

TEACHER APPRAISAL POLICY

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Date of Next Review: March 2027



Purpose

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 school's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers.

Appraisal 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 and to develop as teachers. It also refers to the arrangements that will apply where any concerns are raised about a teacher's performance.

Application of the policy

The policy applies to the Headteacher and to all teachers employed by the school, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. ECT's) and those about whose performance there are serious concerns that the appraisal process has been unable to address and are therefore subject to the school's Capability Procedure.

The policy will be applied fairly and equitably, with appropriate confidentiality.

The appraisal period

The appraisal period will run for twelve months, normally from October to October. 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 a 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.

Appointing appraisers

The Headteacher will decide who, with Qualified Teacher Status, will appraise other teachers, taking into account any objections to the choice of appraiser if necessary.

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 qualifications and experience required of an external adviser are not set by regulation. It is for the governing body to decide who they wish to use as an external adviser, ideally

with the agreement of the Headteacher.

Role of the external adviser - to use available evidence to advise the governing body on agreeing the head's objectives and reviewing performance against those objectives. Regulations require all schools to secure external advice. The work of the external adviser will normally include:

- Reading, reviewing and analysing documents supplied, and giving written advice to the appointed governors, which review's the head's progress against objectives and suggests areas for future objectives;
- Holding pre-review meetings with the head and with the appointed governors attending the review meeting and carrying out agreed functions;
- Carrying out any agreed post-review work.

The task of appraising the Headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of normally two/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 to the Chair of Governors for that governor to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request. The final decision will rest with the Chair of Governors; however, advice may be sought from Schools' HR.

Teachers

The choice of appraiser is for the Headteacher. Where teachers have an objection on professional grounds to the Headteacher's choice, their concerns should be put in writing. Their objections will be carefully considered and an alternative appraiser may be offered. Where the objections are rejected by the Headteacher the teacher should be advised in writing. All appraisers appointed by the Headteacher will be suitably trained.

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 appraiser for the duration of that absence.

If the Headteacher appoints an appraiser who is not the teacher's 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, a suitably senior member of the leadership team may undertake the role of appraiser. See also section on Teachers Experiencing Difficulties.

Setting objectives

The setting and agreement of objectives is fundamentally important to the effective operation of a performance management system that aims to link individual performance to pay progression. A number of reference documents may be used to help identify relevant objectives for each teacher, for example the job description, the school

improvement plan, the school's business plan, the Ofsted School Inspection Report and the Teachers Standards.

In addition, some flexibility may need to be built in around issues that are emerging for the school so as to allow for objectives to be adjusted throughout the appraisal period so that they remain relevant to the performance of the individual and to the priorities of the school. Objectives should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timed).

The Headteacher's objectives will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period by the appraisal sub-group of the Governing Body and after consultation with the external adviser and the Headteacher.

Objectives for each teacher will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience. In setting the objectives, appraisers/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. Teachers may at any point append their comments alongside their objectives.

The appraiser and the teacher 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. Targets will be moderated across the school to ensure that they are consistent between teachers with similar experience and levels of responsibility. However, appraisal objectives will normally become more challenging as a teacher progresses up the pay range.

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 targets is appropriate, these will be reasonable, in the circumstances in which the teacher works and it will be recognised that factors outside the teacher's control may significantly affect success.

The Headteacher/Governors will be mindful that setting too many objectives can lead to teachers experiencing unreasonable workload and pressure, making the objectives more difficult to achieve. Therefore, generally three to four objectives would be considered reasonable, save in exceptional circumstances where more objectives may be required.

The objectives set for each teacher are intended to contribute to the school's plans for improving the school's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at that school and will take into account the professional aspirations of the teacher.

The appraiser will take into account the effects of an individual's circumstances, including any disability, when agreeing any objectives.

Objectives will be set out in a planning statement, along with details of any training and support which have been agreed. The planning statement should also specify the evidence that will be collected to support the review of the performance including details of the arrangements for task or classroom observation, where relevant.

Teachers' Standards

Under the appraisal arrangements that take effect from 1 September 2013, the performance of all teachers, regardless of their career stage, will be assessed against the Teachers' Standards. The standards define the minimum level of practice expected of trainees and teachers from the point of being awarded QTS.

The standards against which performance must be assessed in respect of a teacher are the set of standards articulated in the Teachers' Standards document and any other set of standards relating to teachers' performance published by the secretary of state as the governing body or Headteacher determine as being applicable.

Teachers will meet with their appraisers to discuss progress against appraisal objectives and ways in which they have met the Teachers' Standards.

