WULFRUNA
PARTNERSHIP

Executive Pay Policy

2026 - 2027

Document Management	
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1. Statement of Intent

The Wulfruna Partnership understands its duty to ensure that the most competent and skilled people are in leadership positions; however, it also understands that salaries must be:

- Justifiable
- In the best interests of the Trust
- Reflective of the individual's responsibilities
- Demonstrative of value for money.

This policy aims to outline how the Trust ensures that executive salaries reflect, and are underpinned by, the seven principles of public life (the Nolan Principles):

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

The Trust will always seek to make decisions about pay which enable the Board of Trustees to be confident about, and accountable for, these decisions. The Trust Board are committed to adopting policies and procedures to ensure their compliance with the Academy Trust Handbook (ATH), which sets out the financial management, control, and reporting requirements of the Trust.

The Trust Board will have due regard to propriety and regularity, and ensure value for money, in the use of public funds.

Trustees will fulfil their fiduciary duties and wider responsibilities as charitable trustees and company directors.

This policy and procedure has been produced to assist with recruitment, retention, and recognition of executive employees, whilst also recognising that the decisions regarding pay should be fair, justifiable, open, objective, accountable and within the agreed policies and procedures.

For the purposes of this policy 'Executive Leader' has been used to define anyone who is primarily a member of non-teaching staff in a leadership role in which they are held to account for the standards across the Trust.

2. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Charity Commission (2025) 'Trustee expenses and payments'
- Committee on Standards in Public Life (1995) 'The Seven Principles of Public Life'

- DfE (2023) 'Implementing your school's approach to pay'
- DFE (2025) 'Setting executive salaries: guidance for academy trusts'
- DFE (2025) 'Academy Trust Handbook 2025'
- DFE (2025) 'Academies accounts direction 2025 to 2026'
- Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Financial Procedures Policy
- Staff Attendance and Absence Policy
- Anti-fraud and Corruption Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Members, Trustees and Governors Expenses Policy
- Finance Policy
- Risk Management Policy

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that its decisions on executive pay follow a robust evidence-based process and are reflective of the individual's role and responsibilities
- Discharging its responsibilities effectively, whilst ensuring its approach to pay and benefits is transparent, proportionate and justifiable
- Ensuring that decisions about executive pay and benefits reflect independent and objective scrutiny by the Board and that conflicts of interest are avoided
- Ensuring that factors in determining pay and benefits are clear, including whether educational and financial performance considerations and the degree of challenge in the role have been taken into account
- Ensuring that pay and benefits represent good value for money and are defensible relative to the public sector market
- Ensuring the Board is sighted on broader business interests held by senior executives and is satisfied that payments do not undermine the transparency requirements for disclosing pay in accordance with the Academies Accounts Direction
- Ensuring documentation, including the rationale behind decisions relating to executive pay, is maintained.
- Maintaining the presumption that executive pay and benefits should not increase at a faster rate than that of STPCD and NJC Pay Awards
- Delegating responsibilities to the Pay Committee as appropriate

Trustees will ensure that funds are used in a way that commands broad public support, pays due regard to propriety and regularity, and provides value for money.

Trustees accept that absolute independence in any review process may not always be possible. In circumstances where this may be the case, reasonable steps will be taken to protect the integrity of the

process and ensure any challenges to its independence are limited and justifiable.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 The Trust will publish information on its website about the gender pay gap within the Trust.

The Pay Committee will be responsible for:

- Ensuring no individual is involved in deciding their own pay
- Setting and reviewing this policy as delegated by the Board of Trustees
- Approving the design of, and determining performance targets for, any performance-related element of executive pay
- Recommending and monitoring executive pay and the first layer of executive management below
- Determining and recommending the wider pay policy to the Board of Trustees
- Carefully managing conflicts of interest and avoiding them wherever possible
- Taking advice, making a record and making decisions when a conflict of interest arises
- Reviewing the performance of Executive Leaders to inform pay reviews

Executive Leaders will be responsible for:

- Attending Pay committee meetings when invited to advise on broader matters relating to pay
- Absenting themselves from discussions related to their own pay

The Accounting Officer will be responsible for adjusting pay levels where appropriate.

4. Trust Aims

The Trust will always aim to attract and retain individuals with the required values, experience, knowledge and skills required to lead its schools. The Trust will, therefore, ensure that executive pay and benefits remain competitive in order to achieve targets and support pupils to reach their potential.

The Trust will seek to ensure that salaries are fair in relation to individuals' skills and experience and that this is upheld across the Trust.

