

Huntspill Community Federation



TEACHER APPRAISAL POLICY



Lead Person: Derek Nevell
Committee: Business
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PURPOSE

This policy sets out the framework for a clear & consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the head teacher, & for supporting their professional & personal development within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision & performance, & the professional standards expected of teachers. It also provides the basis for an assessment of a teacher's performance & a recommendation to inform a decision by the Governing Body's Pay Committee (or other relevant decision-making body) about pay progression.

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 separate capability procedure.

APPLICATION OF THE APPRAISAL POLICY

This policy applies to the head teacher & to all qualified teachers employed at the schools except those on contracts of less than one term & those undergoing induction (i.e. NQTs) or teachers on formal capability procedures.

Appraisal in our schools will be a supportive & developmental process designed to ensure that all teachers have the skills & 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 & to develop as teachers.

THE APPRAISAL PERIOD

The appraisal period will run for twelve months normally from 1 September to 31 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 schools part-way through a cycle, the head teacher or, in the case where the employee is the head teacher, 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 schools part-way through a cycle, the head teacher or, in the case where the employee is the head teacher, the governing body shall determine whether the cycle shall begin again & whether to change the appraiser.

APPOINTING APPRAISERS

All appraisers of teachers, other than those appraising head teachers, will be qualified teachers suitably trained in the appraisal process.

Headteacher: The head teacher will be appraised by the Governing Body. The Governing Body will appoint an external adviser to provide advice & support in relation to the management & review of the performance of the headteacher. The external adviser will have a proven expertise in performance management of headteachers & will have no professional or personal connection with the headteacher.

The task of appraising the headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group normally consisting of 3 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.

Teachers: The headteacher will choose the appraiser for each teacher. Where teachers have an objection to the headteacher's choice, their concerns will be carefully considered &, where appropriate an alternative appraiser will be offered. All appraisers appointed by the headteacher will be qualified teachers & will have current or recent teaching experience.

Due regard must be paid to the workload of appraisers when decisions about the choice of appraisers for teachers are made. Appropriate working time must be made available for appraisers to carry out their role, whatever the number of appraisees.

Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser appointed by the headteacher will be absent for the majority of the appraisal cycle, the head teacher may perform those duties herself/himself or delegate those duties to another teacher for the duration of that absence.

If the head teacher 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 & training to undertake the role.

SETTING OBJECTIVES

The headteacher's objectives will be set by the appraisal sub-group of the Governing Body after consultation with the external adviser & 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 Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Time-bound & will be appropriate to the context of the appraisee's work & their role & level of experience/career stage. In setting the objectives, appraisers will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in

the context of roles, responsibilities & experience, consistent with the school's strategy for achieving a work/life balance for all staff.

Objectives will be recorded in the Planning Statement. Appraisees may at any point append their comments alongside their objectives.

The appraiser & appraisee will seek to agree the objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change. The schools will operate a system of moderation to ensure that all appraisers are working to the same standards. Targets will be moderated across the schools to ensure that they are consistent between teachers with similar experience & 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 targets is appropriate, these will be reasonable, in the circumstances in which the teacher works & it will be recognised that factors outside teachers' control may significantly affect success.

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

The objectives set for each teacher are intended to contribute to the school's plans for improving the school's educational provision & performance & improving the education of pupils attending the school & 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 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.

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period each teacher will be informed of the professional standards against which that teacher's performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. All teachers will be assessed against "Teachers' Standards". The headteacher or governing body (as appropriate) will need to consider whether certain teachers should be assessed against other sets of standards published by the Secretary of State or another body that are relevant to them. For Qualified Teacher Learning & Skills (QTLS) holders, that may include the overarching professional standards for teachers in the lifelong learning sector, held by the Institute for Learning.

All teachers should be able to demonstrate competence against the relevant professional standards. It is expected that competence will be further developed as a teacher's career progresses. To progress to the Upper Pay Spine a teacher will need to demonstrate that they are "highly competent" in all elements of the relevant professional standards as specified in Section 2, paragraph 17 of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2013.

