving the chosen goal should be by the coach in the first instance and ultimately by the Headteacher/CEO.
- 11.4 Feedback should focus on the agreed 'professional growth plan' and should be provided at an appropriate time, and in an appropriate manner.

- 11.5 The subsequent conversation is where the learning and action takes place and this structured professional dialogue will focus on goal setting and next steps for the coachee in order to grow further.

12. Pay progression – Teachers only

- 12.1 Pay progression within the Main pay scale for Teachers from M1 to M6 is automatic unless a teacher is subject to action in accordance with the Trust Capability policy. Progression onto and within the Upper pay range will be in accordance with the Threshold process detailed within the TPAT Pay Policy.
- 13.1 Professional Growth is a proactive way to ensure employees are the best they can be through engaging and achieving professional growth.
- 13.2 Where employees fail to meet the relevant standards, fail to engage in professional growth and where matters are not resolved at check ins and through development, they may be transitioned to the informal stage of the capability policy.
- 13.3 Employees who fail to meet the relevant professional standards and who are being supported through the informal and formal stages of the Capability policy, and there is evidence of discussions having taken place with the employee, the automatic pay progression will cease, and the pay point of the employee will remain static until such time as the performance improves.

14. Confidentiality and retention of records

- 14.1 The documents relied upon throughout this process are working documents they will be added to and amended throughout the period. It is the responsibility of both coach and coachee to retain the documentation securely to ensure the contents of the documents are not accessed by individuals not party to the activity.
- 14.2 At all times the need to maintain confidentiality will be observed. Information must not be shared with anyone except those directly involved. This does not preclude a confidential discussion with a fellow work colleague or trade union representative.
- 14.2 Circulation of information will be that which is necessary, to ensure a fair and quality process. Unnecessary disclosure of confidential information at any stage may lead to disciplinary action.
- 14.3 Any relevant records be retained on the employee's personnel file or the identifiable electronic system for 6 years and then securely destroyed.
- 14.4 As part of the application of this policy, the School will collect process and store personal data in accordance with our data protection policy. We will also comply with the requirements of Data Protection Legislation.

15. Policy Review

- 15.1 This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years to ensure that it is working effectively and complying with good practice.