The Trust will remain up-to-date with average executive salaries in other trusts to ensure that pay remains competitive and measured to Executive Leaders' roles and responsibilities.

5. Process For Setting Executive Pay

The following process must be followed when considering and setting the pay for Executive Officers working for the Trust.

- The Pay Committee has delegated responsibility for undertaking an annual assessment of Executive pay
- Reviewing the Pay package for the Executive Officers must be exclusively a Trustee led process overseen by a member of the Pay Committee
- Reviewing the pay of Executive Officer roles other than the CEO may be undertaken by the CEO. The

CEO should present evidence-based recommendations to the Pay Committee for approval

- Pay Committee may choose to out-source the annual executive pay review process to an independent third party. In these circumstances the standard procurement policies and procedures of the Trust must be followed
- Evidence to support changes to executive pay, including appropriate independent benchmarking data, must be documented in, or appended to, the assessment form provided in Appendix B
- The review should take place in the Autumn term of the academic year when national teacher and support staff pay awards have been announced and performance reviews have been completed Appendix A
- The Pay Committee should make recommendations for any changes to executive pay to the Autumn Term meeting of the Board of Trustees
- The Board of Trustees must approve changes to executive pay before they take effect

In the event of additional schools, and therefore personnel joining the Trust, it may be necessary for salaries to remain the same following the transfer. The Board or Pay Committee will consider on a case-by-case basis whether it is appropriate to inherit salaries at existing levels and ensure that:

- salaries are in line with the relevant pay policies
- all decisions around pay are evidence based

The Trust is accountable for levels of pay across the Trust. The Trustees may, depending on role, take the following independent factors into consideration when setting pay and reviewing salaries.

6. Academic Performance

When reviewing salaries for Executive Leaders, the Trust will consider academic performance and pupil outcomes across the Trust to ensure that the highest standard of education is being provided to pupils.

The Board of Trustees will robustly challenge escalating leadership costs where they are not clearly justifiable, or where questions are raised about financial sustainability.

Academic performance will be considered in relation to setting and reviewing executive pay – the Trust will ensure that pupil outcomes and the level of improvement needed to ensure the highest standard of education are taken in to account when reviewing executive pay. The Trust will also consider the level of progress that is being made towards improvement and ensure that appropriate adjustments are made where expectations are not being met.

The Trust will consider the following evidence when reviewing executive pay:

- Ofsted ratings
- Long and short-term educational targets of the Trust
- Performance against objectives

The Trust will seek to establish how performance compares with the national average and with schools in trusts in the same area or which have a similar context.

7. Educational Challenge

When making decisions about pay, the Trust will factor in any educational challenge resulting from its individual mission, motivations and values. The Trust will consider whether it requires additional expertise, as a result of particular challenges in its schools, to deliver a curriculum that meets the needs of pupils. When considering whether this applies to the Trust, the following will be considered:

- Percentage of pupils with SEND
- Percentage of pupils eligible for FSM
- Percentage of pupils with EAL
- Percentage of pupil mobility
- Level of deprivation
- Number of CYPiC

The Trust will seek to establish whether the level of complexity and challenge is significantly above other similarly sized trusts.

8. Broader Challenge

The Trust will consider whether the role presents additional challenges outside of those that would normally be expected of this position.

The Trust will consider the following:

- Permanent responsibilities that may not be typical of the role in other organisations
- Existing significant concerns at the Trust
- Whether there is a role in leading future plans for the Trust, e.g. expansion
- Additional accountabilities
- Responsibility for engaging the local community

The Trust will seek to establish the level of complexity and challenge and whether it warrants a higher salary alongside how the responsibilities of executives compare with trusts of a similar size and complexity.

9. Financial Performance

Financial performance alongside benchmarking with relevant sectors and the requirements of the 'Academy Trust Handbook' will be considered when reviewing executive pay.

The Board of Trustees will have sufficient access to the current actual financial position and projections for the Trust to inform decisions about pay.

Provisions will be made under the contract of employment to revise salaries where the financial position of the Trust deteriorates due to poor management. The Trust will ensure that there is flexibility in the employment contract of the Accounting Officer to make a downward adjustment if appropriate.

When considering pay and the Trust's financial performance, the following will be considered:

- The Trust's deficit or surplus position
- The auditor's view of the Trust and the progress towards implementing audit recommendations
- Requirement for additional financial support
- Whether the Trust has delivered to its financial forecast under the individual's management
- Whether the Trust is forecasting a deficit in the forthcoming three-year period, in excess of the operating surpluses generated in the previous three years
- Whether the Trust's pupil number projections have been reflected in the annual census

10. Experience of Executive Leaders

Pay will be considered alongside any additional expertise that the individual may bring to the role which will add value to the leadership team.