In consultation with teaching staff, each school will make it clear what constitutes "competent", & "highly competent" performance against the Teachers' Standards in that school, taking into account career stage. Schools will also need to be clear about what constitutes "inadequate" performance against Teachers' Standards. In articulating competence schools may wish to have regard to the Ofsted grade descriptors for Teaching & Learning in defining levels of performance.

REVIEWING PERFORMANCE

Observation: Our schools believe that observation of classroom practice & other responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing teachers' performance in order to identify any particular strengths & areas for development they may have & of gaining useful information which can inform school self-evaluation & improvement more generally.

The amount & type of classroom observation will depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher & the overall needs of the school.

Classroom observation for appraisal purposes will be carried out by those with QTS.

The effective & efficient operation of the appraisal process requires lesson observation to be a confidential process of constructive engagement within an atmosphere of support & co-operation.

Accordingly, observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion, with professionalism, integrity & courtesy, will be evaluated objectively & reported accurately & fairly & will take account of particular circumstances which may affect performance on the day.

The arrangements for classroom observation will be agreed between appraiser & appraisee in advance, will be included in the Planning Statement at the start of the cycle & will include the amount of observation & specify its primary purpose, any particular aspects of the teacher's performance to be assessed, the duration of the observation, when during the performance management cycle the observation will take place & who will conduct the observation.

For the purposes of appraisal, teachers' performance will be observed on an appropriate & reasonable number of occasions & will, as far as possible, be agreed by the appraiser with the appraisee based on the individual circumstances of the teacher & the overall needs of the school. The number & duration of appraisal observations will be in accordance with the schools Classroom Observation & Visits Protocol (attached to this policy), which includes provision for exceptional circumstances where concerns have been raised about a teacher's performance, or where the teacher requests additional observation visits.

The appraisee will be given verbal feedback by at least by the end of the next school day & written feedback within 5 working days, unless circumstances make this impossible.

Headteachers or other leaders with responsibility for learning & teaching standards may also visit classrooms in order to fulfil their school leadership responsibilities. A distinction needs to be made between observation for the purposes of the formal Appraisal process, & school managers' general responsibility to know their school, the staff & the children & support good practice. The length & frequency of visits to classrooms & the notice to be given, will vary depending on specific circumstances but will be in accordance with the school's classroom observation & visits protocol.

The school may use the findings of each classroom visit & observation, including appraisal observations, for other management purposes (for example subject area reviews), thereby seeking to keep the total number of occasions on which teachers are observed to reasonable levels.

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

Other evidence: As well as Classroom Observations, other evidence will be used in the appraisal process in making an assessment of a teacher's overall performance, whether they have met their objectives & their level of competence against the Teacher Standards. Other evidence might include (schools to determine in consultation with staff):

- Self-assessment
- Peer-review
- Pupil progress data
- Pupil attainment data
- Lesson planning and evaluation
- The 'pupil voice' where pupil comments are systematically gathered by school leaders in assessing the quality of teaching and learning
- Recorded information concerning the teacher's conduct, performance and attendance

The latter may only be known to the Headteacher if it is an outcome of formal procedures. If so, the Headteacher may use the information in moderating appraisal outcomes.

Development & Support: Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. 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 & to the on-going professional development needs & priorities of individual teachers.

The schools' CPD programme will be informed by 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, & support agreed for appraisees, maintaining access on an equitable basis.

An account of the training & development needs of teachers including the instances where it did not prove possible to provide any agreed CPD, will form a part of the headteacher's report to the governing body about the operation of the appraisal process in the schools.

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 & support will help the schools to achieve its priorities; &
- b) 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.

Feedback: Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year & 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 development & will:

- give clear feedback to the teacher;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment & discuss the concerns;
- agree any support (eg coaching, mentoring, structured observations), that will be provided to help address developmental needs.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

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. At the end of the cycle, assessment of performance against an objective will be on the basis of the performance criteria set at the beginning of the cycle. Good progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective, even if the performance criteria have not been met in full, will be assessed favourably.

