

People Directorate

Pay Policy



THINKING
personnel

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1. General commitment

The Thinking Schools Academy Trust (known from now as the Trust) will seek to ensure that staff are rewarded in an open and transparent way for the level of responsibility they carry and the individual contributions they make to the work of the Trust subject only to the constraints of statutory documents, national and local pay structures and budgetary provision.

The aim of this pay policy is to enable the Trust to recruit and retain sufficient staff of suitable quality and number and thereby secure its improvement objectives.

This policy operates in conjunction with the Trusts' policy on Professional Growth. This pay policy will be reviewed annually by the Director in consultation with staff via the recognised Trade Unions as part of the 'Joint Consultative and Negotiation Committee'.

In this document:

'The Board' are the Directors of Trust.

'The AGB' are the Academy Governing Body that has been delegated power by the Board to oversee the Academy.

'Head/Principal' identifies the lead professional of the Academy.

EDI Statement

We are committed to being an inclusive employer enabling all staff to feel a sense of belonging. We commit to ensuring our policies are inclusive by nature, are of benefit, accessible and understood by all staff. As a minimum we ensure our policies and practices comply with the Equality Act 2010, but we are committed to go beyond our minimum requirement of equality legislation.

Our policies aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers and create opportunities to maximise positive impacts on our staff, fostering greater social cohesion and greater participation in public life. Through our actions we recognise, appreciate and value difference, treat everyone fairly and seek to embed a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion across our Trust which delivers the best outcomes for the diverse society in which we work. We are committed to undertaking an equality impact assessment on all relevant policies and to review the outcomes of those policies on an annual basis.

2. Basic principles and Governance

2.1 Terms and Conditions

Teaching Staff and Support staff are paid in accordance with TSAT terms and conditions. Where staff TUPE into the Trust, they will be consulted with, on a measure to transfer to these terms and conditions, pay and increments. Staff that transfer into the trust will not be

put at a detriment. The Trust considers national frameworks as a minimum benchmark.

Changes to the pay policy/principles will be subject to negotiation and consultation with Unions.

The Trust will actively promote equality in all aspects of Academy life, particularly as regards decisions on advertising of posts, appointing, promoting and paying staff, training, and staff development and Professional Growth & Pay outcomes will be monitored in accordance with equality good practice across the Academy and Trust.

The Headteacher/Principal will ensure that each member of staff is provided with a job description/list of duties in accordance with the agreed staffing structure. Job descriptions should be reviewed annually by the member of staff's line manager, senior leadership team or in the case of the Headteacher/Principal, the Regional Director/Governing Body (AGB), in consultation with the individual employees concerned and their Union in order to make any reasonable changes. This would naturally form part of the Professional Growth management discussions between the employee and their reviewer. The employees' workload will not be increased by any such changes without the necessary consultation and agreement between the employee and their Union representative.

The Trust commits to reviewing the pay points and groups annually for teaching and support staff in consultation with Unions and will ensure that T1 remains at a higher level than the base of the main scale as reflected in the STPCD and T10 remains at a higher level than the top of the upper scale. Cost of living increases, as a percentage, will be applied in line with national uplift as a minimum benchmark, and T scales will reflect this overall, but may vary at each pay scale. The Trust will consult meaningfully with Unions on the annual cost of living increase. The Trust will determine annually the cost-of-living increase to be applied will be a monetary figure or percentage and will determine how this is applied at each pay point.

2.2 Pay reviews

The Headteacher/Principal of each Academy within the Trust will review every teacher and support staff salary with effect from 1 September and no later than 31 October every year. They will issue each employee a formal statement saying what their salary is and how it has been determined; showing any other financial benefits to which they are entitled.

All pay reviews will progress automatically, unless the member of staff is currently on a 'formal' capability process, in which case only cost of living will be applied. Following the removal of performance related pay the Trust reserves the right to retain 'exceptional' payments and will publish annual criteria for such. This can be found in the professional growth policy.

2.3 Complaints/appeals

Pay progress is automatic from the academic year 2025/26, within pay ranges published. Where a member of staff is dissatisfied with the annual pay progression increase, they will

have the opportunity to discuss the recommendation with the Headteacher/Principal before the recommendation is actioned, and confirmation of the pay decision is made by the school.

Where a member of staff is dissatisfied with a decision of the Headteacher/Principal, this should be taken up informally with the Regional Director (or the Chair of the Staffing Committee if it is the Headteacher/Principal who is dissatisfied with their own pay progression) in the first instance. If unresolved, then the employee can formally appeal in writing to the governing board. The grounds for any appeal and process for pursuing it are described in Section 9. Pay decisions around applications for 'exceptional', will be eligible for appeal as above.

2.4 Confidentiality

The elements of the Trust's pay policy will be shared and discussed openly with the Trust's staff. Individual pay decisions will be handled confidentially between the Pay Committee, Headteacher/Principal, and the staff concerned. Where pay information is requested by the wider governing body, it will be anonymised.

3. Basic Salary

3.1 Part-time teachers

Teachers employed on an on-going basis at the Trust, but who work less than a full working day or week are deemed to be part-time. The Headteacher/Principal will give them a written statement detailing their working time obligations, and their pay will be determined by the provisions of the statutory School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. The Document requires Academies to calculate their part-time teachers' pay fractions with reference to the 'School timetabled teaching week' (STTW).