In order to meet the Teachers' Standards, a teacher will need to demonstrate that their practice is consistent with the definitions set out in Part 1 (Teaching) and Part 2 (Personal & Professional Conduct). (See Teachers' Standards)

Pay Progression

Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the recommendation made by the appraiser will be based on the assessment of the teacher's performance against the agreed objectives. The decision made by the relevant decision-making body will be based 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 the STPCD. The Governing Body will ensure that decisions on pay progression are made by 31 December for headteachers and by 31 October for other teachers.

Upper Pay Range

From 1 September 2013, any qualified teacher can apply to be paid on the Upper Pay Range. All applications should include the results of appraisals; where such information is not available, a written statement and summary of evidence that sets out how the applicant has met the assessment criteria will be sufficient. Teachers who have been absent through sickness, disability or maternity may cite written evidence over a 3-year period before the date of the application.

To be assessed successfully, a teacher will be required to meet the criteria set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD):

- The teacher is 'highly competent' in all the elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- The teacher's achievements and contribution to the school is 'substantial' and 'sustained'.

In Watergate School this means that the teacher's performance is assessed as

demonstrating consistently and over time:

Highly competent

The teacher's performance is assessed as demonstrating excellent depth and breadth of knowledge, skills and understanding of the Teachers' Standards in the particular role they are fulfilling and the context in which they are working.

Substantial

The teacher's achievements and contribution to the school are significant, not just in raising standards of teaching and learning in their own classroom but also in making a significant wider contribution to school improvement which impacts on pupil progress and the effectiveness of staff and colleagues.

Sustained

The teacher must have had two consecutive successful appraisal reports and have made good progress towards their objectives; they will have been expected to have shown that their teaching expertise has grown over the relevant period and is consistently good to outstanding.

Gathering the evidence

As part of the overall appraisal process, it is critically important that all members of staff who are subject to the school's teacher appraisal policy are clear about the evidence that will be required by their appraiser to enable the appraiser to assess their performance and for the Headteacher to make a substantiated and evidence-based pay recommendation to the 'decision maker'.

Judgements relating to performance should be supported by evidence, agreed at the beginning of the performance cycle. Evidence should show and demonstrate a contribution towards:

- An increasing positive impact in pupil progress;
- An increasing impact on wider outcomes for pupils;
- Improvement in specific elements of practice, e.g. lesson planning;
- An increasing contribution to the work at the school;
- An increasing impact on the effectiveness of staff.

The evidence gathered will largely be determined by the nature and scope of the agreed objectives and / or the Teachers' Standards. Examples of evidence may include:

- Classroom observations
- Task observations
- Reviews of assessment results
- Appropriate and relevant planning of learning
- Internal tracking including pupil work sampling
- Moderation within and across schools

- Evidence supporting progress against Teachers' Standards

Any classroom or task observations will be carried out in accordance with the schools 'classroom and task observation protocol'. Classroom observation will be carried out by suitably trained appraisers. Appropriate notice of the date and time of the observation will be given and verbal feedback provided by the end of the next school day in a suitable private environment.

Written feedback will be provided within 5 working days, unless circumstances make this impossible. The appraisee has the right to append written comments to the feedback document.

For appraisal purposes, the governing body is committed to ensuring that classroom and task 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; and
- Respect the confidentiality of the information gained.

The arrangements for classroom / task observation will be stated in the appraisal planning statement and will include the amount of observation, specify its primary purpose, any particular aspects of the employee's performance which will be assessed.

Where evidence emerges about the teachers' performance which gives rise to concern during the cycle further evidence will be required to validate the judgement including analysis of data, work scrutiny and lesson observations within an agreed timescale. Where the teacher requests additional observation visits, additional observations may be arranged during the cycle.

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

Additional monitoring activities such as task observation, work scrutiny (including providing written feedback for learners), reviews of assessment results and appropriate and relevant planning of learning may also be carried out.

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

performance management, observations can be used to share best practice and promote a learning culture.

The school will use the findings of each observation, including appraisal observations, for other management requirements, for example subject area reviews.

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

It should be noted that, as part of their overall inspection framework, Ofsted will expect to see evidence in schools that the appraisal procedure is used effectively and enables school improvement. If appraisal evidence is not available, this is likely to impact negatively on the Ofsted Inspection Grade for Leadership and Management. This school intends to generate and retain as much reasonable 'appraisal system' evidence as practically possible.

Reviewing Performance and the Annual Assessment

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the Headteacher, the Governing Body must consult the external adviser.