The performance management cycle is annual, but on occasions it may be appropriate to set objectives that will cover a period over more than one cycle. In such cases, the basis on which the progress being made towards meeting the performance criteria for the objective will be assessed at the end of the first cycle & will be recorded in the planning & review statement at the beginning of the cycle.

Appraisers will prepare a draft Appraisal Planning & Review Statement which will be provided to the Headteacher for moderation & to ensure consistency of practice & standards. At this stage the Headteacher may make use of any recorded information concerning the teacher's conduct, performance & attendance in moderating the overall assessment.

The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period - & have the opportunity to comment on - a written appraisal report. The Appraisal Planning & Review Statement will include:

- details of the teacher's objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- an assessment of the teacher's performance of their role & responsibilities against their objectives, & against the relevant professional standards;
- an assessment of the teacher's training & development needs & identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- a recommendation on pay progression where that is relevant (**N.B. - pay recommendations need to be made by 31 December for headteachers & by 31 October for other teachers**);
- a space for the teacher's own comments.

A review meeting will take place to discuss the content of the report & any further action required & to inform objective setting for the next cycle. In some circumstances an interim review meeting may be appropriate.

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

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 their appraisal objectives, having regard to any specific & significant contextual circumstances which might have impacted upon performance, & against the relevant professional standards. Recommendations from teachers' appraisers will be collated & moderated by the Headteacher, who will put forward final recommendations on pay progression to the Governing Body's Pay Committee or other relevant decision-making body. The decision made by the Governing Body's Pay Committee (or other relevant decision-making body) will be based on the statutory criteria set out in the School Teachers' Pay & Conditions Document (STPCD) & the relevant teacher standards, non-statutory guidance from the DfE and the school's own pay policy.

The Governing Body has agreed the pay policy of the school & has considered the implications of the appraisal policy with respect to the arrangements relating to teachers' pay in accordance with the School Teachers' Pay & Conditions Document. The Governing Body will ensure that decisions on pay progression are made by 31 December for head teachers and by 31 October for other teachers.

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 (& 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 a trade union representative.

TEACHERS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES

When dealing with a teacher experiencing difficulties, the objective is to provide support & guidance through the appraisal process in such a way that the teacher's performance improves & 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. In such circumstances advice & support from Human Resources should be sought & the teacher should be advised to seek support from their union representative.

If an appraiser identifies through the appraisal process, or via other sources of information, for example verifiable parental concerns, 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 written feedback to the teacher about the nature & seriousness of the concerns;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment on & 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, & inform the teacher that he/she has the right to be assisted by a representative of an independent trade union or work place colleague, & at any

future meetings where capability will be discussed;

- in consultation with the teacher at the above meeting, an action plan with 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 & when it will be reviewed;
- explain the implications & process if no - or insufficient - improvement is made.

The teacher's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process & a reasonable time given for the teacher's performance to improve. This will depend upon the circumstances, but will be for a specified period of time, for example half a term, with appropriate support as agreed in the Action Plan, in order that the aim of recovering & improving performance can be achieved. During this monitoring period the teacher will be given regular feedback on progress & 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 or head teacher. 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 transition meeting to determine whether formal capability proceedings need to be commenced or the appraisal process remains in place. The teacher may be assisted by a trade union representative or work colleague & will have at least 5 working days notice of the meeting.

In the above circumstances the school will follow the capability procedures as laid out in '**Guidance for Schools - Volume1, Section 14**'.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THIS POLICY

ACAS Code Of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures: In the first instance, issues relating to teacher performance will be managed through the arrangements for Teachers Experiencing Difficulties set out within this policy.

The conduct of any subsequent formal capability process will be undertaken outside the Appraisal process under the separate Capability Procedure & 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 & fairness & will abide by all relevant equality legislation.

Sickness: If long term sickness absence appears to have been triggered by the commencement of monitoring or application of the formal capability procedure, the case will be dealt with in accordance with the school's absence policy & will normally be referred to the occupational health service to assess the member of staff's health & fitness for continued employment & 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 physician will always be taken into account 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 & appraisal or capability cases are related it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

Confidentiality & Professional Relationships: The appraisal & 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 with access to the appraisee's plan recorded in her/his statements. This will be done upon request & only where this is necessary to enable the line manager to discharge her/his line management responsibilities. Appraisees will be consulted on requests for access to statements in the context of this policy.