In accordance with the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, the STTW includes the Academy's session hours timetabled for teaching, including PPA time and non-contact time. STTW excludes break times, registration and assemblies, although these remain part of directed time hours.

The resulting pay fraction will be used to calculate the salary of all part-time teachers in the Trust, as well as the proportion of directed time they should work. The calculation of PPA time is unaffected. Entitlement to PPA time is pro-rata of 10% of actual teaching time for part time staff.

The Trust will consult with staff on any changes to STTW. If a part-time teacher suffers a financial loss as a result of these changes, however, there is no entitlement to salary safeguarding/protection. Where a change results in a contractual change leading to financial loss, this will be through formal consultation with the employee and their Union.

Part-time teachers who are employed on specific days of the week will not be required to

work at the Trust on a day on which they are not normally employed. Attendance at CPD days on non-working days will be by agreement only and remunerated accordingly. No staff member can be forced to attend on their non-working day.

3.2 Short notice/supply teachers

Teachers who work on a day-to-day or other short notice basis have their pay determined in line with the statutory pay arrangements in the same way as other teachers. Teachers who work less than a full day will be paid in proportion to the length of the Academy Day.

3.3 Salary Safeguarding/Salary Protection

There are provisions set down in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions document for teachers that provide salary safeguarding in some situations where a teacher's salary is reduced as a result of a restructure or redeployment, which the Trust will follow. There are also salary protection arrangements that may apply to support staff, depending on the nature of the restructure/redeployment (see redundancy and restructure policy for further information). If the Academy determines a need to restructure, such a decision will be subject to consultation with staff and Unions, and the Academy will confirm the salary protection arrangements that shall apply in specific situations during that consultation period. The salary protection period for both teachers and support staff is 3 years. Where a support staff salary drops more than 2 grades or a teacher's salary drops by more than 25% salary, safeguarding would not apply, and this would constitute a redundancy situation. More information can be found within the Restructure and Redundancy policy.

3.4 Pay Ranges

The Trusts updated pay scales will be published on the Trust website no later than the 31st October for all staff to see. Subject to the completion of pay negotiations where possible pay uplifts will be applied from 1st September.

3.5 Executive Pay

The Trust Board will set the salary ranges and framework for the Executive Leadership Team with the advice and guidance of an external consultant, who will be commissioned to undertake an external review and provide a full report. An external review will be carried out every three years. The next external review is due in September 2028.

In determining the September 2025 pay framework, a benchmarking exercise was undertaken to provide clear market context for Executive pay. Several Trusts were selected as specific comparators based on size (number of schools), regional presence (Southeast or national reach), and publicly available pay data. These comparators help test the proportionality of the Trust executive pay bands and provide an evidence base for decisions.

The CEO scale sits within the upper Southeast band, consistent with Trusts of 20+ schools. The Trusts ratio (1:7–1:9) is consistent with sector norms and supports accountability. The Regional Directors scale sit slightly above the Southeast midpoint but aligned with national high-performing trusts.

The Service Directors scale bring the Trust fully into line with regional comparators.

The Confederation of School Trusts (CST) publishes annual benchmarking data on leadership pay across the sector. The 2024 data provided a robust external reference point for the Trusts Executive pay framework.

The Trusts CEO band is competitive but not excessive.

Indicates the range for Regional Directors is justified for scale and complexity.

Validates the range for Service Directors ensuring alignment with national norms while recognising regional recruitment challenges.

The Trusts Executive Pay ranges for September 2025 can be found in Appendix 5.

3.6 Leadership Pay

The Staffing Committee will set salary ranges for staff on leadership having regard to the scheme of delegation in appendix 3. Progression through these ranges will be automatic as outlined in section 5.1 and 5.2 of this policy.

The Staffing Committee sets the salary ranges for The Executive Team, Executive Headteachers, Headteacher/Principals, and Head of school.

The scheme of delegation for the Leadership pay structure recognises three categories of schools and three types of Head teachers.

School categories where the Trust have judged the responsibilities to be similar:

- Small primary schools
- Large primary schools
- Secondary schools

Different levels of Headteachers:

- Those with more than one OFSTED accountability or have a wider Trust accountability
- Those with a single school OFSTED accountability
- Those who are operationally a lead of a school but do not have overall OFSTED accountability

Deputy and Assistant Head posts are all set as 5-point ranges with a gap between the differing levels.

The Trusts leadership pay range structure can be found in Appendix 3.

3.7 Leading Practitioner

The Governing Body has determined that the post of Leading Practitioner will support the Academy in realising its educational improvement aims. Teachers who occupy this post in the Academy structure will model outstanding teaching and lead to the improvement of

teaching skills in this Academy and other Trust Academies. Progression through these ranges will be automatic as outlined in sections 5.1 and 5.2 of this policy.

Leading Practitioner Posts will have a 5 point pay range set within this 15-point range. The values attached to each point can be found in the tables at the end of the policy.

3.8 Qualified Classroom Teacher

The main pay range will consist of 10 points. It is made up of 4 stages;

T1 -T2	ECT
T2 – T3	Developing teacher
T4 – T7	Enhancing teaching
T8 – T10	Embedding teacher

The salary values attached to each T point can be found in the pay tables at the end of the policy. Progression along this range is automatic annually, unless the staff member is in a formal capability process.

ECT

This point would be outside the scope of Professional Growth as success through the ECT programme would demonstrate expected progress. Pay progression will be automatic unless subject to formal capability procedures.

