



People Development Policy

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Author	Dr Kerry Jordan-Daus
Scrutiny	Stephanie Sheppard, Head Teachers
Trustee Scrutiny	Hannah Duncan
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Introduction

Mission, Values and Vision

At Veritas Multi Academy Trust, we are committed to providing high-quality education, making learning irresistible for all, and embedding a culture of continuous professional development for all Trust staff. The Policy is underpinned by our mission, values and vision; to support irresistible learning for all and our aim for Veritas MAT to be an irresistible place to work. Coaching, mentoring and critical friendship is at the core of our people development practice. The policy and processes recognize our commitment to workload and wellbeing, ensuring that our People Development Policy gives our people agency over their own professional development and career progression.

The Trust is committed to the goals of [High Quality Trusts](#) and is committed to an ambitious, embedded and impactful professional development offer for all its people.

This Policy outlines our approach to supporting and empowering our people, thereby enhancing the overall learning and daily experiences for our children and the people working across our Trust schools.

We recognise the inherent value of working collaboratively across our Trust Schools and with our partners: other Trusts, Teaching School Hubs, our regional University - Canterbury Christ Church, the Chartered College of Teaching, the Institute of School Business Leaders and the National Governance Association. All our people have access to high-quality online training through the National College.

The Policy acknowledges the [DfE review of workload](#). Where performance related pay is in place for our Trust staff, this is managed in such a way to minimize additional workload.

Support and development for our [Early Career Teachers](#) is addressed in a separate policy.

Aims

The aims of our People Development Policy are as follows:

1. To enable all our people to enhance their practice through a wide range of personalised professional development opportunities.
2. To promote a culture of collaboration and sharing of best practices among our people.
3. To ensure that all our people are equipped with up-to-date knowledge and skills relating to their role in our organisation.
4. To embed Trust training and professional development, bespoke to individual's need.
5. To support a culture of continuous improvement through coaching, mentoring and peer to peer support.

All our people will undertake Statutory Training either as part of their induction into a new role or on an annual basis. This includes:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Prevent Duty
- Health and Safety
- Online Safety
- Code of Conduct

The following sections of the policy lay out our commitment to our people recognising the differences in role but no less underpinned by the Trust's Mission, Values and Vision, which apply to all.

Role and Responsibilities

The Trust Board and the CEO are responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy, ensuring that all Trust Schools are using the policy to inform practice.

Head Teachers are responsible for ensuring that the policy is adhered to and each member of our teaching and teaching support team, learning and support volunteers are enabled and supported in their engagement with aims and the processes.

Our Trust Business Manager is responsible for ensuring that the policy is adhered to and each member of the business and site development team is enabled and supported in their engagement with the aims and the processes.

Our Governance Professional is responsible for ensuring that the policy is adhered to and each member of our governance volunteer team is enabled and supported in their engagement with the aims and the processes.

Teacher and Leadership Development

Investing in high quality professional development for our teachers and leaders is a priority for the Trust. The Trust invests in an ambitious, embedded and impactful professional development offer for all its teachers and leaders. There is an expectation that all our teachers and leaders will actively engage in the menu of learning and development opportunities and also work collaboratively across our Trust to support the learning and development of others.

Our Menu of Professional Development

We offer a wide range of professional development that caters to the diverse needs of our teachers and leaders. Our menu of opportunities includes

- Access to online statutory and bespoke training from the National College
- Coaching and mentoring
- Regular staff meetings dedicated to professional sharing, discussion, and peer support
- Level 4 to Level 7 accredited education courses and non-accredited learning opportunities working in partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University
- Bespoke professional development and National Professional Qualifications, through Teaching Schools and Specialist Hubs

We use a range of strategies to support teacher development; including peer review including 360 feedback, pupil voice, book looks, moderation of work. All are underpinned by a commitment to reflective practice. Observations of teaching and talking about teaching and learning can provide a rich development opportunity. Learning and development come from a place of challenge and support, and a shared commitment to the organization's mission. The Trust recognizes that observation of teaching plays an important part in knowing what is working, evaluation and school improvement. But this is undertaken in a culture of commitment to the individual's sense of wellbeing.

As a Trust and across our schools we value the opportunity to learn with and from colleagues and utilizing the observation of teaching is carefully planned through a reciprocal (instructional) coaching model. Teachers and leaders engage with observation of practice as a tool to support learning and development.

Teaching Assistant and Learning Support Development

The Trust recognizes the importance of the roles of those working within learning support and as teaching assistants and continues to seek innovative ways to support our people on their development journey.

As a result, the Trust has developed a three-tiered development system for our TAs to recognize the skills of our people, allowing progression and development in the role as their skills, training and professional development progress, with a bespoke menu of development available to achieve this.

Teaching assistants complete a detailed audit, which recognizes the diversity of knowledge, skills and understanding that individuals possess. From the audit a personalized plan is created. The plan will be informed by conversations with colleagues, including class teacher and line manager.

All teaching assistants have a personalized plan and access to a range of online and face to face training aligned to an individual's need based on their audit.

Our menu of opportunities includes

- Access to online training statutory and bespoke from the National College
- Coaching and mentoring
- Staff and Team meetings dedicated to professional sharing, discussion, and peer support.
- Level 4 to Level 7 accredited education courses and non-accredited learning opportunities working in partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University
- Bespoke professional development and National Professional Qualifications, through Teaching Schools and Specialist Hubs

Business and Site Team Development

Across the Trust we have colleagues fulfilling a range of critical roles ensuring core functions of a high-quality trust are efficiently and effectively completed. Our people in these roles are recognized in our commitment to continuous development.

