

# Saffron Academy Trust

## Staff Charter



**Every child deserves to go to a great school**

**Updated Spring 2025**

## Contents

<b>Section</b>	<b>Page</b>
Staff Charter: Introduction	3
Culture & Climate in a SAT School	4
Appraisal: Best Practice	5
Staff Charter Questionnaire	6
Careers Pathway	7

# Saffron Academy Trust

## Staff Charter: Introduction

Our mission at Saffron Academy Trust (SAT) is a very simple one: to provide every child with a great education because we believe that **Every Child Deserves to Go to a Great School**. Our parents trust us to do the best we possibly can for their children, and we must deliver on that promise to be great. What we do know is that our staff at all levels of the organisation can only do an exceptional job if they enjoy going to work, feel valued, feel listened to and have their talents nurtured. When we get the culture right our staff exceed our expectations and make 'discretionary effort'. They do things because they want to do them and do the things that are needed rather than working their hours and contractual obligations only. At SAT, we recognise that you cannot ask or tell people to do this. Our staff want to put in discretionary effort because they love their jobs.

### **Enjoy Work! Be Valued! Feel Listened to! Talent Nurtured!**

In order to have excellent, motivated staff we are mindful about their health and welfare, their workload and the negative stress that working pressures can put them under. Because we look after our staff we are more likely to retain them. We aspire to attract the very best people, and to keep them and their talents by engendering loyalty. There are 4 strands to doing this:

1. Through leading the culture and climate
2. Through talent development
3. Through effective behaviour management
4. Through creating manageable workloads and wellbeing approaches

#### **Leading the Culture and Climate**

Our Senior and Middle leaders understand and radiate the positive values of the school and SAT in every interaction with staff and students and this leadership should be visible and easy for others to adopt too. Our leaders model what they expect from staff.

#### **Talent Development**

Right through SAT we prioritise the development of other leaders and take pride in their growth even when it means they leave us for promoted posts. We promote our SAT leadership pathways (copies of these are included later in this document), give staff appraisal the time and attention it deserves, create time for line-management and mentoring and offer coaching. Our training will always be of the highest possible quality and hence be valued.

#### **Behaviour Management**

Schools have strong and consistent behaviour management systems so that all staff can focus on the job they were trained to do.

#### **Workload and Wellbeing**

Initiatives are mindful of workload and every reasonable attempt is made to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, activity that has no proven impact and that which does not relate to the core business of education. Facilities to support staff wellbeing, such as counselling referral or coaching, are made available.

#### **SAT Employee Benefits**

A booklet outlining benefits to SAT staff is available to view on our website.

## What does the culture and climate look like in a SAT school?

1. **A culture that values staff** and shows that it does in every decision it makes and in gestures big and small. Examples: *meeting regularly with a staff committee and union representatives, praising excellent work and outcomes through verbal praise or cards of thanks.*
2. Leadership that sees staff **wellbeing as vital to success**. Examples: *being open to flexible working and generous about requests to attend special personal events.*
3. A culture that supports staff to improve their **physical and mental wellbeing**. Examples: *offering counselling, occupational health assessments, supervision, and coaching.*
4. Leaders who make **workloads manageable** and model good work/life balance. Example: *making it a habit to consider the impact of staff workload in all management decisions made.*
5. A premium given to **ITT and ECT** development. Examples: *being part of Saffron Teaching School Hub, training mentors.*
6. Fair, humane and transparent **recruitment** processes. Examples: *advertising jobs, selecting 'blind' and on merit, interviewing kindly and in a way that considers the pressure placed on candidates, using no tricks, communicating outcomes quickly and gently. Offering constructive and positive feedback.*
7. Personalised development opportunities and **career pathways**. Examples: *advertising career pathways, celebrating success, actively looking to 'grow your own' leaders.*
8. Training time for staff to be **ring-fenced and substantial**. Example: *planning training time carefully so that training is research informed and impactful, tailored to development needs.*
9. Teaching to be impactful and **evidence-informed**, with teachers' own experience enhanced by what research tells us are the best bets. Example: *training to avoid the latest craze and to focus on what is proven to have impact.*
10. All staff accept that they have a professional **obligation to improve** their practice. Example: *all staff engage in training and appraisal.*
11. All teachers accept that they should continue to **enhance their curriculum knowledge** and expertise throughout their career. Examples: *reading professional journals, books or blogs, joining professional associations, engaging in subject specialist groups, accessing additional training through social media or working with subject specialists across primary and secondary phase to enhance knowledge particularly to support transition.*
12. Leaders at all levels in the school will strive to maintain **excellent student behaviour** in active collaboration with all teaching and support staff, so that teachers can teach, and the environment is calm and respected. Examples: *strong enforcement of behaviour policies married to high expectations of kind behaviour and conduct.*
13. Feedback loops will enable every colleague to contribute to **improving** the school. Example: *the school cycle of meetings is considered so that staff have opportunities to feed into new ideas and initiatives.*