The process of gathering evidence for appraisal will not compromise normal professional relationships between teachers. The governing body recognises that the reviewer will consult with, & seek to secure the agreement of, the appraisee before seeking information from other colleagues about the work of the appraisee.

However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the headteacher & governing body to quality-assure the operation & effectiveness of the appraisal system. The headteacher or appropriate leadership colleague might, for example, review all teachers' objectives & written appraisal records personally - to check consistency of approach & expectation between different appraisers. The headteacher might also wish to endorse or amend any pay recommendations that have been made before they are considered by the Governing Body's Pay Committee (or other relevant decision-making body).

Monitoring & Evaluation: The governing body & headteacher will monitor the operation & effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements.

Retention: The governing body & head teacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years & then destroyed.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

The Governing Body & school leadership are committed to ensuring that classroom observation for appraisal purposes is developmental & supportive & that those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity & courtesy;
- evaluate objectively;
- report accurately & fairly;
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained.

Classroom observation for appraisal purposes: The amount of classroom observation arranged for any teacher for appraisal purposes will be proportionate to need, having regard to the individual circumstances of the teacher & the needs of the school, but will not be excessive.

'Proportionate to need' means it will take place on an appropriate & reasonable number of occasions agreed, as far as possible, by the appraiser with the appraisee, based on the individual circumstances of the teacher & the overall needs of the school.

In this school 'proportionate to need' & 'the overall needs of the school' are determined by the Governing Body on the advice of the Headteacher & in consultation with staff. In our schools, following consultation with teaching staff, the Governing Body has determined that one observation for appraisal purposes for each teacher each term would meet the needs of the school & the appraisal process, unless concerns about performance identify the need for additional observations. In general we consider that each observation should be no longer than one lesson.

The arrangements for classroom observation for appraisal purposes will be included in the planning & review statement.

Where evidence emerges about the appraisee's teaching performance which gives rise to concern during the appraisal cycle, classroom observations may be arranged in addition to those recorded at the beginning of the cycle, subject to determination at a meeting between appraiser, appraisee & headteacher or member of the school leadership team with a view to addressing any such concern.

Although such classroom observation is undertaken for appraisal purpose, other information gathered during the observation will be used, as appropriate, for a variety of purposes including to inform school self-evaluation & school improvement strategies in accordance with the school's commitment to streamlining data collection & minimising bureaucracy & workload burdens on staff.

In keeping with the commitment to supportive & developmental classroom observation, observations will be agreed between appraiser & appraisee in advance & be included in the appraisal planning statement.

Classroom observations for appraisal purposes will only be undertaken by persons with QTS. In addition, in this school such classroom observation will only be undertaken by teachers informed by the school's published appraisal policy on how to prepare for & conduct observations, & on how to give constructive supportive feedback in the context of professional dialogue between colleagues.

Verbal feedback will be given as soon as possible after the observation & by at least the end of the next school day following the observation taking place. 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 & review statement these should also be covered in the written feedback & the appropriate action will be taken by the appraiser or the issues will be referred to the appropriate member of the school leadership team to determine appropriate action in consultation with the appraiser & appraisee.

The written record of feedback includes the date on which the observation took place, the lesson observed & 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.

Other classroom visits by school leaders: In schools, the headteacher will seek to discharge his/her responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching & learning & other leadership responsibilities through the planned classroom observations for appraisal purposes. However the headteacher (& other designated school leaders) may undertake other classroom visits in order to fulfil their school leadership responsibilities. In this school such classroom visits will be carried out by the headteacher supported by members of the leadership team. These classroom visits will only inform the appraisal process where concerns arise which merit the revision of the appraisal planning statement. If such concerns arise the school leader concerned will meet with the appraiser & appraisee to discuss them & agree any revision to the appraisal planning statement.

