ST CLARE

Catholic Multi Academy Trust

Employee Growth and Development (Appraisal) Policy

Policy Name	Employee Growth and Development Policy (Appraisal)
Status	Live
Policy Author	2025 CEO, 2026 reviewer HR Manager
Reviewer	Director of Operations
Date Adopted	July 2025
Review Period	May 2026 – July 2026
Last Review Date	N/A
Next Review Date	31 July 2027
Version	2
Advisory Committee	
Linked Documents and Policies	Capability Policy

This policy shall be reviewed in accordance with the above review date, or earlier should there be a legal requirement, business requirement or any collective agreement that necessitates a change.

Changes to this edition

Date	Version	Details of changes
July 2025	1.0	First Edition.
Sept 2025	1.1	Title change from Appraisal to Employee Growth and Development (Appraisal).
May 2026	2	General review arising from Trade Union feedback. Deescalation of references to the Capability Policy.

Contents

Commitment to Equality 3
1 **SCOPE** 4
2 INTRODUCTION 5
3 PURPOSE 5
4 PRINCIPLES 6
5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 7
6 REVIEWING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH 8
6.3 Step 2 - Action 8
6.4 Step 3 - Monitor 9
6.5 Step 4 - Review 9
7 DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND PLAN 9
8 FEEDBACK 10
9 LINK TO CAPABILITY PROCEDURE 10

Commitment to Equality

We are committed to providing a positive working environment which is free from prejudice and unlawful discrimination and any form of harassment, bullying or victimisation. We have developed several key policies to ensure that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in relation to human dignity and dignity in work become embedded into every aspect of school life and these policies are reviewed regularly in this regard. We recognise the importance of overtly demonstrating:

- respect for the rights and dignity of employees
- support for the flourishing of all members of the community. opportunities for all to participate and contribute.

Definitions

In this Employee Growth and Development (Appraisal) Policy and Procedure, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

i. Board' means the board of Directors of the St Clare Catholic Multi School Trust.

ii. Career Stage Expectations' means the career stage professional expectations defined by the St Clare.

iii. Shared Services Team means all staff employed in the Shared Office functions of the St Clare.

iv. 'Chair' means the Chair of the Board as appointed from time to time.

v. ‘St Clare Catholic Multi School Trust’ means the Catholic Multi School Trust, that is the company responsible for the management of the Share Services Team and the schools and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff within the Shared Services Team and the schools.

vi. ‘Companion’ means a willing work colleague not involved in the subject matter under which the policy in being invoked, a trade union official, an accredited representative of a trade union or other professional association of which the employee is a member.

vii. ‘Diocesan Education Service’ means the education service provided by the diocese in which St Clare is situated, which may also be known, or referred to, as the Diocesan School Commission.

viii. ‘Directors’ means directors appointed to the Board.

ix. ‘Headteacher’ means the most senior Teacher in the school who is responsible for its management and administration.

x. ‘Development Review’ means the review and management of Growth and Development, in accordance with this Policy.

xi. ‘Development Period’ means the terms set out in section 6.0.

xii. ‘Development Plan means the report prepared in accordance with section 7.0.

xiii. ‘Policy’ means this Employee Growth and Development (Appraisal) Procedure.

xiv. ‘School’ includes all sites upon which the school undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.

xv. ‘Standards’ means the Teachers’ Standards (published by the DfE in July 2012), the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers (published by the DfE in January 2015 and as revised in 2020) and any other professional standards in relation to the employee’s role e.g. Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants, ISBL Professional Standards.

xvi. ‘Working Day’ means any day on which you would ordinarily work if you were a full-time employee.

xvii. 'Working Week’ means any week you would ordinarily work.

1 SCOPE

1.1 Subject to Paragraph 1.2 below, this Policy applies to all employees within St Clare, based within a school or the Shared Services team (hereinafter referred to as an “employee” or “you”).

1.2 This Policy and Procedure does not apply to those employees who are employed under a contract of employment for less than one term, are on an apprenticeship, are on probationary periods, undergoing induction (e.g. Early Career Teachers – ECT’s) or those who are subject to action under the formal stage of the St Clare Capability Policy and Procedure (Part B).

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Our Employee Growth and Development (Appraisal) policy has been created to ensure that all our staff continue to improve; to continually grow as great people resulting in our employees feeling truly valued, happy and content in their work. All St Clare employees are recognised as children of God, made in his image, empowered to make decisions, be creative, to lead and to grow. This process will enable all employees to be the best that they can be leading to improved individual and organisational performance.

2.2 This policy sets out our expectations and framework for a clear and consistent approach to professional growth so that our employees may genuinely grow and succeed as St Clare and valued professionals.