14. Staff will be openly encouraged and actively supported to think of **progressing their own careers**.  
Examples: *line-managers encourage staff to develop and give them manageable responsibility, SLT take steps to retain high quality staff by advertising internally at times, leaders talk to staff about their own careers in a positive way.*
15. Policies and practice around teaching and learning will be **informed by subject leaders** so it is meaningful and coherent at a subject delivery level. Example: *subject spotlights, subject communities and teams are always involved in curriculum decisions.*
16. Leaders reflect on the impact of their decisions on the **staff at other schools** too. Example: *decisions are carefully considered so that they do not negatively impact on neighbouring schools and the responsibility for the 'school down the road' is taken seriously.*

#### **References:**

Talent Architects, Mandy Coalter CATT 2018

Putting Staff First, John Tomsett and Jonny Uttley CATT 2020

## **Appraisal – Best Practice**

*This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Saffron Academy Trust Appraisal Procedure.*

### **Why is Appraisal important?**

Every employee in SAT deserves a chance to demonstrate to their line-manager how well they have been doing their job and to receive a meaningful review of their work over the previous year. It is also important for the employee to see how their work is rated by their line-manager. Without a formal appraisal process, unfair or subjective snap judgements could be made. Some people are better at making themselves 'noticed' than others and appraisal is a fairer system which can challenge confirmation bias about what good or effective work can look like or indeed who does it.

### **How do we show that Appraisal is important?**

Our SAT schools need to show that they value the appraisal process and make time for it in the cycle of regular meetings. An appraisal meeting is a priority and should never be cancelled lightly. It must be given sufficient time, a quiet and private space and both appraiser and appraisee should avoid all distractions from emails, mobile phones, visitors and interruptions. Simple things like taking the phone off the hook, putting a 'Do Not Disturb' sign over the door and switching email notifications off will help. All staff leading appraisal should be given training on how to do so.

### **The Process**

Arrange a review meeting at a mutually convenient time. Set aside a full hour for this meeting.

Arrange for the meeting to take place in a room which is private.

Prepare fully in advance. Read the employee's self-evaluation and, using information available, consider whether they met their last appraisal target. This could include data, formal observations, or softer intelligence like the views of a colleague. You should have made it clear when the target/objective was set what evidence sources would be used to indicate success.

Begin the meeting by asking the employee to reflect on their performance in the previous year in general terms. Ask about successes and the things they learned. The conversation should be far fuller than a discussion of their target alone, but you will need to move onto the evidence behind whether this was met or not. Take the time to praise and thank the employee for the things they did really well. An evaluation of

the year should be a holistic one. Make sure there is a conversation about the employee's general well-being at work. Remember that a good employee may have not achieved a target as a consequence of factors beyond their control and this might be perfectly allowable. During the conversation, move the discussion onto a target for improvement. This target should be focused on professional development, career progression or research to improve teaching learning. Targets should also be relevant for the school and be designed to have a positive impact on a relevant area of school improvement. In an ideal world both employer and employee should agree with the target set and most will, but sometimes it is important to set a target that addresses a particular area for development that the employee fails to recognise. This should not stop that target being set as long as it is reasonable and relates to an aspect of the employee's job description.

