



The Skills for Life Trust

Appraising Performance

September 2019

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Ratified: December 2019

1.0 APPLICATION OF THE APPRAISAL POLICY

1.1 This policy applies to the CEO, Headteachers, Head of Primary Education, Support Staff and to all Teachers (qualified or unqualified) employed at the academy trust except those on contracts of less than one term and those undergoing induction (i.e. newly qualified teachers) and those who are subject to capability procedures.

1.2 This appraisal process will not be used as a substitute for the informal stage of the capability procedure. Capability is subject to a separate policy and procedure.

1.3 All aspects of the teacher appraisal cycle should be arranged within teacher directed time, not PPA time.

2.0 PURPOSE & ETHOS

2.1 This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of support staff, teachers, the CEO and Headteachers for supporting their development within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision and performance. The framework will also address the professional needs of each member of staff.

2.2 Where a member of staff is eligible for pay progression, the assessment of performance throughout the cycle, against the performance criteria specified in the statement, will be the basis on which the recommendation is made by the reviewer.

2.3 The Headteacher will use this information to form a judgement of whether progression should be granted or not.

2.4 This policy aims to embed coaching as an ethos for staff to help them develop their professional performance. Teachers will focus on attaining the Teacher Standards and will be supported by the leadership team and middle leaders through ongoing evidence collection against these standards. The intention is to cut down on the workload required for teachers to gather evidence and to focus their attention on the pursuit of excellent teaching rather than arbitrary objectives.

2.5 Coaching is defined as "A one-to-one conversation focused on the enhancement of learning and development through increasing self-awareness and a sense of personal responsibility where the coach facilitates the self-directed learning of the coaches through questioning, active listening and appropriate challenge in a supportive and encouraging climate." Christian van Nieuwerburgh, 2012

2.6 The policy requires Teachers and Senior Leaders to engage fully and meaningfully in their own professional development and offers a platform to seek out new techniques, methods and strategies in order that pupil outcomes will improve.

3.0 THE APPRAISAL PERIOD

3.1 The performance of staff will be reviewed annually. Performance planning and reviews will be completed for all teaching staff by 31 October and for Headteachers by 31 December. Support staff annual reviews will take place in term 1 at Warren Wood Primary Academy, Hilltop, Walderslade Girls' School and Greenacre Academy. Support staff annual reviews will take place in term 4 at Chantry Community Academy.

3.2 The appraisal period will run for twelve months normally from September to September except for the case of support staff at Chantry Community Academy where it will run from March to March.

3.3 Members of staff 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.

3.4 Where a member of staff starts their employment within the trust part way through a period, the Headteacher shall determine the length of the first period for that member of staff, with a view to bringing the period into line with the period for other staff as soon as possible.

3.5 Where a member of staff transfers to a new post within the academy trust part way through a period, the Headteacher shall determine whether the period shall begin again and whether to change the appraiser.

4.0 APPOINTING APPRAISERS

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

4.2 Headteacher

4.2.1 The Headteacher will be appraised by the CEO and the Chair of the local Governing Body.

4.2.2 The CEO will be appraised by the Academy Trust Board, supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced external advisor who has been appointed by the Board for that purpose. Senior Trust members will be appraised by the CEO.

4.3 Appraisers

4.3.1 The choice of the appraiser is for the Headteacher to decide. Where a member of staff has an objection to the Headteacher's choice, their concerns will be carefully considered but the overriding decision lies with the Headteacher. All appraisers of teachers appointed by the Headteacher will have current or recent teaching experience and should hold QTS.

4.3.2 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.

4.3.3 If the Headteacher appoints an appraiser who is not the member of staff'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.

4.3.4 A moderation process ensures all appraisers are working to the same standards.

4.3.5 Appraisers must take into account the individual teachers circumstances, including any disability when setting objectives

4.3.6 Trust staff will be appraised by their line manager.

5.0 SETTING OBJECTIVES OR USING STANDARDS

5.1 Teachers will be expected to meet the Teacher Standards, support the SFL principles and demonstrate SFL values. During the Initial Appraisal Meeting, the Appraisee will be coached by the Appraiser to reflect on the Teacher Standards, SFL principles and SFL values to assess which areas will be the focus of their CPL. The Appraisee and Appraiser will seek to agree a series of actions to address any areas of development.

5.2 Members of the Leadership Team and Headteachers will be expected to use the Head Teacher standards as a framework to develop their practise as well as support the SFL principles and demonstrate SFL values. The Headteacher standards are designed as a developmental tool towards excellence. "They therefore should not be used as a checklist or as a baseline" (DfE National standards of excellence for Headteachers; January 2015).