2.3 It assumes, unless evidence suggests otherwise, that employees within St Clare are meeting their appropriate professional standards and/or the requirements detailed in their job specifications. This policy sets out the whole St Clare approach to professional Growth and Development and replaces all local existing performance management policies.

3 PURPOSE

3.1 We want to help and support our employees so that our 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 also wish to create a culture within the St Clare that encourages them to stay and grow with us.

3.2 Professional growth within St Clare has many benefits and our employees should experience the following benefits:

- Feeling motivated, valued and inspired, through regular check-ins and discussions regarding their individual development. In line with the principle of human dignity, time will be taken to recognise the worth of each worker.
- Involvement in determining their own development needs. In line with the principle of *subsidiarity*, opinions will be heard and valued.
- Engagement in planning their future career development needs in line with the principle of subsidiarity, plans will be made in partnership with employees.
- The prospect of accessing a range of learning and development opportunities linked to both their current role and future roles. In line with the principle of the *common good*, the flourishment of each and all will be evident in sign-posting professional development opportunities.
- Improved wellbeing. In line with the principle of solidarity, the needs of others will feature in wellbeing developments.
- Increased job satisfaction from training opportunities which upskill and build confidence. In line with the principle of respecting the dignity of work and the worker, time will be taken to provide continuing professional development (CPD) and formation which enable the talents of individuals to be recognised and developed, listening to the needs of each person to ensure their voices and opinions are included.
- Awareness of career opportunities within the diocese that meet their skill set. In line with the principle of *respecting and valuing the dignity of work and the worker*, employees will have access to information about career progression within respective roles, including opportunities to work through training courses to hone skills and increase knowledge within a particular field.

- A reduced likelihood of seeking a career outside of the Diocese of Hallam. In line with the principle of *human dignity*, employees will be treated with the utmost respect.

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 part of a team that ensures the St Clare schools are among the best schools in the country, and positively reflect the Catholic ethos of the school, St Clare and Diocese.

3.5 This policy is designed to change the way we view accountability and continuous professional development. Professional growth within the St Clare where employees determine their own development needs and are engaged in planning their future career development needs. The challenge is to always improve, to always get better, recognising that every person has a responsibility to *care for our common home* and recognise the positive impact that each can make in our world.

3.6 Within our St Clare we have high aspirations for ourselves; a belief and pride that we can be the very best, driven by a sense of moral purpose and desire to continuously improve. This policy and procedure are a key driver not only for employee development and school improvement, but also for recruitment, retention, and improved wellbeing within our Catholic organisation.

3.7 This approach means focusing on:

- Employees carrying out self-reflection to help focus on key expectations.
- Employees having joint ownership of their developmental goals with their line manager which are detailed in their own Development Plan.
- Regular progress 'check ins' take place throughout the year as part of line management conversations.
- Empowering line managers and leaders to use coaching skills and support employees to become the very best versions of themselves at work.
- The opportunity for employees to continuously reflect on their achievements and goals for development.

4 PRINCIPLES

4.1 To ensure that all employees achieve the highest possible standards in our daily work and conduct.

4.2 For our Headteachers and Teachers, the Head Teachers' Standards and Teacher's 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.

4.3 For our Teaching Assistants and other support staff colleagues, the relevant professional standards where they exist.

4.4 For all other employees, the key skills and attributes set out in their job descriptions and person specifications.

4.5 Effective, and genuinely continuous, professional growth

- Builds and enhances knowledge and expertise to bring about changes in practice.
- 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, frequent feedback and developmental conversations.

4.6 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.

4.7 As long as St Clare employees continue to meet their relevant professional standards and engage in the process of professional growth, pay progression will be automatic to the top of their pay range and not linked to any mechanism of traditional 'performance management'. We expect our employees to progress up the pay range annually as the norm.

4.8 The expectation is that the professional growth process will be both continuous and cyclical. The initial planning meeting should normally take place in the Advent term. There is an expectation that each cycle will be reviewed in line with the individual development plan. It is possible that goals can be realized and new goals could begin within the same academic year.

4.9 All meetings will normally 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 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The responsibility for carrying out development conversations is the line manager or a reviewer appointed by the Headteacher.

5.2 All employees are expected to participate fully in the process and identifying areas for development.

5.3 The professional growth process for Headteachers will be carried out by the CEO or as delegated to the Directors of Education, in conjunction with the Head Teachers' Appraisal panel of the Local Governing Body.

5.4 As part of this approach it may be identified and agreed that an employee may benefit from coaching on an identified development need. In such cases, a coach must have appropriate training and have agreed a coaching arrangement with the coachee (employee). A coach might not be the individual's Line Manager, but rather someone with specific expertise in an area requiring development.

