



- The School at Hackney City Farm -

Teaching Staff Appraisal Policy

INTRODUCTION

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 policy applies only to teachers, including Headteachers.

This policy is based on the national revised appraisal arrangements which come into force on 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)

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 school's 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 students, and raise the morale of teachers, by motivating teachers to up-date 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.

APPLICATION OF THE APPRAISAL POLICY

This policy applies 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. NQTs) or teachers on capability procedures.

Appraisal in this school/academy 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.

THE APPRAISAL PERIOD

The appraisal period will run for 1 school year, normally from the start of the academic year to the end of the summer term.

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

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

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 normally 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.

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 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.

SETTING OBJECTIVES

The Headteacher's objectives will be set by the Governing Body after consultation with the external adviser and the Headteacher.

The appraiser should not set numerical targets, only objectives.

An objective might be to work towards a general aspirational target, based on pupil progress, and could be to contribute to pupil progress. However, as this is affected by so many other factors outside of the teacher's control, it is unrealistic to make this a "target". An objective has to be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time Bound, and will be appropriate to the appraisee's role and level of experience. Agreeing to a % target which may be affected by other factors outside the teacher's control may not be achievable or realistic.

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 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 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 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 objectives. Appraisers need to give due regard to the Governors obligations under the 2010 Equalities Act, and in particular the duty of reasonable adjustments to disabled teachers and those with long term health issues who would count as disabled under the Act. 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.

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 2011. 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 other body

that are relevant to them. For QTLS holders, that may include the overarching professional standards for teachers in the lifelong learning sector, held by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service.

OBSERVATION

The school believes that 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.

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 cooperation.

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 by at least by the end of the next school day and written feedback within 5 working days, unless circumstances make this impossible.

For the purposes 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/academy's observation protocol, which includes provision for exceptional circumstances where concerns have been raised about a teacher's performance, or where the teacher requests additional observation visits.

Headteachers 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 school's 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.

The 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.

DEVELOPMENT AND 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 and to the on-going professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

The school's/academy'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, will form a 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:

the training and support will help the school/academy 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.

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

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.

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 teacher's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives, and against 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 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.

TEACHERS 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, support will be offered as soon as possible, without waiting for the formal annual assessment.

The Headteacher/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/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/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 standard required
- 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 assisted by a trade union representative or work colleague and will have at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting.

A portfolio of evidence of support should be made available 5 days prior to the initial meeting. The formal stage of the Capability procedure may also be invoked before any informal discussions or counselling, where it is considered appropriate due to the seriousness of the concerns.

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.

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 with access to the appraisee's plan recorded in her/his statements. This will be done upon request and 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 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.

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 an assessment of the impact of these policies on:

- Race.
- Sex.
- Sexual orientation.
- Disability.
- Religion and beliefs.

- Age.
- Part-time status.
- Maternity and pregnancy.

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

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.