

Teacher Appraisal Policy

Signed:

Chair: S. Gribbin

CEO: L. Jackson

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Purpose

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the head teachers and CEO, and for supporting their development within the context of the schools' plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers. It also sets out the arrangements that will apply when teachers fall below the levels of competence that are expected of them.

Appraisal in our schools will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all teachers have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It will help to ensure that teachers are able to continue to improve their professional practice *through high quality CPD* and to develop *further* as teachers.

This policy applies to the CEO, head teachers and to all teachers employed by the trust, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. ECT) and those who are subject to performance improvement procedures.

The appraisal period

The appraisal period will run for twelve months from 1st October to 30th September.

Teachers who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than a year will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of the period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when teachers begin or end employment with a school.

Appointing appraisers

The CEO will be appraised by the Trust's Pay and Performance Management Committee, supported by a suitably skilled and experienced external adviser who has been appointed for that purpose.

Headteachers will be appraised by the CEO, supported by a suitably skilled and experienced external adviser who has been appointed for that purpose. The Trust's Pay and Performance Management Committee will oversee the process.

The Headteacher, after consultation with CEO, will decide who will appraise the other teachers in the school. All appraisers of teachers other than the head teachers will have appropriate, relevant and current teaching experience. All appraisers should have QTS and the appraiser will receive sufficient and appropriate training before undertaking the role. The appraiser should have equivalent or greater level of responsibility than the teacher they are appraising and normally have line management responsibility. The designated appraiser must conduct all aspects of the review, including pay recommendations of teachers who are eligible. Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser appointed by the head teacher will be absent for the majority of the appraisal cycle, the head teacher may perform those duties him/herself or delegate those duties to another teacher for the duration of the absence.

Where possible, alternative appraisers will be offered to teachers where there is a genuine and valid reason or the appointed appraiser is not available due to long term sickness. This will be confirmed with the appraisee at the beginning of the process.

Setting objectives

Objectives set will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the appraisee's role and level of experience. Common objectives may be agreed to support school or Trust development plans.

The headteacher's objectives will be set by the CEO and the external consultant. These must support the developments identified by the Trust.

Objectives for each teacher will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. This will be quality assured by the headteacher.

The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives but where a joint determination cannot be made the appraiser will make the determination. The appraisee may request moderation and should this be unsuccessful then the appraisee will be given the opportunity to append comments alongside their objectives. Each school must agree with the Trust its own moderation process. Objectives may be revised by agreement if circumstances change.

The objectives set for each teacher will, if achieved, contribute to the school's and trust's plans for improving the school's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at that school and take into account the professional aspirations of staff. No teacher will be given more than three objectives: setting more than three objectives can cause increased workload and be inconsistent with the school's strategy for achieving work / life balance for all staff.

Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, each teacher will be informed of the standards against which that teacher's performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. Teachers' and Headteacher's Standards provide the context in which, through professional discussions, objectives are set, CPD needs identified, success criteria defined and the nature and extent of any required observations planned. The Teachers' and Headteacher's Standards should not be used as a checklist but should inform the setting of targets.

The agreed objectives will contain a description of what success may look like. Where use of numerical targets is appropriate, these will be reasonable, in the circumstances in which the teacher works and it will be recognised that factors outside teachers' control may significantly affect success.

Setting more than three objectives, or for example using sub-targets, can lead to teachers experiencing unreasonable workload and pressure, making objectives more difficult to achieve. Therefore, other than in exceptional circumstances, no teacher will be given more than three objectives.

The appraiser will take into account the effects of an individual's circumstances, including any disability, when agreeing objectives. For example, this might include a reasonable adjustment to allow an individual slightly longer to complete a task than might otherwise be the case. When staff return from a period of extended absence, objectives may be adjusted to allow them to readjust to their working environment.

Reviewing performance

Observation

Observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing teachers' performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development they may have and of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion and follow the procedure as set out in Appendix 2.