### **Whose Document?**

The school will store a copy of the appraisee's documentation in a secure place. However, the document belongs to the appraisee and is something to use for reflection and self-evaluation throughout the year and not just in advance of the review meeting.

## **Staff Charter Questionnaire**

All staff in the Trust will be given the opportunity to complete the Staff Charter Questionnaire electronically in the spring term. Information will be gathered from the responses on how staff feel about working at their school. The information will help us to improve the way we support our staff.

Examples of the questions you will be asked in the questionnaire include the following:

- Do you have all the knowledge you need to do your job well?
- Does your line manager help you to resolve difficulties when you ask them to?
- Does your appraisal help you to become more effective at your job?
- Does your school value the work that you do?
- Do you enjoy working at your school?
- Are there meaningful training opportunities open to you in your workplace?
- Do you feel confident voicing honest opinions and concerns to your line manager?
- What areas do you think could improve working conditions at your school?

## **Careers Pathway**

The following document gives details of the careers pathway at Saffron Academy Trust's schools.



SAFFRON  
ACADEMY TRUST

# Saffron Academy Trust Careers Pathway

Great Schools, Great Teachers, Great Leaders



EVERY CHILD DESERVES TO GO TO A GREAT SCHOOL



SAFFRON WALDEN  
COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

# Introduction

## Great Schools, Great Teachers, Great Leaders

At Saffron Academy Trust, we believe that **every child deserves a great school**—and great schools need great teachers. Our teachers are our most valued resource, and we are committed to **nurturing talent and providing meaningful opportunities for growth and progression** at every career stage.

Through the **Golden Thread** of professional development, delivered by **Saffron Teaching School Hub**, we offer a seamless journey of training and support. From the outset of their journey, Early Career Teachers benefit from a structured induction programme, ensuring they master the craft of teaching with confidence. Beyond this, our **5 Career Pathways programme** empowers teachers to shape their careers within education:

### 5 Career Pathways at Saffron Academy Trust

- Teaching Pathway
- Teacher Training & Coaching Pathway
- Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Pathway
- Pastoral, Behaviour & Culture Pathway
- Leadership Pathway

This model offers **flexible, continuous development**, blending accredited routes, such as **National Professional Qualifications** (NPQs), with bespoke in-school opportunities. While some teachers specialise in a single pathway, others explore multiple areas, enriching their expertise through research, innovation, and leadership.

Through the **Golden Thread**, we ensure professional growth is a continuous journey, enabling every teacher to thrive, lead, and inspire the next generation.





# Accredited Development Pathway

## Teachers

### Early Career Teacher

A statutory programme for teachers in their first two years of teaching provided in partnership with Saffron Teaching School Hub and Teach First

### Chartered College Certificate in Evidence Informed Practice

A 3-month programme for teachers and leaders to develop their understanding of evidence-informed practice and gain credits towards Chartered Teacher status

## Middle Leaders

### NPQ Leading Behaviour & Culture

For those interested in creating a culture of good behaviour and high expectations in which staff and pupils can thrive

### NPQ Leading Literacy

For those interested in how to effectively teach and promote literacy across the whole school, year group, key stage or phase

### NPQ Primary Maths

For current and aspiring leaders of maths to develop and implement high quality maths teaching and curriculum across their whole school

### NPQ Leading Teacher Development

For those interested in developing the skills to successfully lead a subject, year group, stage or phase

### NPQ Leading Teaching

For those interested in becoming a teacher of education and supporting teachers in school to expand their skills

## Senior Leaders

### NPQ Senior Leadership

For those interested in developing leadership knowledge and expertise to improve outcomes for teachers and pupils in a school

### NPQ Headship

For those interested in developing the knowledge that underpins expert school leadership and applying it to become an outstanding headteacher

### NPQ Executive Leadership

For those interested in developing the expertise needed to become an outstanding executive leader, leading change and improvement across a group of schools or multi-academy trust

### NPQ Early Years Leadership

For those interested in developing expertise in leading high-quality early years education and care, as well as effective staff and organisational management

### NPQ Special Educational Needs Coordinator

For those interested in specialising their practice to provide expert coordination and strategic support for pupils with additional needs

# Early Career Teacher

As an ECT at Saffron Academy Trust, **your training and development are a top priority**. We provide the **time, tools, and support** to help you succeed through a structured two-year programme designed to **build confidence and expertise**.