Our menu of opportunities includes

- Access to online statutory and bespoke training from the National College
- Team meetings dedicated to professional sharing, discussion, and peer support, including 360 feedback.
- Coaching and mentoring
- Level 4 to Level 7 accredited education courses and non-accredited learning opportunities working in partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University
- Bespoke professional development and National Professional Qualifications or other professional bodies

Volunteers

Volunteers play an important and invaluable role in our Trust and our schools. Our People Development Policy recognises their work and is committed to providing an appropriate development programme to meet their needs.

Governor, Trustee and Member Development

The work of our volunteer governors and trustees is integral to the work of a High-Quality Trust. The commitment to support the development of our volunteer governors and trustees is equally embedded. All governance volunteers will be inducted by the Governance Professional, including a 1:1 meeting, Introduction to Governance VERITAS training, and shadowing.

Our menu of opportunities includes

- Access to online statutory and bespoke training from the National College
- Team meetings dedicated to professional sharing, discussion, and peer support and peer review, including 360 feedback.
- Coaching and mentoring
- Bespoke training from the National Governance Association or sector specific training for the governance of a Trust.

Learning and Support Volunteer Development

All volunteers undertake a programme of statutory training as part of their induction and the annual update.

Some of our volunteers are looking towards a career in the sector and thus their role as a volunteer is an important first step in this journey. Their development programme is appropriately personalized to attend to needs. Whether this volunteering is a precursor to teacher training, teaching assistant or business support role, the Trust makes a commitment to their development.

Additionally, some of our volunteers are supporting the school and children post-retirement, and as such, have differing needs. All our volunteers bring indispensable skills, commitment and enthusiasm to their role and the Trust makes a commitment to their development.

Learning Communities for All

We believe in the power of collaborative learning and actively promote professional learning communities.

These include:

- Team meetings dedicated to professional sharing, discussion, and peer support.
- Teach Meets
- Trust Peer Groups, Trust Focus Groups to address agreed priorities
- Annual Trust Conference
- Cross Trust/Schools collaborations e.g. Kent MAT Alliance; for example Writing Moderation, Kent Association of Leaders in Education
- Membership of and access to Chartered College of Teaching, Institute of School Business Leaders, National Governor Association, Confederation of School Trusts

Research and Dissemination of Practice

The Trust is proud of and committed to its culture of research and evidence informed practice. Research, evidence informed practice and the sharing of this is aligned to our people development values, how we learn, grow and support each other through collaboration.

Each year, colleagues will be invited to submit their own individual research / study to the Trust's Research Journal. We adopt a broad definition of research; this could include sharing reading of a book or a chapter or an article, or a new teaching resource that has been used, it could include being involved in a partner research project or part of an NPQ or MA programme.

Our Trust commitment to research and evidence informed practice is similarly aligned to our commitment to reflective practice, and engagement with personal professional development.

The Trust supports our people by providing membership of the Chartered College of Teaching, which is open to all our people. Through the CCT and our and our partnership with our regional University, Canterbury Christ Church University, we actively promote evidence and research informed practice.

There is an expectation that Trust employees who have been supported on an external programme (for example, National Professional Qualification) will submit to the journal. Evidence of engagement through dissemination of learning will additionally be useful to support colleagues who are wishing to review their grading or apply for promotion etc.

Those staff who are wishing to progress to Upper Pay Scale would also be expected to demonstrate their engagement with research and evidence informed practice through the Trust's journal, or another publication route e.g. Chartered College of Teaching Impact.

Our Process for Managing Professional development and continuous improvement

Our policy supports a culture of continuous improvement, whereby individuals identify a professional development objective, through a coaching conversation with their line manager. This objective would arise from a professional development review and would normally be linked to the School or Trust Improvement Plan.

All our people will engage in a self-review and objective setting cycle, usually running from September to July each academic year, with a mid-year review.

The objective setting exercised will be informed by different evidence e.g. for our Teaching Assistants this would be based on their audit. The objective could be linked to aspirational goals, for example a teacher wishing to apply for Upper Pay Scale and thus would be aligned to the UPS Criteria (See Trust Pay Policy).

At a point of final review (usually July), in discussion with their line manager, an individual would demonstrate evidence of addressing their objective.

Simple documentation evidencing the initial professional conversation, mid-year review and the final year end conversation will be collected. This will be stored in an individual's EVERY HR Portal.

No additional paperwork is expected or required. Sharing evidence of training undertaken through the National College (My Training) portal could be used or for example, discussion of engagement with the Trust Peer Groups, completion of an ISBL module etc. However, at all times the focus must be on "and what difference" have I made. The development conversation at the point of review should not replace ongoing "checking in" conversations which should be ongoing throughout the year.

Additional Support

Where any of our Trust Employees are identified as requiring additional support, the Trust is committed to using our combined resources to offer and provide timely and personalised interventions. There can be many factors attributing to an employee seeking additional support and our culture of openness and honesty comes to fore herein.

Our [Capability Policy](#) lays out the steps should this need arise.

Conclusion

This policy aims to ensure that development is embedded and supported through the lived experience of all our people. Our commitment to support is both a vehicle for recruitment and retention, but most importantly, to ensure that we recognise that our people are important, valued and integral to our mission of making learning irresistible for all.