5.3 The Headteacher's appraisal will be conducted by the CEO or person nominated by the CEO and the chair of the local Governing Body unless delegated by the CEO.

5.4 The CEO's objectives will be set by the appraisal sub-group of the Trust Board.

5.5 When objectives are to be set, they will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set will be Challenging, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the Appraisee's role and level of experience. Appraisees may at any point amend their comments alongside their objectives. Should their circumstances or role change, a member of staff should request to meet with their Appraisee to review their objectives.

5.6 UPR Teachers may complete a UPR proposal form to outline how they plan to meet the requirements of a UPR teacher at the Headteachers' discretion.

5.7 TLR holders will discuss the actions they intend to take in relation to their area of responsibility. Where a member of staff is a jointly responsible or second in charge for an area, they are to have the appropriate level of input for the development of that area.

5.8 Teaching Assistants will be expected to meet the Teaching Assistant Standards (June 2016), support the SFL principles and demonstrate SFL values. During the Initial Appraisal Meeting, the Appraisee will be coached by the Appraiser to reflect on the Teaching Assistant Standards, SFL principles and SFL values to assess which areas will be the focus of their CPL. The Appraisee and Appraiser will seek to agree a series of actions to address any areas of development.

5.9 Non classroom based support staff will have 3 objectives which could reflect team goals, personal development or sustained performance of a role. They will also be expected to support the SFL principles and demonstrate SFL values.

5.10 Whilst considering objectives, the Appraisee should consider CPL, training, support and interventions which may be necessary to achieve their objectives.

5.11 It is for the academy to decide on what is considered to be a reasonable number of objectives up to a maximum of 3, in discussion with the employee.

5.12 Though appraisal is an assessment of overall performance, objectives cannot cover the full range of roles/responsibilities of a member of staff. For those with objectives, the objectives will, therefore, focus on the priorities for a member of staff for the cycle. Failure of an objective will mean failure of appraisal. However, in extenuating circumstances supported by hard and compelling evidence, it may be possible for a failed objective to be supported. The Trust recognises that there are circumstances outside the teacher's control that may significantly affect success.

5.13 As far as possible objectives should be agreed between Appraiser and Appraisee.

5.14 Staff may register objections on the appraisal record if objectives are not agreed.

6.0 REVIEWING PERFORMANCE

6.1 Learning Walks

6.1 Learning Walks, as part of whole school or department review will offer Areas for Development.

6.2 Learning Walks and drop ins will be carried out in a supportive fashion, with professionalism, integrity and courtesy, will be evaluated objectively and reported accurately and fairly and should take account of particular circumstances which may affect performance on the day.

6.3 Verbal feedback will be provided on an ongoing basis as learning walks are a regular feature of support in the academies.

6.4 The CEO and Headteachers or other leaders with responsibility for learning and teaching standards may “drop in” or undertake other learning walks 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 learning walks, and the notice to be given, will vary depending on specific circumstances. For teachers, throughout the appraisal period, evidence will be recorded by middle and senior leaders which will demonstrate that the teaching standards have been met.

6.5 For the purpose of professional development, feedback about learning walks and work scrutiny should be developmental and generate agreed areas of development.

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

6.7 Learning Walks and Drop ins will replace Formal Observation to inform the development of teaching. Should a teacher feel that formal observation would be helpful as a developmental tool, they are welcome to request this.

7.0 CPD

7.1 Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. The Academy Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all members of staff take responsibility for improving their performance through appropriate professional development, through action enquiry and training sessions. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the on-going professional development needs and priorities of individuals.

7.2 An account of the training and development needs of teachers will form a part of the Headteacher’s annual report to the governing body about the operation of the appraisal process in the school.

7.3 With regard to the provision of CPL 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/academy to achieve its priorities;
and
- b) the CPL identified is essential for an Appraisee to meet their objectives or complete their actions in pursuit of the relevant standards.

8.0 ASSESSMENT, REVIEW & DEVELOPMENT

8.1 Each member of staff’s performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the Headteacher, the CEO or delegate person will liaise with the Chair of the local Governing body.

8.2 For support staff, Informal Reviews will be conducted throughout the cycle to assess progress towards meeting objectives and to discuss intervention or support that may be required. Any changes to objectives will need to be agreed by the Headteacher.