The amount and type of classroom observation will depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the school. The total period for classroom observation arranged for appraisal purposes for any teacher will not exceed three hours per cycle having regard to the individual circumstances of the teacher. There is no requirement to use all of the three hours. The amount of observation for each teacher should reflect, and be proportionate to, the needs of the individual. Classroom observation will be carried out by those with QTS.

Teachers (including the head teacher) who have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

In addition to formal observation for appraisal purposes, it is acknowledged that head teachers or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards are required to evaluate the standards of teaching and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained. Processes and procedures for this are part of a whole school improvement strategy separate and distinct from the appraisal process. However, this does not prevent appraisal

observations being used for multiple purposes by agreement in order to restrict the number of observations being carried out.

In the more general monitoring and evaluating of teaching standards concerns may be identified. Any concerns that may arise should be discussed with the teacher.

Verbal Feedback should be within 24 hours of the observation. Written feedback must be provided within five working days by the person who has undertaken the observation who should also be the appraiser.

Development and support

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development (CPD). The school wishes to encourage a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development. Professional development is an entitlement and will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

Sufficient time, within directed hours, should be provided to enable the appraiser and appraisee to fulfill their statutory and contractual obligations.

The Trust and Local Governing Committee will ensure in the budget planning that, as far as possible, appropriate resources are made available in the school budget for any development and support agreed for and with the appraisee at the planning and review meeting.

An account of the support and development needs of teachers in general, including the instances where it did not prove possible to provide any agreed CPD, will form a part of the head teacher's annual report to the Local Governing Committee about the operation of the appraisal process in the school.

Teachers should not be held accountable for failing to make good progress towards meeting their performance criteria where the support recorded in the planning statement has not been provided.

Feedback

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their progress towards the achievement of their appraisal objectives, e.g. following a lesson observation. Feedback should always be given in a supportive context highlighting particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need additional support in order to successfully meet their appraisal objectives. A written record on progress made should be kept of the date and key issues of any feedback and should form part of the appraisal documentation. Should either the appraiser or appraisee identify issues of concern an interim meeting may be called to discuss any support that is necessary to address the concerns.

Relationship to performance improvement

Schools must not rely solely on the appraisal process as a trigger to consider a performance improvement procedure. Elsewhere this document has described the legitimate need for schools to have a wider knowledge of the quality of teaching within their organisation. The appraisal process should inform that wider knowledge. There must be the recognition that poor performance issues can arise for a variety of reasons including being triggered by work related and non-work related factors. Once a decision has been made to proceed to performance improvement procedures the appraisal process is suspended.

Before embarking on a formal performance improvement procedure, the Chair of the Trust (in the case of the CEO), the CEO (in the case of head teachers) or head teacher (in case of other teachers) must be able to evidence that every aspect of support through the appraisal process and all other avenues has been exhausted and has failed to achieve the required improvements. Where it proves to be necessary to begin a performance improvement procedure with a member of staff, subject to this procedure, a formal meeting should be held to bring the Appraisal process to an end and give notice of the initiation of the performance improvement procedure.

Annual assessment

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the CEO, the Directors must consult the external adviser, the CEO will fulfill this role for headteachers, with advice from the external consultant and provide Directors with a report, via the Pay and Performance Management Committee.

This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities may need to be reviewed at an interim meeting. Priorities may need to be reviewed if an appraisee's circumstances or responsibilities change. In such cases a written addition to the planning statement should be made. The appraisee, as previously, should be given the opportunity to add any written comments.

The whole process will have regard to what can be reasonably expected of any teacher in that position given the desirability of the appraisee and appraiser being able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge their professional duties and the time required to pursue their personal interests outside work. Priorities may need to be reviewed if an appraisee's circumstances or responsibilities change. In such cases a written addition to the planning statement should be made. The appraisee, as previously, should be given the opportunity to add any written comments.

The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period a reviewed document. Teachers will receive their reviewed document by 31st October (31st December for head teachers). The appraisal report will include:

- Details of the teacher's objectives for the appraisal period in question
- An assessment of the teachers' performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards
- An assessment of the teacher's training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them
- A recommendation on pay where that is relevant
- A space for the teacher's own comments if needed

The assessment of performance and of training and development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period.