## Programme Overview

- Delivered over two years, progressing from foundational skills to deeper expertise
- Opportunities for reflection, mentoring, and professional discussion
- Focus on embedding, refining, and consolidating practice

## Year 1 – Building Strong Foundations

- 10% timetable reduction to focus on development
- Weekly mentor sessions for guidance and reflection
- Six core modules covering:
  - Establishing a positive learning environment
  - Memory & cognition strategies
  - Effective teaching & adaptation
  - Strengthening subject & curriculum knowledge
  - Using assessment, feedback & questioning
  - Collaboration with colleagues & parents
- Spring term conference to network with fellow ECTs

## Year 2 – Deepening Expertise

- 5% timetable reduction to continue professional growth
- Modules 7–12 revisit key themes, tailored to your department
- Continued mentor support to refine and consolidate practice
- Focus on career progression and next steps

At Saffron Academy Trust, we **recognise that teacher development is an ongoing journey**. Our ECT Programme, aligned with the Golden Thread of professional development, ensures you are fully equipped to grow, lead, and succeed.

## Next Steps: Chartered College - Certificate in Evidence Informed Practice

The *Certificate in Evidence-Informed Practice* is perfect for teachers wishing to further develop their understanding of evidence-informed practice and gain recognition for their expertise. This qualification is perfect for teachers with 3 to 6 years of experience, and successful completion awards participants with a certificate in evidence-informed practice and credits towards Chartered Status.

The logo for the Chartered College of Teaching, featuring the text "CHARTERED COLLEGE OF TEACHING" in white capital letters on a dark blue square background.

CHARTERED  
COLLEGE OF  
TEACHING

# Teaching Pathway

## Who would suit this pathway?

Career progression does not have to mean stepping out of the classroom. Teaching is at the very heart of what we do and there are a wealth of options to diversify and progress while maintaining your focus on your class.

This pathway is ideal for passionate classroom practitioners, interested in perfecting their craft, showcasing their expertise and working towards sharing their practice to inspire, support and develop others.

They might be interested in working towards leadership of either a subject or a key stage, or leading teaching and learning more widely across a school.

### Spotlight on ECT Mentoring

The Early Career Framework is where the *Golden Thread* of professional development begins, and underpins excellence in our schools. Mentors are at the heart of the process, supporting practitioners as they navigate their first teaching posts, and providing expert guidance on Quality First Teaching principles. Mentors benefit from full training on all aspects of the role, including coaching for impact.



**“Teaching is the most rewarding and exciting profession and I love the excitement and creativity that being in the classroom offers. As a lifelong learner, I am always challenging myself to be at the forefront of developments in education and enjoy innovating my practice through research and new initiatives. I am passionate about my practice, and would love to positively impact others through sharing my knowledge and experience.”**

# Teacher Training & Coaching Pathway

## Who would suit this pathway?

Outstanding teachers need outstanding teachers – not only to inspire them but to lead, guide and train them. Through collaborative coaching to one-to-one mentoring, this pathway is suited to teachers who are keen to use their knowledge and expertise to develop the next generation of teachers.

Practitioners following this pathway have excellent interpersonal skills, high levels of emotional intelligence and an ability to positively influence change.

### Spotlight on NPQLTD - Leading Teacher Development

This 12 month programme has a strong focus on effective mentoring and coaching of teachers at various stages in their careers - in particular ETCs.

Participants will learn how to sequence and implement ongoing professional development which meets the needs of the whole school while supporting individual teachers.



**“I felt so lucky to have a fantastic mentor when I was training, and the example they set along with the knowledge they imparted still impacts my practice today. I would love to positively influence someone’s journey into the profession and help them navigate their way through the challenges of the year. I would be interested in developing my skills as a coach and working with ECTs in the future.”**

# Teaching Learning & Curriculum Pathway

## Who would suit this pathway?

This career pathway would suit teachers who are interested in developing a phase or subject specialism into leadership. They are passionate about subject knowledge and the pedagogical approaches to teaching as well as developing, implementing and evaluating approaches and policies that contribute to school improvement.