The Trust will consider the following evidence:

- Previous significant experience in improving educational and financial outcomes
- Business Management qualifications and experience
- National Leaders of Education or National Leaders of Further Education
- Other relevant qualifications

The Trust will seek to establish whether the level of expertise is essential for the role, what value the expertise brings and the Pay levels of other individuals with this level of expertise either within the Trust or within similarly sized trusts.

11. Total Cost of Pay Package

The total Pay package will be considered alongside the cost of the basic salary. The Trust will consider the following:

- Performance-related pay and other bonuses awarded during the financial year
- Pension contributions and payments in lieu of pension contributions
- Salary sacrifice arrangements
- Compensation for loss of office
- Any sums paid under pension scheme in relation to employment with the provider
- Other taxable benefits
- Non-taxable benefits that are available only to senior members of staff
- Other Pay elements and the cost to the provider, e.g. travel allowance

Where an Executive Leader is on a part time or fixed term contract, the Trust Board will ensure the full-time equivalent (FTE) is still reasonable within the context of the Trust. Where the Executive Leader is also a Trustee, the Board will consider whether expenses could be considered a conflict of interest.

Executive Officer's Pay Ranges Effective From 1 January 2026

The Trust Board holds the right to review and revise the Executive Leadership pay range (Appendix D) at

any point.

The following are the agreed pay ranges:

Chief Executive Officer Pay Range* Point 37 to 43

Technology Officer - Point 6 to 9

These Executive Officer's uplifts will be in line with the agreed School Teachers Pay and Conditions Leadership pay award and will be backdated to 1 September.

*The Pay Committee can award lump sum payments, periodic payments, or provide other financial assistance, support or benefits for a recruitment or retention incentive as deemed appropriate. This may include uplifts beyond the agreed scale point range. The relevant Pay Committee will make clear at the outset, in writing, the expected duration of any such incentive or benefit, and the review date after which it may be withdrawn. The Pay Committee will, nevertheless, conduct an annual formal review of all such awards. The total sum of any such payment must not exceed 25 per cent of the annual salary which is otherwise payable to the Executive Leader.

Performance Management and Pay Progression

Decisions to award pay progression must be related to the individual's performance, as assessed through the Trust's appraisal arrangements.

Pay increases will not be awarded automatically and will be linked to a clear and measurable set of Key Performance Indicators within the parameters of the agreed contractual arrangements. The Trust Board must be satisfied that there is an evident link between the levels of achievement of the individual and across the Trust and pay progression. Pay ranges should only be reviewed when there have been significant changes to responsibilities and not just because the top of the current range has been reached.

Pay increases should always be considered in the context of the wider organisation. Rewards must be applied appropriately at all levels. Executive Officers are not solely responsible for the performance outcomesat the Trust. It is important that awards for exceptional performance be applied across all levels. Executive Officers' pay should not increase at a faster rate than that of teaching staff. Consideration should be given to the rate of increase across the board.

12. Public Interest

The Trust will consider future plans for the Trust and engagement with the local community when reviewing executive pay.

The Trust will ensure that executive pay is proportionate and defensible to the public sector market and reflects value for money.

Public perception and the public benefit of decisions made by the Trust will be considered when making salary decisions.

The following will be considered with public interest in mind:

- Levels of teacher pay within the Trust and how the proposed salary compares
- Salary levels in the local area
- National salary levels
- Justification in response to DfE challenge of salaries over £100,000
- Local and national media interest in salaries
- The local economy

The Trust will publish on its website, in a readily accessible form, the number of employees whose benefits exceeded £100,000, in £10,000 bandings, for the previous year ended 31 August. These benefits include:

- Salary
- Employers' pension contributions
- Other taxable benefits
- Termination payments

Where the Trust has entered into an off-payroll arrangement with an individual who is not an employee, the amount paid for their work for the Trust will also be included in the website disclosure where payment exceeds £100,000.

13. Gender Pay Gap

The Trust will publish gender pay gap figures by 30 March annually on the government's reporting portal and on its own website.

The Trust will consider evidence-based actions to address gender pay differences including:

- Ensuring transparency to promotion, pay and reward processes
- Clearly communicating the salary range on offer.

The Trust will consider guidance from The Government Equalities Office to help understand gender pay gap figures and take the right action.