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. This will be provided by Link SLT members for teachers and by Governors for the Headteacher, save in exceptional circumstances. The report will record the overall performance assessment and pay recommendation and will include:

- Details of the teacher's objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- An assessment of the teacher's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives, and against the Teacher 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;
- A space for the teacher's 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 the next cycle. In some circumstances an interim review meeting may be appropriate.

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

Good progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective, even if the performance criteria have not been met in full, may be assessed favourably. If agreement cannot be reached, especially on the outcomes of an appraisal meeting, the teacher may appeal to the Headteacher or in the case of the headteacher may appeal to the chair of the governing body, whose decisions will be final – see Appeals section below.

The overall assessment of performance and its subsequent performance rating for individual teachers will be subject to a process of moderation, arrangements for which will be put in place by the headteacher with the approval of the governing body.

The final version of the appraisal documentation will be placed on the teacher's file and a

copy of their CPD made available to the school's CPD Coordinator. The sharing of such information is governed by the data protection principles under the Data Protection Act 1998.

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, through peer observation for example. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing 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 teachers. As far as possible, CPD will make best use of the school's own expertise. Teachers also have a responsibility to develop their own CPD and are expected to be proactive in developing their own practice to meet school objectives.

An account of the training and development needs of teachers will form part of the headteacher's annual 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:

- (a) the training and support will help the school to achieve its priorities; and
- (b) The CPD identified is essential for a teacher 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.

TEACHERS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES

When dealing with a teacher experiencing difficulties, the objective is to provide support and guidance through the appraisal process in such a way that the teacher's performance improves and the problem is, therefore, resolved.

Where it is apparent that a teacher's personal circumstances are leading to difficulties at school, reasonable support will be offered as soon as possible, without waiting for the formal annual assessment.

If an appraiser identifies through the appraisal process, or via other sources of information,

for example parental complaints, that the difficulties experienced by a teacher are such that, if not rectified, could lead to capability procedures the appraiser, the headteacher, or a member of the leadership team, will, as part of the appraisal process meet the teacher to:

- give clear feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
- give the teacher at least 5 working days' notice that a meeting will be held to discuss targets for improvement alongside a programme of support, and inform the teacher that he/she has the right to be assisted by a representative of an independent trade union or work place colleague, and at any future meetings where capability will be discussed
- in consultation with the teacher at the above meeting, an action plan with clear expectations and agreed support will be established (for example coaching, training, in-class support, mentoring, structured observations, visits to other classes or schools or discussions with advisory teachers), that will help address those specific concerns;
- make clear how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed;
- it may be appropriate to revise objectives, and it will be necessary to allow sufficient time for improvement. The amount of time is up to the school but should reflect the seriousness of the concerns as well as the impact on the children's learning and colleagues;
- explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made.

During this monitoring period the teacher will be given regular feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify 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 and/or headteacher. Following this meeting the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through that process. However, the teacher will be expected to maintain this level of standard.

If insufficient improvement has been made over this period, the teacher will be invited to a transition meeting to inform the teacher that formal capability proceedings will need to be commenced under Stage 2 of the school's Capability Procedures. The teacher may be assisted by a trade union representative or work colleague and will have 5 working days' notice of the meeting.

Advice may be sought from Schools' HR at any stage of the process.

APPEALS

Where a teacher objects to any of the entries in the written appraisal report, those objections should be put in writing and, if requested, a meeting will be held to discuss this with the headteacher. If it relates to entries made by the headteacher, or where the headteacher has objections to any entries in his/her own report, the meeting will be held with the Chair of Governors or an alternative nominated governor not already involved in the process, as appropriate. There will be no further right of appeal beyond this meeting.

Pay progression Appeals - 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 recommend for pay progression) may exercise the right of appeal, assisted by a companion who may be a colleague, a trade union official or a trade union representative. This appeal will be processed under the school's pay appeal procedure.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THIS POLICY

ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

The conduct of the formal capability stages under the school's Capability Procedure will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the ACAS Code of Practice.

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

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

Definitions

Unless indicated otherwise, all references to 'teacher' include the headteacher.

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 or 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 adviser will always be sought before a decision is reached.

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. Advice should be sought from Schools' HR on a case by case basis.

Confidentiality & Professional Relationships

The appraisal and capability processes will be treated with confidentiality.

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

However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team 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 will need to be aware of any pay recommendations that have been made.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The governing body and Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements, including carrying out an annual equalities impact assessment.

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.