

Policy for Appraisal

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Governor Responsibility:	Resources Committee
Staff Responsibility:	Headteacher
Review Period:	Annual
Status:	Statutory
Reviewed:	July 2016
Next Review Date:	Summer 2017
Governor Signature	

1. Introduction

This policy is based on the national revised appraisal arrangements which came into force with effect from 1 September 2012. They are set out in the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations) which replace the Education (School Teacher Performance Management) (England) Regulations 2006 (the 2006 Regulations). They are set out in the Education (Teachers Appraisal) (England Regulations 2012) (the Appraisal Regulations) which replace the Education (School Teacher Performance Management) (England) Regulations 2006 (the 2006 Regulations).

The Appraisal Regulations set out the principles that apply to teachers in all maintained schools and unattached teachers employed by a local authority, in each case where they are employed from one term or more. They retain the key elements of the 2006 Regulations but allow schools more freedom to design arrangements to suit their own individual needs and circumstances. They provide the minimum national framework within which schools should operate and say nothing, or very little, on many subjects on which the 2006 Regulations made detailed provision. If they wish, schools may include in their own policies details that are no longer covered by the Appraisal Regulations.

Schools and local authorities must stay within the legal framework set out in the Appraisal Regulations and in other relevant legislation that affects all employers (for example legislation on equality, employment protection and data protection). Schools and local authorities must have an appraisal policy for teachers and a policy, covering all staff, which deals with lack of capability. This model applies only to teachers, including Headteachers. It has been written in the context of schools, but the same principles apply to unattached teachers.

2. Policy Statement

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the Headteacher, and for supporting their development within the context of the schools plan for continuous professional development, 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.

This procedure sets out how the school will improve outcomes for children/students, and raise the morale of teachers, by motivating teachers to update their skills and improve their performance. The appraisal procedure will be used also to address any concerns that are raised about a teacher's performance. If concerns are such that they cannot be resolved through the appraisal process, there will be consideration of whether to commence the capability procedure.

3. Application of the Appraisal Policy

These policies apply to the Headteacher and to all teachers employed at the school/academy except those on contracts of less than one term and those undergoing induction (i.e. NQT's) or teachers on capability procedures.

Appraisal in this school 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 in meeting the needs of the school. It will help to ensure that teachers are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop as teachers as part of a committed team set on providing the best educational experiences as possible for our children.

4. The Appraisal Period

The appraisal period will run for 12 months, normally from September to August. Teachers who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one 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. Where a teacher starts their employment at the school part way through the cycle, the Headteacher or, in the case where the employee is the Headteacher, the Governing Body shall determine the length of the first cycle for that teacher, with a view to bringing his/her cycle into line with the cycle for other teachers as soon as possible.

Where a teacher transfers to a new post within the school part way through a cycle, the Headteacher or, in the case where the employee is the Headteacher, the Governing Body shall determine whether the cycle shall begin again and whether to change the appraiser.

5. Appointing Appraisers

All appraisers of teachers, other than those appraising Headteachers, will be teachers and will be appropriately trained.

5.1 Headteacher

The Headteacher will be appraised by the Governing Body, supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the Governing Body for that purpose.

The task of appraising the Headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub – group consisting of three members of the Governing Body. Where a Headteacher is of the opinion that any of the governors appointed by the Governing Body is unsuitable to act as his/her appraiser, s/he may submit a written request for that governor to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request.

5.2 Teachers

The choice of appraiser is for the Headteacher. Where teachers have an objection to the Headteacher's choice, their concerns will be carefully considered and, where possible, an alternative appraiser will be offered. All appraisers appointed by the Headteacher will be qualified teachers and will have current or recent teaching experience. Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser appointed by the Headteacher will be absent for the majority of the appraisal cycle, the Headteacher may perform those duties herself/himself or delegate those duties to another teacher for the duration of that absence.

If the Headteacher appoints an appraiser who is not the teachers direct line manager, the appraiser to whom she/he delegates those duties will have an appropriate position in the staffing structure, together with the necessary background knowledge, skills and training to undertake the role.

Where a teacher is experiencing difficulties and the Headteacher is not the appraiser, the Headteacher may undertake the role of the appraiser.

6. Setting Objectives

The Headteacher's objectives will be set by the appraisal sub-group of the Governing Body after consultation with the external adviser and the Headteacher. An objective has to be **SMART**: Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic, Time Bound, and will be appropriate to the appraisee's role and level of experience. The objectives set for each teacher will, if achieved, contribute to the school's plans for improving the school's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at that school.

Objectives will be set before or as soon as practicable after the start of each appraisal period. In setting the objectives, reviewers will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in the context of roles, responsibilities and experience, consistent with the school's strategy for achieving a work/life balance for all staff. Appraisees may at any point append their comments alongside their objectives.

The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change. The school operates a system of moderation to ensure that all appraisers are working to the same standards. Objectives will be moderated across the school to ensure that they are consistent between teachers with similar experience and levels of responsibility. Should the objectives not be agreed, the final decision on allocation of objectives rests with the Headteacher.