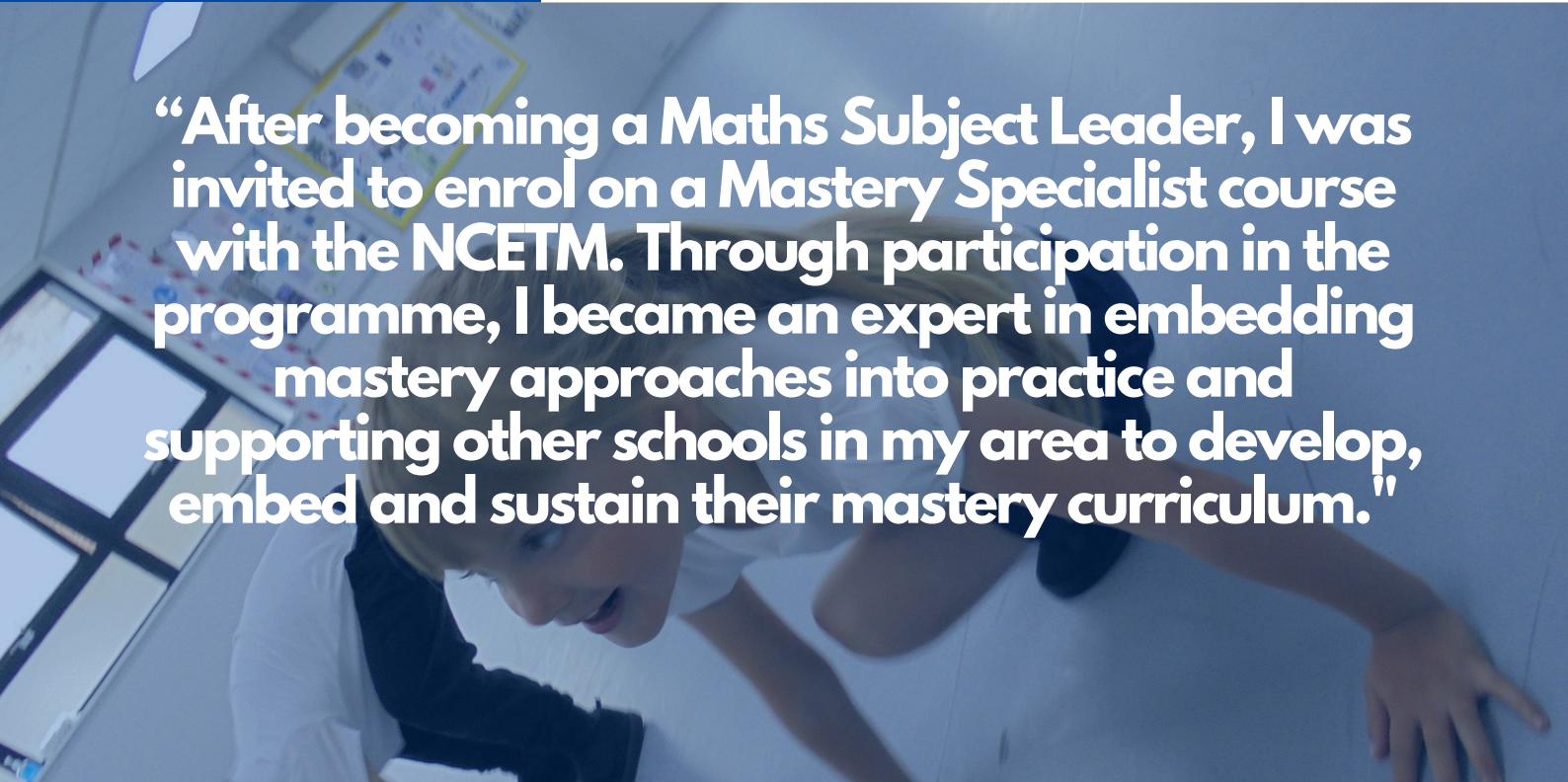
They also like to engage with educational research and are at the forefront of developments in practice.