General principles underlying this policy

Confidentiality

The appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the head teacher, Local Governing Committee and Trust to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

Quality assurance will be undertaken as part of monitoring and evaluation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Trust and Local Governing Committee will monitor the operation and outcomes of performance management arrangements.

The head teacher will provide the Trust and Local Governing Committee with a written report on the operation of the school's appraisal policy annually. The report will not contain any information which would enable any individual to be identified. The report will include:

- The operation of the appraisal policy

- The effectiveness of the school's appraisal procedures
- Teachers' training and development needs

Consistency of treatment and fairness

The Trust is committed to ensuring that the appraisal process is fair and non-discriminatory. The head teacher's report must confirm that the appraisal process complies with the Equalities Act 2010.

The head teacher will also report on whether there have been any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination under any of the protected categories covered by the Equalities Act 2010.

Appeals

At any point in the appraisal process teachers and head teachers have a right of appeal in respect of application of the policy or any entry in their planning and review statements.

The grounds for the appeal will determine the relevant appeal process to be used.

Definitions

Delegation

Normal rules apply in respect of the delegation of functions – see Trust Scheme of Delegation.

Long Term Absence

The appraisal process may need to be adjusted if long term sickness absence or maternity leave affects the achievement or progress towards the appraisal objectives, and in such cases a review will take place.

Retention

The Trust, Local Governing Committee and head teacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed. The appraisee should retain his or her own copy for the same period.

Access to Documentation

All staff will have access to documentation relating to school improvement and any other documents and procedures to which this policy relates.

APPENDIX 1

Teacher standards for each career stage are set in the context of the needs of each school.

Each school will ensure that all staff have access to a detailed description of the expectations of each stage in their appraisal or performance management documents.

APPENDIX 2

Appraisal Purposes

The Trust and Local Governing Committee is committed to ensuring that classroom observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
- evaluate objectively;
- report accurately and fairly;
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained and;
- ***seek to reach agreement in advance on how classroom observations are to be carried out.***

The total period for classroom observation arranged for any teacher, for appraisal purposes, will not exceed three hours per cycle having regard to the individual circumstances of the teacher. There is no requirement to use all of the three hours. The amount of observation for each teacher should reflect and be proportionate to the needs of the individual.

In this school 'proportionate to need' will be determined in keeping with the following principles:

The arrangements for classroom observation will be included in the planning and review statement and will detail the amount of observation, specify its primary purpose, any particular aspects of the teacher's performance which will be assessed, the duration of the observation, when during the appraisal cycle the observation will take place and who will conduct the observation. Prior to the appraisal observation the context of the observation will be confirmed between the appraiser and appraisee.

Where evidence emerges about the appraisee's teaching performance which gives rise to concern during the cycle, classroom observations may be arranged in addition to those recorded at the beginning of the cycle subject to a revision meeting being held.

Information gathered during the observation will be used, as appropriate, for a variety of purposes including informing school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies in accordance with the school's commitment to streamlining data collection and minimising bureaucracy and workload burdens on staff.

In keeping with the commitment to supportive and developmental classroom observation those being observed will be notified in advance. All teachers should be given at least 5 working days' notice of the appraisal observation.

Classroom observations will only be undertaken by persons with QTS. In addition, in this school, classroom observation will only be undertaken by those who have had adequate preparation and the appropriate professional skills to undertake observation and to provide constructive oral and written feedback and support, in the context of professional dialogue between colleagues.

Oral feedback will be given as soon as possible after the observation and no later than the end of the following working day. It will be given during directed time in a suitable, private environment.

Written feedback will be provided within five working days of the observation taking place. If issues emerged from an observation that were not part of the focus of the observation as recorded in the planning and review statement these should also be covered in the written feedback and the appropriate action taken in accordance with the regulations and guidance.

The written record of feedback also includes the date on which the observation took place, the lesson observed and the length of the observation. The teacher has the right to append written comments on the feedback document. No written notes in addition to the written feedback will be kept.