Developing Teachers

Providing the quality of education that will aim to deliver pupil progress outcomes in-line with expectations from their starting point

Meeting the teaching standards as set out by the Trust standards for a developing teacher and some of the elements of ‘truly great teaching’ principles

Developing skills and knowledge through active participation in CPD leading to thorough reflection of the impact on self and their pupils

Enhancing Teachers

Providing the quality of education that will aim to deliver pupil progress outcomes in-line with or better than similar students nationally

Meeting the teaching standards as set out by the Trust standards for an enhancing teacher and most of the elements of the ‘truly great teaching’ principles

Active participation in CPD which goes beyond self and influences and develops others

Embedding Teachers

Providing the quality of education that will aim to deliver sustained positive pupil progress outcomes in line with or better than similar students nationally

Meeting the teaching standards as set out by the Trust standards for an embedding teacher and all the elements of the 'truly great teaching' principles

Making a significant contribution towards whole school priorities that make a substantial impact on the outcome of pupils beyond your own classes

Demonstrate high levels of competencies and used to support and mentor colleagues; in a way which improves their practice

3.9 Unqualified Teachers

The Headteacher/Principal will decide, on a case-by-case basis, whether to pay an unqualified teacher on one of the employment-based routes into teaching on the unqualified or qualified teacher's pay range. The Unqualified Teacher pay range will consist of 6 points. The values attached to each point can be found in Appendix 1.

3.10 Support Staff

Support staff grading is determined by matching the role to the appropriate TSAT role profile; each role profile has been subject to NJC job evaluation and has been linked with one of the nine support staff pay groups.

Where a new role is advertised, the Academy's Head of Business and Operations and HR Partner must evaluate this in line with the NJC job evaluation scheme. Please see the Trusts Job Evaluation policy.

The Support staff bandings consist of nine pay groups each with a minimum and a maximum. Progression along this range is automatic annually, unless subject to formal capability procedures. Progression will be based on a percentage increase.

Pay group	Type	Principles	Job Evaluation banding	Notice period
1	Routine/Seasonal/Apprentice	National Minimum Wage	0-250	1 month
2	General assistants	In line with real living wage	251-350	1 month

3	Skilled assistants		351-400	1 month
4	Technical assistants and officers		401-450	2 months
5	Technical/Senior officers	In line with NQT+1	451-500	2 months
6	Management/Professional		501-600	3 months
7	Senior Management		600+_ or Management level 1	3 months
8	Operational Head		Management level 2	3 months
9	Strategic Head	Capped at L20	Management level 3	3 months

The values attached to the pay groups can be found in Appendix 2.

4. Pay on appointment including promotional posts

For all new appointments, the Headteacher/Principal will determine, within the ranges set, an appropriate pay range for the post and the salary to be offered to the person appointed. The Headteacher/Principal will not restrict the pay range advertised for starting salary and pay progression prospects available to classroom teacher posts, other than ECT appointments who will be appointed at T1 or T2.

In determining the range and salary, the Trust is supportive of and will apply the principles of pay portability and will consider the factors listed below. This list is not exhaustive.

- The nature of the post
- The level of skills, qualifications and experience required
- Market conditions
- The wider Academy context
- Their existing salary
- The stage of their Professional Growth cycle

The Headteacher/Principal will pay a Recruitment Allowance to those paid under the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD), when they consider their basic salary is not adequate having regard to the factors outlined above. The criteria for the award of a Recruitment Allowance are detailed in section 6.2.1 *Recruitment and Retention Allowances and/or Benefits*.

4.1 Executive leadership

The Board will advertise and appoint within the Trust Executive Leadership pay framework

set out in 3.5, this will include:

- Defining the role and determining the pay group
- Setting the pay range
- Deciding the starting salary

4.2 Headteacher/Principal

The Board will advertise and appoint within the Trust Leadership pay framework; this will include:

- Defining the role and determining the pay group
- Setting the pay range
- Deciding the starting salary and individual pay range

4.3 Head of Academy, Deputy Headteacher/Principal and Assistant Headteacher/Principal

The AGB & Trust will advertise and appoint within the Trust leadership pay framework, framework, this will include:

- Defining the role and determining the pay group
- Setting the pay range
- Deciding the starting salary and individual pay range

4.4 Leading Practitioner

The Headteacher/Principal will advertise the 5-point range of salary for this role, as determined in section 3.5.2 of this pay policy. An appropriate level of salary within this range will be determined when the job is offered.

4.5 Qualified Classroom Teachers

The Headteacher/Principal will advertise and appoint within the 10-point pay range for the post. ECT posts will be advertised and appointed to T1 point.

4.6 Unqualified Teachers

The Headteacher/Principal will advertise and appoint within the 6-point pay range for the post.

4.7 Support Staff

Support staff grading is determined by matching the role to the appropriate TSAT role profile; each role profile has been subject to NJC job evaluation and has been linked with one of the nine support staff pay groups.

Where a new role is advertised, the Academy's Head of Business and Operations and HR

Partner must evaluate this in line with the NJC job evaluation scheme. Please see the Trusts Job Evaluation policy.

New employees will normally be appointed to the bottom of the pay group. Where the candidate's current employment package would make the first step of the salary range unattractive (and this can be demonstrated by the applicant in relation to current earnings), a higher salary may be considered by the Governing Body. This will be within the pay group of the evaluated grade for the role, providing the candidate has a level of skill and experience consistent with that of other employees in a similar position on the salary range.

