



# Teacher Appraisal Policy

## Guidelines and Procedural Document

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### 1. Purpose

This appraisal policy introduces the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the head teacher, for supporting their development within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers. The teacher capability policy sets out the arrangements that will apply when teachers fall below the levels of competence that are expected of them.

Following consultation with governing bodies, head teachers and teaching trades unions this policy is effective from September 2012 and will be reviewed in August 2015.

### 2. Application of the policy

The teacher appraisal policy applies to the head teacher and to all teachers employed by the school or local authority, except those on fixed term contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (*i.e.* NQTs) and those who are subject to the teacher capability policy.

### 3. Policy statement

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. The process will also include open and honest discussions between the appraiser and appraisee.

### 4. The appraisal period

The appraisal period will run for twelve months from Autumn half term 1 to Autumn half term 1.

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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.

There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when teachers begin or end employment with a school or local authority or when unattached teachers change post within the same authority e.g. to support staff who have an untypical working pattern.

Where a teacher starts their employment at the school part-way through a cycle, the length of the first cycle will need to be determined with a view to bringing the cycle in line with other teachers as soon as possible.

Where a teacher transfers to a new post within the school, their objectives should be reviewed at the appropriate point and continue with the same appraiser until the end of the academic year when the situation would be reviewed.

## **5. Appointing appraisers**

All appraisers should be appropriately trained in appraisal procedures.

### **5.1 Head teacher**

The head teacher 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 head teacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of two/three members of the governing body.

Where a head teacher is of the opinion that any of the governors appointed by the governing body is unsuitable to act as the appraiser, they may submit a written request to the chair of governors for that governor to be replaced stating the reasons for the request.

### **5.2 Teachers**

The head teacher will decide who will appraise other teachers.

Where a teacher is of the opinion that the appraiser, appointed by the head teacher, is unsuitable to act as the appraiser, they may submit a written request to the head teacher for the appraiser to be replaced stating the reasons for the request. All appraisers appointed by the head teacher will be qualified teachers and will have current or recent teaching experience.

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

who will have the appraisal delegated to them will have the appropriate background knowledge, skills and training to undertake the role.

## **6. Setting objectives**

The head teacher's objectives will be set by the governing body after consultation with the external adviser and head teacher. The objectives of teachers will be set by the appraiser appointed by the head teacher in consultation with the teacher.

Objectives for each teacher will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives should be clearly defined with appraisers and appraisees clear what success will look like and how progress will be measured. The objectives set for each teacher, will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the teacher's role. The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change. Appraisees may append their comments alongside objectives.

The number of objectives set for each teacher should be reasonable, and normally this will be a maximum of three objectives.

In setting the objectives, appraisers will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in the context of roles and responsibilities.

A moderation system should be implemented to ensure all appraisers are working to the same standards when setting and reviewing objectives.

The objectives set for each teacher will, if achieved, contribute to the school's plans for improving the school's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at that school. Consideration should also be given to take into account the professional aspirations of the teacher when setting objectives.

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. All teachers should be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called "Teachers' Standards" published in July 2011. The head teacher or governing body (as appropriate) will need to consider whether certain teachers should also be assessed against other sets of standards published by the Secretary of State 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.

It is recommended that in addition to setting objectives at the appraisal meeting, consideration be given to each teacher completing a “self review” against teacher standards. This will allow the appraisal process to consider overall performance as well as performance against agreed objectives.

## **7. Reviewing performance - observation**

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. All observation will be carried out in a professional and supportive fashion with a clear focus linked to agreed objectives.

Teachers’ performance will be observed but the amount and type of classroom observation will depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the school. Classroom observation will be carried out by those with QTS. In addition to formal observation, head teachers or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards may “drop in” in order to evaluate the standards of teaching and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained. The length and frequency of “drop in” observations will vary depending on specific circumstances. In many cases one formal observation may be sufficient for appraisal purposes.

Teachers (including the head teacher) who have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

## **8. Development and support**

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. A culture should be encouraged in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

## **9. Feedback**

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after any observation that contributes to the appraisal process has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback following a lesson observation could result in a judgement for the lesson e.g. inadequate/adequate/good/outstanding. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher’s performance the appraiser/line manager will refer the matter to the head teacher or member of the senior leadership team.

The head teacher or member of the senior leadership team will meet the teacher informally and:

- 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;

The objective is to provide support and guidance through the appraisal process in such a way that the teacher's performance improves and any concerns are resolved.

If the head teacher or member of the senior leadership team is satisfied that there are no concerns about the teacher's performance, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through that process. The teacher will be notified of the need to sustain improvement.

#### **10. Transition to informal capability**

If at any time the head teacher or member of the senior leadership team is satisfied that there are concerns about the teacher's performance, that can't be addressed through the normal processes of professional support e.g. appraisal, the teacher will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the teacher capability procedure, and will be invited to an informal capability meeting.

#### **11. Annual assessment**

Every teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the head teacher, 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 and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year in informal interim meetings which will take place e.g. once a term or through a mid-point review.

The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period a written appraisal report e.g. by 31 October (31 December for the head teacher). 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 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 recommendation on pay where that is relevant (NB – pay recommendations need to be made by 31 December for head teachers and by 31 October for other teachers);
- space for the teacher to comment in writing on the written report

## **12. General principles underlying this policy**

- **Confidentiality**

The appraisal processes will be treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the head teacher and governing body to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system e.g. the head teacher or appropriate colleague might review all teachers' objectives and written appraisal records personally, in order to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers. The head teacher might also wish to be aware of any pay recommendations that have been made. Please speak to HR Services for further guidance on this.

- **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 head teacher.

- **Delegation**

Normal rules apply in respect of the delegation of functions by governing bodies, head teachers and local authorities.

- **Monitoring and evaluation**

The governing body and head teacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements.

- **Retention**

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

- **Equality and diversity statement**

The Governing Body is committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity in everything we do including service delivery and employment. Further details can be obtained by referring to the Equality and Diversity in Employment Policy Statement available on the Council's Intranet.

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