14. Appeals

If an Executive Leader is dissatisfied with any pay decisions, they will be expected to raise this with the Chair of the Board.

If the issue remains unresolved, the Executive Leader will be permitted to submit an appeal within 10 days of the notification of the pay decision or discussion with the Chair of the Board.

Appeals will be considered if they are based on any of the following:

- Incorrect application to any provisions of their employment contract
- Failure to have regard to statutory guidance relating to pay
- Failure to take account of relevant evidence

- Failure to consistently apply this policy and associated performance management or appraisal procedures
- An allegation of bias
- Unlawful discrimination of the Executive Leader

The appeal will be held in accordance with Appendix C.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed in writing within 5 working days, stating if it has been upheld or not upheld. There will be no further right of appeal.

15. Additional Considerations

Tax

The Trust will ensure its senior employees' payroll arrangements fully meet their tax obligations and comply with HM Treasury's guidance about the employment arrangements of individuals on the avoidance of tax. Senior managers with significant financial responsibilities will be exclusively on payroll and subject to Pay As You Earn with income tax and NI contributions deducted at source. In circumstances where it may be appropriate to make an off-payroll appointment, the Trust Board will ensure that tax arrangements remain transparent.
ESFA approval will be sought in advance in exceptional circumstances where the Trust seeks to appoint an off-payroll Accounting Officer or CFO.

Pensions

The Trust will consider whether Executive Leaders are on the correct pension package that represents the best value for money for the Trust.

Benchmarking

The Trust Board may use benchmarking to support quality decision making when taken into consideration alongside the specific context of the individual trust. When using benchmarking the Trust Board will consider the individual trust perspective when comparing against statistically similar trusts. Where results show that the Trust is at the high end of the benchmarking scale, the Trust Board will ensure clear reasoning and rationale as to why this is the case.

Where possible the Trust Board will aim to benchmark against individuals with similar responsibilities, as the responsibilities associated with different job titles vary across the sector. The Trust Board may also contact similarly sized trusts in the area to enquire about their levels of pay.

Characteristics

The Trust's characteristics will be considered when setting executive pay, this will include considering:

- The number of schools
- The number of pupils
- The range of provision
- The quality of provision and their financial effectiveness

- The type of school

The Trust will seek to establish:

- Whether the size and provision of the Trust provides any additional challenges
- How similarly sized trusts remunerate their Executive Leaders
- Whether the type of school presents additional challenges to that of an academy trust of a similar size

Location

The Trust will consider the location of its schools when making decisions about pay. Issues such as the cost of housing and whether the location results in additional financial burden will be considered.

Ratios

The Board of Trustees will consider statistics alongside the individual circumstances of the Trust to form the basis of discussion around whether costs are reasonable and relevant in the context of the Trust.

The following will be considered:

- Cost of salary per pupil when benchmarked against comparable trusts
- Cost of total leadership team compared with trusts of a similar size
- Percentage difference between the highest and lowest paid staff
- Rate of pay increase across the Trust
- Senior Leadership Team costs as a percentage of total staff cost across Schools in the Partnership

Succession Planning

When planning for successors, individuals will not automatically be recruited at the same level as their predecessor. The Trust will consider:

- Whether severance payments are reasonable and justifiable
- The intended length of service
- The required notice period
- The length of time required to recruit a replacement

16. Policy Review

This policy is reviewed annually, unless updates 'in year' are required in terms of compliance with the Academies Trust Handbook.

Appendix A

Assessment form for documenting Executive Pay Performance

Please note that the individual preparing this report must not be the person whose role is being considered.

Role	
Employee	
Date	
Factors to be considered in setting pay	
Date of last pay review	
Current salary (£)	
Other benefits (e.g. bonus, honorarium, pension)	
Performance Please comment on the performance of the individual relative to agreed targets. This should reflect comments in the persons most recent performance review.	
Proposal	
Proposed salary (£) *Please note if any proposed change in pay should start from a date other than 1st September.*	
If applicable, please describe any changes to other benefits	
Approval	
Date of Board of Trustees approval**	

Notes:

*The marketplace review does not need to be completed every year. It must be undertaken:

- Annually if there has been a material and noticeable shift in pay awards in the marketplace
- In the absence of a material shift then once every 3 years.

**The individual whose role is being considered must be excused from any part of any meeting where formal discussions on their salary are undertaken.

Appendix B

Assessment form for documenting Executive Pay Decisions

Please note that the individual preparing this report must not be the person whose role is being considered.