New employees who join the Trust between April and August will not be eligible for further pay progression in September; however, they will receive the value of any cost-of-living increases. The Trust's automatic pay progression runs from September to September.

Employees who have had a change of role between April and August that results in an increase in pay will not be eligible for automatic pay progression in September. However, they will receive the value of any cost-of-living increases. Automatic pay progression will commence in September of the following year. Line Managers should take this into consideration when determining the employee's new salary for their new role. Where the salary increase for the new post is less than an automatic increase in their original role, this should be referred to the People Director for review. The Trust is committed to no staff suffering from detriment through taking a 'promotion'.

4.8 Apprentices

Apprentices will be paid at least the National Minimum Wage. Different rates of pay apply depending on age, year of apprenticeship and type of apprenticeship. However, the contract of employment will stipulate the wage rate and hours of work.

5. Pay Progression

Staff will be automatically entitled to pay progression (where there is room in their range or pay group) as defined in this section. The Trust expects that where a teacher or support staff is not meeting the expectations of their role, appropriate support and assistance will be provided and that the individual is aware that if they are subject to formal capability procedures they will not receive automatic pay progression.

The scheme of delegation for pay decisions is set out in the table below;

Pay recommendation	Pay decision	Ratification	Informal	Formal appeal
Line Manager	Headteacher/Head of Service	Director	Headteacher	Director
Headteacher/	Director	School AAB/	Director	School

Head of Service		Deputy CEO		AAB/Deputy CEO
Director/Deputy CEO	CEO	People Committee	CEO	People Committee
CEO	People Committee	Board	People Committee	Board

Details of the appeal process are contained in section 7.

Any member of staff who are subject to 'formal capability will be deemed ineligible for an automatic pay progression as part of the annual review process.

The governing body recognises that funding cannot be used as a criterion to determine progression for staff, and the budgeting process will allow for the potential for pay progression for all staff where there is room on their range or pay group.

5.1 Non-consolidated pay bonus (Optional and awarded on individual basis)

Staff who reach the top of the pay band can receive an unconsolidated payment for exceptional performance.

For staff who are already at the top of the scale, they can receive a payment of up to 3% beyond the pay band. This will be based on their pro-rata salary for the previous academic year (i.e., the academic year upon which their professional growth outcome was based).

For staff not already at the top of the scale, but who would reach the top of the scale as a result of the automatic uplift, they can receive a payment of up to 3% beyond the pay band. This will be based on their pro-rata salary for the previous academic year (i.e., the academic year upon which their professional growth outcome was based).

5.2 Headteacher/Principal

Headteacher/Principal posts will be automatically entitled to pay progression of one point (where there is room on their range or pay group) as defined in this section, unless the individual is on formal capability process.

The Headteacher/Principal has the right to appeal as set out in the scheme of delegation in section 5.

5.3 Salary progression for teachers appointed to Leading Practitioner posts (new dates)

The individual will move one point on the scale automatically unless the employee is in a formal capability process.

5.4 Salary progression Qualified Classroom Teachers (by end of October)

The individual will move one point on the scale automatically unless the employee is in a formal capability process. This will take place no later than the end of October and be backdated to 1 September. Where pay negotiations allow, this will take place on the 1 September.

5.5 Salary progression Early Career Teachers (by end of October)

ECT's are subject to a 2-year induction and will be awarded pay progression on the successful completion of each year of their induction.

Service at another school or academy can be used to count towards the completion of the induction years. The Trust will liaise with previous mentors/schools and the teacher to collate evidence of progress prior to joining the Trust.

5.6 Unqualified Teachers (by end of October)

The individual will move one point on the scale automatically unless subject to formal capability procedures.

In any event, there will be no progression beyond the top of the Unqualified Pay Range.

5.7 Executive Leadership Team

5.7.1 Annual review

Each November the Staffing Committee will review the individual pay review outcomes for each member of the Executive Team and consider progression within the bands using the following considerations:

- Cost of living
- Performance review linking professional growth and impact against educational priorities, pupil outcomes, and strategic objectives
- Review of any additional responsibilities

Any annual pay increase for the combined factors above will be capped at 10%

Cost of living will be set by the TSAT board for Executive pay; these may be different for each role level and from the agreed Trusts uplift.

The increased responsibilities and accountabilities may be applied as an increase to the salary or as a separate allowance. This will be dependent on individual circumstances.

5.8 Salary progression for Support Staff (by end October)

The individual will move through the pay range automatically unless subject to formal capability procedures. This will take place no later than the end of October and be backdated to 1 September. Where pay negotiations allow, this will take place on the 1 September.

Employees who have had a change of role between April and August that results in an increase in pay will not be eligible for automatic pay progression in September. However, they will receive the value of any cost-of-living increases. Automatic pay progression will commence in September of the following year. Line Managers should take this into consideration when determining the employee's new salary for their new role. Where the salary increase for the new post is less than an automatic increase in their original role, this should be referred to the People Director for review. The Trust is committed to no staff suffering from detriment through taking a 'promotion'.