8.3 For Teachers, Informal Appraisal Reviews will be conducted in terms 3 and 5. A coaching approach will consider the attainment of the teaching standards, actions undertaken since the last meeting and identify areas which are to be addressed and how CPL and support will help the teacher to meet the Teacher Standards. During this informal review, UPR teachers will review reflect on their UPR proposal which was submitted at the start of the appraisal period and TLR holders will discuss the impact they have had in relation to their area of responsibility.

8.4 For Leadership Team members, Informal Appraisal Reviews will be conducted in terms 3 and 5. A coaching approach will consider the actions they have taken in relation to their development against the Headteacher Standards.

8.5 Within one week of each Informal Appraisal Review meeting, the Appraiser will summarise the discussion and list the agreed actions in writing. The Appraisee will then be able to add to this report if they wish to.

8.6 In addition to Appraisal Reviews, Appraisee can request coaching sessions in terms 2 and 4 to problem solve any issues relating to their proposed actions, UPR proposal or TLR area of responsibility.

8.7 The member of staff will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period – and have the opportunity to comment on and append comments to the written appraisal report. The appraisal report will include:

- details of any objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- an assessment of their own performance of their role and responsibilities against *their objectives or against the relevant standards;
- a recommendation on pay where that is relevant (**N.B. – pay decisions need to be made by 31 December for Headteachers and by 31 October for other teachers – please refer to the schools pay policy**);
- a space for their own comments;

8.8 The annual appraisal meeting will take place to discuss the content of the report and any further action required and to inform the next cycle.

8.9 This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed on an informal basis during the cycle.

9.0 Staff experiencing difficulties

9.1 When a member of staff is experiencing difficulties, support and guidance will be provided through the appraisal process. Where it is clear that a member of staff's personal circumstances is leading to difficulties at work, appropriate support should be offered at the earliest opportunity.

9.2 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 be referred to the occupational health service who will assess the member of staff's health and fitness for continued employment and whether either continuing with informal monitoring or formal procedures is deemed to be appropriate.

9.3 If the appraiser identifies through the appraisal process or through other sources of information, parental complaints for example, that the difficulties experienced by a teacher are such that, if not rectified could lead to the capability procedure, the appraiser will, as part of the appraisal process, meet the member of staff to:

- give clear written feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the member of staff the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns;
- give the member of staff at least five working days' notice that a meeting will be held to discuss targets for improvement alongside a programme of support and remind the teacher that they have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at any future meetings where capability will be discussed;
- agree and establish, in consultation with the member of staff, an action plan with support that will help to remedy specific concerns;
- make clear, how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed; and
- explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made.

9.4 The member of staff's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and a reasonable time given for the member of staff's performance to improve. During this monitoring period, the member of staff will be given regular feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate. If sufficient progress is made, the member of staff should be informed of this at a formal meeting and the appraisal process will continue as normal. If no, or insufficient improvement has been made, the colleague will be invited to a transition meeting to determine whether formal capability proceedings will be invoked.

10.0 Pay Progression - Teachers

10.1 Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the recommendation made by the appraiser will be based on the assessment of their performance against the relevant standards and the degree to which they have engaged meaningfully in their professional development. 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 and the relevant teacher standards.

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

10.3 Support staff should consult the Trust Pay policy regarding pay progression.

10.2 Appeals to annual assessment against pay progression - Teachers

10.2.1 Details of the appeals process are available from the Headteacher or from the HR manager, and will be contained within the Trust's pay policy. Where the CEO or Headteacher has not been recommended for pay progression he/she will be informed by the appropriate governor or trustee.

10.2.2 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 the Headteacher when the head has not been recommended for pay progression) may exercise the right of appeal, assisted by a workplace colleague or a trade union representative.

10.2.3 Support staff should consult the Trust Pay policy regarding appeals.

11.0 CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

11.1 The appraisal process 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.

11.2 The process of gathering evidence for the appraisal meeting will not compromise normal professional relationships between members of staff. The governing body recognises that the appraiser will consult with, and seek to secure the agreement of the Appraisee before seeking information from other colleagues about the work of the Appraisee.

11.3 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' actions 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 made.

12.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

12.1 The governing body and Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's/academies appraisal arrangements.

12.2 The Headteacher will provide the governing body with a written report on the operation of the academy's appraisal policy annually. The report will not identify any individual by name. The report should include an assessment of the impact of these policies on:

- Race
- Sex
- Gender identity
- Disability
- Religion and Beliefs
- Age
- Part-time Status
- Maternity and Pregnancy

12.3 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.

13.0 RETENTION

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