The LETTA Trust

Appraisal Policy

Approved and adopted on:	Autumn 2026	**To be reviewed:**	Autumn 2027
Reviewed by:	TB Resources	**Signed:**	

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1. Introduction and legislation

As a multi-academy trust, we are free to determine our own appraisal arrangements. At LETTA our policy takes account of the minimum national requirements for teachers' appraisal in maintained schools as set out in The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

2. Purpose of appraisal

At the LETTA Trust all staff can expect to receive regular, constructive feedback on their practice. Staff members participate in annual appraisal that is intrinsically supportive and developmental within a culture that recognises our staff members' commitment to children and families, professional learning and excellent performance.

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of staff members including the Headteacher, other leaders, teachers and support staff. The primary aim is to support staff development within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision and performance. Evaluation against the Teachers Standards is an important element of the process for teachers.

At the LETTA Trust, the appraisal policy applies to all staff employed by the Trust except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. ECTs) and those who are the subject to a probationary review or to capability procedures.

The policy aims to:

- improve staff morale and motivation
- lead to professional development according to identified needs and interests
- increase staff participation in decision-making and develop a sense of ownership over their professional development
- identify the resources and facilities needed to support staff in their development
- be manageable and not introduce unnecessary bureaucratic burdens
- create an atmosphere of trust between staff, reviewers and the Headteacher.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's pay policy which provides details of the arrangements relating to staff pay.

3. Our appraisal process

Appraisal in Trust schools is a supportive developmental process designed to ensure that all staff have the opportunities they need to keep learning and developing professionally. To be effective, appraisal must include open, honest reflective discussions between the appraiser and the appraisee. Staff members carrying out an appraiser role are trained and supported to do so.

4. Our appraisal period

The appraisal period runs for twelve months, autumn term to autumn term. Staff who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year have their performance supported in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of the period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period if teachers begin or end employment at some point during the year.

5. Appointing appraisers

The Headteacher is appraised by the CEO and a panel including at least 2 members of the Local Governing Board and/or trustees. If this arrangement presents a conflict of interest, the panel will instead be supported by an external advisor.

The Headteacher decides who appraises other leaders, teachers and support staff and will consider an alternative appraiser where a member of staff has a valid and genuine objection to their designated appraiser. The appraiser will normally be the appraisee's line manager or team leader. New appraisers are supported by the Headteacher in their role.

The CEO is appraised by a panel of at least 2 Trustees. The appraising Trustees are supported by a suitably skilled and experienced external adviser appointed by the Trust Board for that purpose.

6. Setting objectives

The CEO and Headteacher's objectives are set in consultation with their appraisal panel.

Objectives for other leaders, teachers and support staff are set as soon as practicable after the start of the new school year. Teaching staff (teachers and support staff) will have objectives relating to:

1. Pupil progress and achievement

2. Quality of teaching and learning

3. Leadership (or wider professional impact)

The objectives set are intended to contribute to improving the education of pupils at the school. Objectives will also take into account the professional aspirations and interests of staff members.

Objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and appropriate to the staff member's role and level of experience. The appraiser and appraisee will aim to agree on objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives.

Objectives may be revised if circumstances change. The appraisal objectives for year three teachers link to their final ECT report. Teachers on the upper pay spine or the leadership group are set objectives at a level appropriate for their knowledge, skills and experience. Objectives are quality assured by the Headteacher to ensure consistency.

7. Reviewing the quality of teaching and learning

At The LETTA Trust we believe that there are a number of indicators of the quality of teaching and learning. Pupil feedback, assessment information, samples of learning (in books for example) and information from lesson visits or learning walks, are all useful pieces of evidence.

Monitoring activities take place throughout the school year and these fulfil a number of functions. Information gathered during them supports staff professional development and is used to inform school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies. Information gathered from visits to classes is one form of data that leaders use to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and to ensure that proper standards of professional performance are embedded.

8. Feedback

Feedback is in the form of a developmental discussion where staff members are encouraged to reflect on their own practice. It highlights strengths and achievements as well as areas that could be improved and the support available to help staff members achieve this.

9. Continuing professional development

Continuing professional development is a priority at LETTA. Professional development is linked to school improvement priorities and to the bespoke needs and interests of individual staff members. Appraisal meetings include the opportunity to discuss staff members' aspirations for professional development or their career development.

10. Annual review meetings

Each staff member's performance will be assessed in respect of each appraisal period. Staff members will need to bring evidence to the meeting to show how they have met their objectives. We encourage staff members to use evidence that has already been produced for other purposes, e.g. pupil work, feedback from monitoring documents.

The Headteacher quality assures the consistency with which objectives are evaluated and supports appraisers new to this role. The CEO provides consistency in the appraisal of Headteachers. For the CEO, Trustees consult the external adviser.

This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities are reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year in line management meetings.

Teachers must receive a written appraisal report by 31 October (31 December for the CEO or Headteacher). Appraisal reports include:

- details of the objectives for the appraisal period in question
- an assessment of performance against objectives and the relevant standards
- an assessment of professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them
- a recommendation on pay where that is relevant

Failure to pass an appraisal could result in those in the leadership group not progressing on the pay spine (see pay policy). For all staff members, if their performance is not good and is not improving, the capability policy will need to be employed (see capability policy).

11. Feedback to the Trust Board

The Trust Board Resources Committee reviews feedback on the appraisal process annually including an overview of anonymised outcomes and pay progression.

12. Links to other policies

- Pay Policy
- Capability Policy