5.9 Redetermination of grade (Support Staff role)

Where the Headteacher determines there has been a permanent change in accountability of a support staff post, a role may be regraded. The role will need to undergo a job evaluation process in line with the NJC job evaluation scheme and in line with the Trust Job Evaluation policy and will be reviewed by the Head of Business and Operations and HR Partner of the Academy. An employee has the right to request a job evaluation review and the right of appeal. Please refer to the job evaluation policy.

Salary changes as a result of a regrading will usually take effect from the beginning of the month in which the assessment took place. Where an individual is upgraded, they will normally be placed at the bottom of the new grade or receive a salary increase of at least 2.5%, whichever is the greater.

Written notifications will be provided for any change in salary or grade.

5.10 Pay outcomes for teaching and support staff

Since the removal of performance-related pay, there remains 2 outcomes of salary reviews until this new pay policy:

Outcome of salary review	Will mean for pay progression: Teachers	Will mean for pay progression: Support staff
Automatic uplift	One points salary progression + CoL	CoL + 2.5%
Ineligible for automatic pay increase (due to recent appointment or being subject formal capability process)	CoL only	CoL only

Cost of living (CoL) increases will be consulted and agreed annually; increases will take into consideration the national landscape. CoL increases may be differentiated across the pay groups where appropriate. Annually the Trust will consult and negotiate with the recognised Trade Unions through the Trusts JCNC.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the TSAT Teaching expectations applicable to the stage of the Teachers.

6. Allowances and other payments

Section 6 sets out the payments the Staffing Committee has determined may be payable in the Trust to certain groups of employees and/or specific post holders. With the exception of the post of Headteacher/Principal (See 6.1 below), each allowance/payment listed below is a discrete payment and is not affected by the payment of other allowances. A Teacher in receipt of safeguarded salary may have the value of that safeguarding reduced or removed, depending on the allowance being paid to that Teacher but, in line with the STPCD.

6.1 Headteacher/Principal

In respect of the Headteacher/Principal, where the Board determine on or after 1 September 2025 to make additional payments for:

- Recruitment, except relocation expenses (see paragraph on recruitment incentives/benefits)
- Retention (see paragraph on retention incentives/benefits)
- Work in an Academy causing concern to raise educational standards, perhaps by secondment
- The Headteacher/Principal being temporarily appointed as Headteacher/Principal at one or more additional Academies
- Continuing Professional Development (see paragraph on Continuing Professional Development)
- Initial Teacher Training activities (see paragraph on Initial Teacher Training activities)
- Out of hours learning activities (see paragraph on Out-of-hour learning activities)
- Any other payment which is not for relocation e.g., a payment under the JNC for Headteacher/Principals in residential establishments or lease car

The sum total of these additional payments will not exceed 25% of the basic salary of the Headteacher/Principal unless there are exceptional circumstances in line with the schoolteacher's pay and conditions document. This will require approval of the Regional Director and CEO. It will also require reporting to the People Committee.

6.2 Allowances/Payments for all teachers

This section (6.2) defines payments that the Trust has determined as payable to all Teachers, including those on Leadership, Leading Practitioners, qualified classroom teachers (including Early Career Teachers) and unqualified teachers.

6.2.1 Recruitment and Retention Allowances and/or Benefits

The governing board will award recruitment incentives and/or benefits using the following

criteria:

- Teachers are needed in subject shortage areas (recruitment incentive)
- an Academy has demonstrable difficulties in filling a post(s), e.g., two advertisements have failed to produce a suitable candidate for appointment (recruitment incentive)
- an Academy is located in a geographical area in which it is difficult to recruit (recruitment incentive)
- difficulties are encountered in retaining staff (retention incentive)

In determining if an employee is eligible for a payment, the governing board should first consider if an employee is eligible for a levelling-up premium payment from the Department of Education. Where an employee is eligible for a levelling-up premium payment, a recruitment and retention allowance should not be awarded.

Payment must be awarded for a temporary basis, lasting no longer than three years. Payments will be reviewed annually by the governing board and having consideration for the reasons for its award, may be withdrawn or reduced with contractual notice.

If the allowance/ benefit is in payment for longer than one year, the annual cost of living uplift will not be applied to the allowance/benefit. The determination to reduce or withdraw the allowance does not attract salary safeguarding, but contractual notice periods will be honored. For Teachers this notification will be issued prior to 31st May.

If an employee leaves during the period that they are receiving a recruitment and retention allowance, the Trust reserves the right to recover any allowance that has been paid.

6.2.2 Acting Up Allowance

Where staff are required to cover senior positions (i.e., those paid on the Leadership Spine) because of sickness, other absences or prolonged vacancy, any additional payment due will be agreed with the employee ideally in advance but at least within four weeks of beginning that cover.

Teaching Assistants who are acting as PPA Cover on an ad-hoc basis will be paid a top up payment, on top of their normal hourly rate. The top up payment will be based on the difference between the top of Pay Group 2 and the top of Pay Group 4.

6.2.3 Payments for teachers seconded to Headship in another Academy

Where a teacher is assigned and carries out the duties of a headteacher, deputy headteacher or assistant headteacher in relation to whom a pay range (as the case may be) has been determined and an acting allowance is paid in line with the pay range for that role, the teacher's total remuneration must not be lower than the minimum of the respective pay range for as long as the acting allowance is paid.

6.3 Allowance only payable to Qualified Classroom Teachers

This section (6.3) sets out payments for qualified classroom Teachers, which includes Early Career Teachers. This section excludes those on leadership, Leading Practitioners and Unqualified Teachers.