6 REVIEWING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH

6.1.1 In order to review the growth and development goals set, objective evidence will be used to demonstrate outcomes and achievement.

6.1.2 The School/ St Clare is committed to developing a professional culture which drives quality assurance from within, which enables the individual's development growth pathway.

6.1.3 For the Professional Review cycle to be successfully undertaken in full, the following stages need to be undertaken:

6.2 Step 1 - Establishing a starting point and beginning the planning process.

This is the initial meeting between line manager/reviewer and employee. For all employees in scope of this process, this will commence in the Autumn Term and will usually be completed in the first half term but must be completed by 31st December in any cycle.

The success of this process will rely on effective self-reflection and supporting colleagues to identify areas where they can develop rather than imposing "top down" objectives. Guidance is available for employees prior to embarking on this meeting to enable them to reflect on their current context and standards to identify the most beneficial focus for growth and development. The job description and any relevant standards will provide the basis for reflection, as well as review. This self-reflection will enable individuals to summarise their strengths are and what future growth areas are and their development needs.

A focus for growth will be discussed at this meeting. This will be recorded in a Development Plan. There is no specific number of development goals as they will be specific to the role, the individual concerned and considering the time and resources available. However, to be effective it is likely that there will be no more than 3 development goals identified at any one time. 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 plan also requires our employees to identify how they will know they have been successful.

6.3 Step 2 - Action

Development activity will be carried out in accordance with the actions identified in the Development Plan. Employees are encouraged to be reflective and keep a log of development activities to monitor and evaluate personal growth.

Employees who set and monitor their own goal(s) are those who will continue to grow as professionals and are driven to become even better rather than being told what to do. The focus for this plan will, however, be chosen within the context of their role and School/St Clare priorities.

It is intended that learning and development will not be limited to specific meetings or CPD activity but become embedded into everyday work practices. Support will be available for all St Clare employees so that they can continue to grow as great people and professionals. This support can

take many forms, such as conversations, networks, lesson drop-ins, mentoring, coaching and feedback.

During the year all employees are encouraged 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 qualification and expertise and who is working with the employee on achieving their development goals.

6.4 Step 3 - Monitor

Ideally progress against development goals will be monitored through light touch check-ins as part of the line management/review process. As a minimum entitlement there should be at least one review meeting to ensure progress against the Development Plan. Following each check-in the Development Plan will be updated by both the employee and their line manager/reviewer.

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.

6.5 Step 4 - Review

This is the final meeting of the cycle. Both the line manager/reviewer and the employee will reflect on development activities undertaken and their impact on work success and personal growth. This will also form the basis for updating the Development Plan for the forthcoming cycle.

7 DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND PLAN

7.1 Every employee has the responsibility of participating fully in the development of Goals along with a development plan, following reflection with their line manager/reviewer.

7.2 This requires reflection on current work and then subsequent build of expertise through a sustained, developmental approach with frequent purposeful practice, reflection and review.

7.3 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 'Development Plan' also requires our employees to identify how they will know they have been successful.

7.4 In the Development Plan clear goal(s) are set by each employee based on the previous self-reflection process with a focus on what to change or develop further with intended impact. Employees have a joint responsibility with their line manager to determine the focus of each of their individual professional goals.

7.5 The 'Development 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 an employee's continuous professional growth.

7.6 To ensure that growth is continuous, and progress ensured, St Clare employees are expected to engage also with any agreed appropriate professional support.

7.7 The final version of the plan details the growth focus:

- What the commitment to grow is.
- What success will look like and defining time frames.
- How the individual will learn to do this.
- The dates for progress check ins and completion.

7.8.0 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.

7.8.1 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.

7.8.2 Employees will regularly reflect on the progress of their 'Development Plan' and any changes in practice through regular subject or phase or team 'check ins'.

7.8.3 All employees are also required to engage fully with any whole school or function/ St Clare professional growth priorities.

8 FEEDBACK

8.1 Reflection on employee's performance is based on multiple factors including, where relevant, pupil attainment and formal observations in accordance with agreed internal practice. The length and frequency of "drop in" observations will vary depending on the specific circumstances but will be reasonable.

8.2 Observation of work in practice will be carried out in a supportive fashion and will not lead to unnecessary increases in workload, and all feedback will be developmental.

8.3 Employees will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after any 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 or support that may be required.

9 LINK TO CAPABILITY PROCEDURE

9.1 Our Employee Growth and Development (Appraisal) Policy is a proactive way to ensure our employees are the best that they can be through engaging and encouraging professional growth. If an employee is not meeting the required standards the Capability Policy and Procedure may be initiated.