Role	
Date	
Factors to be considered in setting pay	
Date of last pay review	
Current salary range (£)	
Other benefits (e.g. bonus, honorarium, pension)	
Nature of the role Has the nature of the role changed since the previous pay review (size, scope, risk, challenge)?	
Benchmarking* Please provide evidence of any changes in pay for equivalent roles in the marketplace (increases or decreases). Due consideration must be given to ensuring comparisons are timely and appropriate. Mark 'no change' if the marketplace has remained unchanged.	
Teaching and support staff uplifts Please describe the most recent average pay uplifts awarded by the Trust to teaching staff and support staff.	
Affordability Does the current level of pay for the role remain affordable? Is a pay uplift affordable?	
Reputation If disclosed to a third party, would the absolute value of pay award or proposed uplift in pay risk damaging the reputation of the Trust?	
Proposal	

Proposed salary range (£) *Please note if any proposed change in pay should start from a date other than 1st September.*	
If applicable, please describe any changes to other benefits	
Approval	
Date of Board of Trustees approval**	

Notes:
*The marketplace review does not need to be completed every year. It must be undertaken:

- Annually if there has been a material and noticeable shift in pay awards in the marketplace
- In the absence of a material shift then once every 3 years.

**The individual whose role is being considered must be excused from any part of any meeting where formal discussions on their salary are undertaken.

Appendix C
Procedure to be followed at an Executive Pay Appeal

1. Introductions and housekeeping.

2. Chair to explain the purpose of the Hearing, the format for the Hearing and the potential outcomes.
3. Any person present may request an adjournment.
4. The employee and their representative will be invited to present the employee's grounds for appeal.
5. The Manager and any HR professional accompanying them may ask questions of the employee.
6. The Panel and their HR Support may ask questions of the employee.
7. The Manager Hearing will respond to the employee's appeal.
8. The employee and their representative may ask questions of the Manager.
9. The Panel and their HR Support may ask questions of the Chair of the Formal Hearing.
10. The Manager will be invited to make a concluding statement.
11. The employee and their representative will be invited to make a concluding statement.
12. The Hearing will adjourn, and all parties will withdraw with the exception of the Panel and their HR Support.
13. Where it is possible for a decision to be made within a reasonable timescale, the Appeal Hearing will be reconvened, and the decision communicated to the employee. The decision will be confirmed in writing within ten working days of the hearing taking place. Where a longer period of time is required to make a decision, the Appeal Hearing will close, and the outcome will be communicated to the employee within five working days.
14. The decision of the Appeal Panel is final and there will be no further right to appeal.

Pay Scales

School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document (September 2025)

PAY POINT	SALARY
L1	£51,773
L2	£53,069
L3	£54,394
L4	£55,747
L5	£57,137
L6	£58,569
L7	£60,145
L8	£61,534
L9	£63,070
L10	£64,691
L11	£66,368
L12	£67,898
L13	£69,596
L14	£71,330
L15	£73,105
L16	£75,049
L17	£76,772
L18	£78,702
L19	£80,655
L20	£82,654
L21	£84,699
L22	£86,803
L23	£88,951
L24	£91,158
L25	£93,424
L26	£95,735
L27	£98,106
L28	£100,540

L29	£103,030
L30	£105,595
L31	£108,202
L32	£110,892
L33	£113,646
L34	£116,456
L35	£119,350
L36	£122,306
L37	£125,345
L38	£128,447
L39	£131,578
L40	£134,860
L41	£138,230
L42	£141,693
L43	£143,796

NJC (from April 2026)

GRADE	PAY POINT	SALARY
2	3	£24,796
	4	£25,185
3	5	£25,583
	6	£25,989
4	7	£26,403
	8	£26,824
	9	£27,254
	10	£27,694
	11	£28,142
5	12	£30,024
	13	£31,022
	14	£32,061
	15	£32,597
	16	£33,699

6	17	£36,363
	18	£37,280
	19	£38,220
	20	£39,152
	21	£39,862
	22	£40,777
7	23	£44,075
	24	£45,091
	25	£46,142
	26	£47,181
	27	£48,226
	28	£49.282
8	29	£52,413
	30	£53,460
	31	£54,495
	32	£55,609
	33	£56,730
9	34	£60,144
	35	£61,263
	36	£62,394
	37	£63,535
10	38	£66,939
	39	£68,074
	40	£69,182
	41	£70,283
11	42	£73,604
	43	£74,715
	44	£75,829
	45	£76,939
	46	£78,051