6.3.1 Teaching and Learning Responsibility payments (TLRs) – Levels 1 and 2

TLRs will be awarded to the holders of posts indicated within individual schools staffing structures.

TLRs are awarded to classroom Teachers who undertake a sustained additional responsibility in the context of the Academy's staffing structure for the purpose of ensuring the continued delivery of high-quality teaching and learning for which they are responsible and accountable. Before awarding a TLR, the Governing Body must be satisfied that the Teacher's duties include a significant responsibility that is not required of all classroom Teachers and that it:

- is focused on teaching and learning; and
- requires the exercise of a teacher's professional skills and judgement; and
- requires the Teacher to lead, manage and develop a subject or curriculum area; or to lead and manage pupil development across the curriculum; and
- has an impact on the educational progress of pupils other than the Teacher's assigned classes or groups of pupils; and
- involves leading, developing, and enhancing the teaching practice of other staff.

In addition, payment of a TLR 1 will require the Teacher's role to include line management responsibility for a significant number of people.

The value of any existing or new TLR1 or TLR2 payment may be based on the proportion of responsibility undertaken; that is, the proportion of the full-time responsibility. For example, a part-time teacher could be paid 100% of the TLR if they agree, by mutual consent, that they will fulfil all the job requirements, or a full-time teacher could be awarded a part-time TLR as part of a job share.

Employees can receive a TLR 1 or a TLR 2 payment. They cannot receive both. An employee in receipt of a TLR 1 or a TLR 2 payment may also receive a TLR3 payment.

6.3.2 Teaching and Learning Responsibility Payments (TLRs) – Level 3

The Governing Body may identify project(s) exist which will enable the Academy to meet its Academy Improvement Priorities, which meet the criteria for a fixed term TLR 3, in that they:

- are clearly time limited Academy improvement projects, or one-off externally driven projects and
- are focused on teaching and learning and
- require the exercise of a teacher's professional skills and judgement and
- have an impact on the educational progress of pupils other than the teacher's assigned classes or groups of pupils.

Payment of the TLR 3 is not conditional upon successful completion; however, individuals who are responsible for delivering these projects will have success criteria defined as a specific objective (TSAT) or rock (TSFE) within Professional Growth.

The amounts are the values for the project and are not pro-rated for part-time teachers. There is no safeguarding when the TLR 3 payment ceases.

6.3.3 Special Educational Needs allowances

The governing board may award a SEN spot value allowance to any classroom teacher who meets the criteria as set out in paragraph 27 of the STPCD.

When deciding on the amount of the allowance to be paid, the Governing body has taken into account the structure of the school's SEN provision, whether any mandatory qualifications are required for the post, the qualifications or expertise of the teacher relevant to the post; and the relative demands of the post as outlined in paragraph 27.3 of the STPCD.

The Governing body will also establish differential values in relation to SEN roles in the school in order to reflect significant differences in the nature and challenge of the work entailed so that the different payment levels can be objectively justified.

6.3.4 Summer Working

Teachers supporting with Thinking Tuition or Summer Clubs during the summer holiday will be paid at a standard rate of £30 per hour.

6.4 Allowances/Payment for Support staff

6.4.1 Overtime

Whether staff are paid for working additional hours or not, all line managers should regularly review hours with their staff to ensure they are achieving an appropriate work life balance and long hours are not having an impact on the employee's health and welfare. In all circumstances where overtime is paid it will be in accordance with the normal overtime payment rules and for those staff up to and including Pay Grade 5. Payment will be based on an employee's basic pay.

Where an employee has more than one contract, then each post is seen as separate in terms of hours of work and the hours cannot be combined to then attract enhanced rates.

TAs who provide cover of a class will be paid the difference between their contractual hourly rate and that of a cover supervisor for the hours they have covered.

All hours worked up to and including 37 hours per week will be paid at single time irrespective of when they are worked. Therefore, additional hours undertaken by part-time staff will be paid at single time until they have exceeded 37 hours per week.

For those employees, who work more than 37 hours per week and are entitled to be paid overtime for those additional hours, payment will be:

Monday to Saturday - (6.30 am - 6.00pm) Single time
 Monday to Saturday- (6.01pm - 6.29am) Time and a half
 Sunday - Double time
 Public Holiday - Double time with equivalent single time off in lieu

6.4.2 Shift allowances

Weekend, night and shift working payments will only be paid to staff up to and including Pay Grade 4. These payments may also be paid to staff graded above Pay Grade 4 in the following circumstances:

- Where it is a critical business requirement that an essential service is delivered out of office hours (for example, maintenance of IT systems, responding to weather or other civil emergencies) or in addition to the normal work pattern for care services where 24-hour attendance is required such as residential care;
- Where staff are required to participate in a regular and frequent standby, Rota and are called out whilst on standby.

The arrangements described below reflect the only arrangements for which the payments specified will be made. Where staff are entitled to receive an enhanced rate of pay, only ONE entitlement will be paid, namely shift allowance or weekend enhancement or night working, for the same hours worked

a) Definitions

Nights are defined as those hours worked between 22.00 to 6.30 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Weekend work can take place on a Saturday which is taken as 00.00 – 24.00 (Saturday), or Sunday which is taken as 00.00 to 24.00 (Sunday).

Rotating shifts are defined as any work pattern where the total period covered by the shifts is 24 hours.