The agreed objectives will contain a description of what success may look like. Where use of numerical objectives or a % target 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.

No teacher will be given more than three objectives. Setting sub – targets is not appropriate as this leads to teachers experiencing unreasonable workload and pressure, making the objectives more difficult to achieve.

6.1 Objectives, Appraisals and the Teachers' Standards

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 will be assessed against the appropriate set of standards contained in the document

Teachers' Standards, published in July 2012. The Headteacher or Governing Body, will need to consider whether certain teachers should be assessed against other sets of standards published by the Secretary of State or other body that are relevant to them.

7. Pay Progression

Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the appraiser (if not the Headteacher) will make an assessment of their performance against the agreed objectives, and this may be taken into account by the Headteacher when considering a recommendation for Pay Progression. Any decision made by the relevant decision making body will be used on the statutory criteria and guidance set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and the relevant teacher standards.

The Governing Body has agreed the pay policy of the school and has considered the implications of the appraisal policy with respect to the arrangements relating to teachers pay in accordance with STPCD. The Governing Body will ensure that decisions on pay progression are made by 31st December for the Headteacher and 31st October for other teachers.

8. Reviewing Performance

8.1. Observations

We believe that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing teacher's 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.

The effective and efficient operation of the appraisal process requires lesson observation to be a confidential process of constructive engagement within an atmosphere of support and co-operation. Accordingly, observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion, with professionalism, integrity and courtesy, will be evaluated objectively and reported accurately and fairly and will take account of particular circumstances which may affect performance on the day.

At least five working days' notice of the date and time of the observation will be given and verbal feedback provided within a 48 hour period and written feedback within 5 working days, unless circumstances make this impossible.

Classroom observation will be carried out by qualified teachers. For the purpose of appraisal, teachers performance will be observed on an appropriate and reasonable number of occasions and will, as far as possible, be agreed by the appraiser with the appraisee based on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the school. The number and duration of appraisal observations will be in accordance with the school's observation protocols, which includes provision for exceptional circumstances where concerns have been raised about a teacher's performance, or where the teacher requests additional observation visits. Peer observations provide the opportunity for colleagues to work in a supportive yet rigorous system of observation and feedback. Feedback is facilitated by a member of the SLT.

The Headteacher or other leaders with responsibility for learning and teaching standards may 'drop in' or undertake other observations to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to ensure that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained. The length and frequency of 'drop in' or other observations, and the notice to be given, will vary depending on specific circumstances but will be in accordance with the schools classroom observation and drop in policy.

For the purpose of professional development, feedback about lesson observations should be developmental, not simply a judgement using Ofsted grades.

This school will use the findings of each observation, including appraisal observations, for other management requirements (for example subject area reviews) thereby seeking to minimise the total number of occasions on which teachers are observed.

Teachers (including the Headteacher) whose posts have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed, in addition to their teaching appraisal observations.

8.2. Development and Support

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. We wish to encourage a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development, for example, through peer observation. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the on-going professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

The school's CPD programme will be informed by the training and development needs identified as part of the appraisal process. The Governing Body will ensure in the budget planning that, as far as possible, resources are made available in the school budget for appropriate training, and support agreed for appraisees, maintaining access on an equitable basis.

An account of the training and development needs of teachers including the instances where it did not prove possible to provide any agreed CPD, may form a part of the Headteacher's Report to the Governing Body about the operation of the appraisal process in the school.

With regard to the provision of CPD in the case of competing demands on the school budget, a decision on relative priority will be taken with regard to the extent to which:

- The training and support will help the school to achieve its priorities; and
- The CPD identified is essential for an appraisee to meet their objectives.

Account will be taken in a review meeting of where it has not been possible for teachers to fully meet their performance criteria because the support recorded in the planning statement has not been provided.

9. Annual Assessment

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each period. In assessing the performance of the Headteacher, the Governing Body must consult the external adviser. This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed, addressed and communicated to the teacher on a regular basis.

The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period – and have the opportunity to comment on – a written appraisal report. 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 against the relevant standards;
- An assessment of the teachers training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- A recommendation on pay where that is relevant (**N.B – pay recommendations need to be made by 31st December for Headteachers and by 31st October for other teachers**);
- A space for the teachers own comments;

A review meeting will take place to discuss the content of the report and any further action required and to inform objective setting for next cycle. An interim review meeting is planned mid-way through the academic year in order to monitor and support appraisees.

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

10. Teachers Experiencing Difficulties

The objective is to provide support and guidance through the appraisal process in such a way that the teachers' performance improves and the problem is, therefore, resolved. Where it is apparent that a teacher's personal circumstances are leading to difficulties at school, support will be offered as soon as possible, without waiting for the formal annual assessment.