Once this is identified, they want to share this expertise with their subject teams, supporting and guiding them to deliver the best classroom experience.

### Spotlight on NPQLT - Leading Teaching

Designed with busy teachers in mind, this blended programme provides participants with the knowledge, skills and expertise to lead high-quality teaching and curriculum development within their schools.

The hybrid programme is full of practical and tangible examples which can be implemented in your practice and delivered through a blend of online self-study materials to interactive conferences and seminars.



**“After becoming a Maths Subject Leader, I was invited to enrol on a Mastery Specialist course with the NCETM. Through participation in the programme, I became an expert in embedding mastery approaches into practice and supporting other schools in my area to develop, embed and sustain their mastery curriculum.”**



# Pastoral, Behaviour and Culture Pathway

## Who would suit this pathway?

Excellent pastoral care is an essential element of Primary practice, and one of the most rewarding roles in education. This career pathway would suit teachers who are committed to ensuring equality and equity in opportunity; professionals who understand the plethora of barriers to learning and strategies to overcome them and are sensitive to the diverse community they serve and supporting children and families to thrive.

Teachers following this pathway could also specialise in the leadership and management of recognised groups of children in a school environment, such as those identified as pupil premium or children with Special Educational Needs.

### Spotlight on NPQLBC - Leading Behaviour & Culture

This programme is for teachers and leaders who have, or are aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading behaviour and/or supporting pupil wellbeing in their school.

Hallmarks of the course include developing whole school culture, managing complex behavioural needs and ensuring pupil wellbeing.



**“I came into teaching to make a difference to the lives of the children and communities I serve. I have always valued the importance of an holistic approach to teaching and learning and ensuring that every child has access to a high quality educational experience, regardless of barriers and background.**”

# Leadership Pathway

## Who would suit this pathway?

This career pathway would suit teachers who want a significant role in leading a school and in ensuring young people receive a first-class education. They will aspire to senior leadership, have an excellent knowledge of the life of a school and will be fascinated by school culture and wider educational debate. For those aspiring to Headship, it is desirable to have experienced a combination of curriculum and pastoral pathways in order to accumulate a broad understanding of school life.

### Spotlight on Leadership NPQs

**NPQ Senior Leadership:** for school leaders who are, or are aspiring to be, a senior leader with cross-school responsibilities.

**NPQ Headship:** for school leaders who are, or are aspiring to be, a Headteacher or Head of School with responsibility for leading a school.

**NPQ Executive Leadership:** for school leaders who are, or are aspiring to be, an Executive Headteacher or have a school trust CEO role with responsibility for leading several schools.



**“I like to challenge myself and think I would like to learn more about leadership. I want to know that I will be supported every step of the way in developing the knowledge, skill and confidence needed to take the next step. Ultimately, I like the idea of making a difference for young people and I want to be in position where I can make that happen ”**

# Enriching Your Pathway

## System Leadership

We believe in **collaboration beyond our own schools** to ensure the best education for young people. As teachers progress into middle and senior leadership, they may have opportunities to become System Leaders, **supporting school improvement across multiple settings**.

### What is a System Leader?

Highly skilled practitioners who:

- Share successful practice across schools
- Provide specialist coaching and leadership development
- Drive school improvement using evidence-informed strategies

### Types of System Leaders:

- Specialist Leaders of Education (SLE) – Develop other leaders by sharing expertise in a specialist area to improve school-wide practice.
- Evidence Leads in Education (ELE) – Support leaders in embedding evidence-informed school improvement tailored to their context.
- National Leaders of Education (NLE) – Outstanding headteachers who work with schools in challenging circumstances to drive transformation.

Through System Leadership, we **foster excellence, collaboration, and impact** across the education sector.



**“I love my school but would like the opportunity to spread my wings and work in other schools with other contexts and cultures. I like the idea of leading CPD and supporting teachers to develop their practice. I feel really strongly that schools should work together to give young people the best education possible and I would like to play a part in that. Being part of Saffron Academy Trust gives me a fantastic opportunity to do this”**