Alternating shifts are defined as any work pattern where the total period covered by the shifts is 11 hours or more and less than 18 hours, in any 24-hour period, and there are at least 4 hours between the start time of the earliest and latest shift.

b) Rates of pay for employees on a rotating or alternating shift, where the shift is a regular and permanent feature of their working arrangements.

Shift Type	Criteria	Allowance
Rotating Shift (a)	Three shifts on a rotating basis covering 24 hours including night shifts over 5 or 6 days a week e.g., Monday to Friday or Tuesday to Sunday	17%

Rotating Shift (b)	Three shifts on a rotating basis covering 24 hours including night shifts over 7 days a week – e.g. Sunday to Sunday Earlies 06.30 – 14.00 Lates 14.00 - 22.00 Nights 22.00 – 06.30	20%
Alternating Shift (a)	Where the total period covered by the two shifts is between 11 and 14 hours in a 24-hour period starting at least 4 hours apart	10%
Alternating Shift (b)	Where the total period covered by at least two shifts is more than 14 hours in a 24-hour period starting at least 4 hours apart	14%

The enhancement outlined in the table will be paid on all hours worked. No additional payments can be claimed as the shift allowance is deemed to cover the “unsocial” nature of the work. Shift payments will be paid during holidays, paid maternity leave (pro rata to the shift working worked and paid during the qualifying period) and when in receipt of pay during sickness absence in accordance with the normal entitlement.

Where a member of staff is directed in accordance with their contract to cover another member of staff’s shift pattern due to absence, which has gone beyond a continuous four-week period, the member of staff will be eligible to receive the appropriate shift allowance which will be backdated to the commencement of the period in question.

This must be approved by the direct line manager and Deputy Head of Facilities. A variation form must be completed and submitted to the payroll team via hr@tsatrust.org.uk.

6.4.3 Summer Working

Support staff supporting Thinking Tuition or Summer Clubs during the summer holiday will be paid at a standard rate of £20. If an employee is leading the session and having to do all of the preparation for the session instead of a teacher, then they should be paid at the Teacher rate of £30 per hour.

7. Support staff term time only calculations

All support staff will have weeks paid per year calculated in the following way:

Weeks worked + Annual leave entitlement + Bank holidays = A
 Number of working days available (365/7 x 5) = B
 Weeks paid for TTO staff = (A / B) x 52.14

After 5 years’ service support staff on term time only contracts receive an additional 3 days’ pay added to their salary calculation.

Weeks	Without 5 years	Weeks	With 5 years
38	44.998	38	45.798
39	45.998	39	46.798
40	46.998	40	47.798
41	47.998	41	48.798
42	48.998	42	49.798
43	49.998	43	50.798
44	50.998	44	51.798
A/L Ent.	27	A/L Ent.	31

8. Absence during the pay review cycle

Consideration will be given to adjusting the pay review process where a staff member has had a significant period of absence due to maternity / family related leave, sick leave or disability related absence.

The precise nature of the adjustments will be determined on a case-by-case basis following discussion with the staff member.

When assessing whether a staff member who has been absent is eligible for automatic pay progression, the following may be considered:

Staff returning from maternity leave should be given any pay increase they would have received had they not been on maternity leave. The same approach may be appropriate where an absence has been for disability-related reasons.

9. Appeals Arrangements

Where a member of staff is dissatisfied with a decision, this should be taken up informally in the first instance in line with the following scheme of delegation.

Pay recommendation	Pay decision	Ratification	Informal	Formal appeal
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Line Manager	Headteacher/Head of Service	Director	Headteacher	Director
Headteacher/ Head of Service	Director	School AAB/ Deputy CEO	Director	School AAB/Deputy CEO
Director/Deputy CEO	CEO	People Committee	CEO	People Committee
CEO	People Committee	Board	People Committee	Board

If unresolved, then this should be pursued by appealing in writing to the relevant AAB/Person. The grounds for any appeal and process for pursuing it are described in this section.

The arrangements for considering appeals are as follows:

A member of staff may appeal against any determination in relation to their pay. The grounds for appeal are that the person or committee by whom the decision was made:

- incorrectly applied any provision of the relevant terms and conditions of service or the pay policy.
- failed to have proper regard to statutory guidance,
- failed to have regard to the Teacher Standards.
- failed to take proper account of relevant evidence.
- took account of irrelevant or inaccurate evidence.
- was biased; or
- otherwise unlawfully discriminated against the member of staff.

An issue raised as a pay appeal cannot then be raised again as a grievance, with exception of a legal right (such as discrimination)

If a member of staff receives an overpayment, an agreement should be reached on the terms and timescales for recovery. In exceptional circumstances where an agreement cannot be reached, the employee may exercise their right of appeal in accordance with this procedure. The sequence of events is as follows:

- The member of staff receives written confirmation of the pay determination and the basis on which the decision was made.
- If the member of staff is not satisfied with the pay decision, they should seek to resolve this by discussing the matter informally with the Headteacher/Principal (or Chair of the Headteacher/Principals' Professional Growth Committee where it is the Headteacher/Principal who is dissatisfied) within ten working days of the decision.
- Where this is not possible, or where the member of staff continues to be dissatisfied, they may follow a formal appeal process.

The member of staff should set in writing the grounds for appeal (which must relate to the grounds as set out above) and send it to the Clerk to the Governing Body, within ten working

days of either the notification of the original decision, or of the outcome of the discussion with the Headteacher/Principal referred to above.