The Headteacher/line manager should investigate and collect evidence of reasons for concern and support so far received, for example, outcomes of whole school monitoring and of additional In Service Training (INSET) and CPD offered. A portfolio of evidence of support and monitoring should be made available 5 days prior to the initial meeting. The Headteacher/line manager should write to the teacher concerned informing them of the initial meeting, outlining the options available and advising them of their right to be accompanied by a trade union representative.

The Headteacher/line manager should arrange an initial meeting to:

- Discuss the specific areas of concerns with the member of staff based on evidence of performance and previous support;
- Give the member of staff the opportunity to state their case before a decision is made
- Consult the member of staff on their needs for support/development
- Consider whether adequate training and support has been provided
- Consider what would help the member of staff to reach the required standard
- Offer the opportunity of peer review, for example, by allowing reciprocal classroom observation with a similar level member of staff who can be from another school.

- Decide a strategy and timescale for improvement and advise accordingly, setting clear targets that can be evaluated as met, partially met or not met.
- Consider whether they have met their management responsibilities

As part of the strategy for improvement, counselling or peer support/mentoring could be arranged.

If the member of staff has a disability, it needs to be established that all reasonable adjustments have been made to provide an opportunity to perform to the required standards, and that there has been a reasonable amount of time to adapt to any such adjustments. It may be appropriate to explore other options that might be open to the member of staff, such as referral to OH if medical conditions impact upon performance. Alternative employment more suitable to the capabilities of the member of staff should also be considered, including transfer to a post with reduced responsibility.

At this meeting, the Headteacher should explain to the appraisee the implications and process if no, or insufficient improvement is made. The teacher's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and a reasonable time given for the teacher's performance to improve. This will depend upon the circumstances but will be for a period of at least 6 weeks, with appropriate support as agreed in the Action Plan, in order that the aim of recovering and improving performance can be achieved. During this monitoring period the teacher will be given regular feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify or extend the support programme if appropriate.

If sufficient progress is made such that the teacher is performing at a level that indicates there is no longer a possibility of capability procedures being invoked the teacher should be informed of this at a formal meeting with the appraiser or Headteacher. Following this meeting the appraisal process will continue as normal.

If no, or insufficient, improvement has been made over this period, the teacher will be invited to a formal meeting to determine whether formal capability proceedings need to be commenced or the appraisal process is extended and remains in place with further support provided. The teacher may be supported by a trade union representative or work colleague and will have at least 5 working days notice prior to the initial meeting.

The formal stage of the Capability may also be invoked before any informal discussion or counselling, where it is considered appropriate due to the seriousness of the concerns.

11. Appeals

Appraisees have a right of appeal against any of the entries in the written appraisal report. Details of the appeals process are available from the Headteacher or from the school Governing Body. Where the Headteacher has not been recommended for pay progression he/she will be informed by the appropriate governor. The Headteacher will notify any teacher who has not been recommended for pay progression of the date when the Governing Body meets to consider pay recommendations, following which the teacher (and Headteacher when the Head has not been recommended for pay progression) may exercise the right of appeal, assisted by a companion who may be a colleague, a trade union official or trade union representative.

General Principles Underlying this Policy

1. ACAS Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievances procedures

The conduct of the formal capability stage will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the ACAS Code of Practice.

2. Consistency of treatment and fairness

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant legislation.

3. Sickness

If long term sickness absence appears to have been triggered by the commencement of monitoring or a formal capability procedure, the case will be dealt with in accordance with the school's absence policy and will normally be referred to the occupational health service to assess the member of staff's health and fitness for continued employment and the appropriateness or otherwise of continuing with monitoring of formal procedures. In some cases it may be appropriate for formal procedures to continue during a period of sickness absence. However, the views of the occupational health physician will be always be taken into account before a decision is reached.

4. Grievances

Where a member of staff raises a grievance during the appraisal or capability process, the appraisal or capability process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and appraisal or capability cases are related it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

5. Confidentiality and Professional Relationships

The appraisal and capability processes will be treated with confidentiality. Only the appraiser's line manager or, where s/he had more than one, each of her/his line managers will be provided (including senior managers where appropriate) with access to the appraisee's plan recorded in his/her statements. This will be done upon request and only where this is necessary to enable the line manager to discharge his/her line management responsibilities. Appraisees will be consulted on request for access to statements in the context of this policy.

The process of gathering evidence for performance review will not compromise normal professional relationships between teachers. The Governing Body recognises that the reviewer will consult with, and seek to secure the agreement of, the reviewee before seeking information from other colleagues about the work of the reviewee.

However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Headteacher and Governing Body to quality assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. The Headteacher or appropriate colleague might, for example, review all teachers' objectives and written appraisal records personally – to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers. The Headteacher might also wish to be aware of any pay recommendations that have been previously made.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Governing Body and Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements.

The Headteacher will provide the Governing Body with a written report on the operation of the school's appraisal and capability policies annually. The report will not identify any individual by name. The report will include assessment of the impact of these policies on the equalities characteristics.

The Headteacher will report on whether there have been any appeals of representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination.

7. Retention

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.