Any appeal should be heard by a panel of three (Directors of Education, non-staff Governors or independent Headteachers/Heads of Service from the Trust) who were not involved in the original decision, normally within 20 working days of the receipt of the written appeal notification, and give the member of staff the right to be accompanied by their trade union representative or a work colleague and make representations in person.

The person who made the recommendation and the decision maker will normally be called as witnesses at that appeal hearing. The employee may call their witnesses. The decision of the appeal panel will be given in writing, and where the appeal is rejected will include a note of the evidence considered and the reasons for the decision. The decision is final and there is no recourse to the staff grievance procedure.

Employees who are dissatisfied in relation to their pay have a statutory right to raise a formal complaint about that decision, which is termed a “grievance”. The process defined within this section meets the statutory requirements for raising a “grievance” and therefore an issue raised as a pay appeal cannot then be raised again under the Trust’s formal Grievance Procedure

10. Equality monitoring

The Governing Body and Trust will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy on a regular basis in conjunction with union representatives. An annual written report on the operation of the pay policy, recording pay decisions taken, non-consolidated payments and equality impact, will be provided to union representatives, including trends in progression across specific groups of teachers to assess its effect and the school’s continued compliance with equalities legislation.

11. Review

The policy will be monitored and reviewed by the relevant body in conjunction with union representatives on an annual basis.

Appendix 1 - Thinking Schools Academy Trust Teachers Pay Scales September 2025

Teacher Scale	£
T1	33,280
T2	35,360
T3	37,440
T4	39,520
T5	41,600
T6	43,680
T7	45,760
T8	47,840
T9	49,920
T10	52,000

Unqualified Scale	£
UNQ1	22,601
UNQ2	25,193
UNQ3	27,785
UNQ4	30,071
UNQ5	32,667
UNQ6	35,259

Lead Practitioner	£
LP1	52026
LP2	53332
LP3	54663
LP4	56022
LP5	57418
LP6	58857
LP7	60443
LP8	61836
LP9	63381
LP10	65010
LP11	66695
LP12	68233
LP13	69937
LP14	71682
LP15	73465

Leadership	£	Leadership	£
L1	51773	L34	116456
L2	53069	L35	119350
L3	54394	L36	122306
L4	55747	L37	125345
L5	57137	L38	128447
L6	58569	L39	131578
L7	60145	L40	134860
L8	61534	L41	138230
L9	63070	L42	141693
L10	64691	L43	143796
L11	66368		
L12	67898		
L13	69596		
L14	71330		
L15	73105		
L16	75049		
L17	76772		
L18	78702		
L19	80655		
L20	82654		
L21	84699		
L22	86803		
L23	88951		
L24	91158		
L25	93424		
L26	95735		
L27	98106		
L28	100540		
L29	103030		
L30	105595		
L31	108202		
L32	110892		
L33	113646		

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TLR Allowances		
Allowances	Min £	Max£
TLR 1	10,068	17,038
TLR 2	3,485	8,519
TLR 3	687	3,435
SEN	2,751	5,491

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Appendix 2 - Thinking Schools Academy Trust Support Staff Pay Scales April 2026

Pay group	Min	Max
1	24,520	25,363
2	25,077	28,001
3	26,866	31,179
4	29,885	34,482
5	33,899	40,190
6	39,493	47,014
7	45,418	55,213
8	53,891	65,600
9	64,021	77,229

Appendix 3- Trust Leadership pay scales

	Role	Description	Range for small primary Academies (individually less than 400 pupils)	Range for large primary Academies (individually more than 400 pupils)	Secondary schools
5-point AHT range	Assistant Head	Has delegated leadership responsibilities defined in job description and can act on behalf of HT in defined situations	L1 – L5	Any 5-point range up to L9	L13 – L17
5-point DHT range	Deputy Head	Can act for HT in all matters on short term absence and in a structure where Executive Head is based on school site for more than 3 days a week	L6 – L10	L10 – L14	L19 – L23
7-point HT range	Headteacher Level 3 (Head of school)	Can act as HT on all operational matters and be responsible for the day to day running of the school if there is an Executive Head attached to the school that is providing at least 1 day's support	L8 – L14	L11 – L17	L20 – L26
	Headteacher Level 2	Responsible for all OFSTED requirements and has less than 1 day's support from Executive Head	L14 – L20	L17 – L23	L26 – L32
	Headteacher Level 1 (Executive Head)	Is OFSTED responsible for at least two schools and is line managing other Heads of School or HT or responsibility for a single school plus additional whole Trust responsibility for 1 day per week	L23 – L29	L23 – L29	L30 – L36
	Headteacher Level 2	Responsible for all OFSTED requirements and has less than 1 day's support from Executive Head		SEN/AP Provision L17 – L23	

Appendix 4- Extended Leadership Scales

	Role	Description	Secondary schools
5-point range	Associate Leader	The Associate Leader is the lead professional for the quality of provision in set subject areas.	L9 – L13

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Appendix 5 - Executive Leadership pay ranges 2025-2028

Pay Group:

Group	Min	Max	Group
CEO	£195,000	£230,000	Exec level 4
Deputy CEO	£160,000	£195,000	Exec level 3
Education Directors	£125,000	£160,000	Exec level 2
Service Directors/Deputy Regional Directors	£85,000	£120,000	Exec level 1