

APPRAISAL POLICY FOR SUPPORT STAFF

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of support staff. It also contains the principles for supporting high quality personal development within the context of each school / academy plan for improving educational provision and performance and the standards expected of all employees.
- 1.2 Appraisal is intended to be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all support staff have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It will help to ensure that all employees are able to continually improve their professional practice and develop within their roles.
- 1.3 Any concerns about performance will be addressed at the earliest possible opportunity. If concerns are such that serious performance concerns cannot be resolved through appraisal arrangements then consideration may have to be given to commencement of the capability procedure.
- 1.4 This policy is intended to reflect the principles of fairness, equity and confidentiality.
- 1.5 Whilst a template is available, schools / academies are free to use their own paper based or on-line systems in order to capture appraisal information in the most appropriate format for their circumstances, on the understanding that this is compliant with the framework of this policy.
- 1.6 Decisions regarding pay progression are based on satisfactory performance. The default position is that all support staff will be able to achieve satisfactory performance. Satisfactory performance means successful completion of an appraisal period and no live formal disciplinary penalties on record.
- 1.7 Subject to satisfactory performance, as evidenced through annual appraisal, support employees will progress through the relevant pay scale until they reach the top of scale.

2. The appraisal period

- 2.1 The window for appraisals for support staff across The Trust will be open between 1 June and 31st October in recognition that some appraisal and target setting meetings are better completed before the summer recess, whilst others cannot be undertaken until October. Each school / academy will determine at a local level when appraisals are carried out and all will be completed before 31st October.
- 2.2 Incremental pay progression will be reviewed between 1 September and 31 October annually with decisions applying from 1 September.

3. Appointing appraisers

- 3.1 The Headteacher (for the Central Team the term CEO replaces the term Headteacher throughout this policy) will decide who will appraise support staff. It is expected that appraisers will be those who hold a management role in relation to the staff member, unless the Headteacher nominates another suitable appraiser.
- 3.2 In all cases an appraiser will hold an appropriate position in the school / academy and have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to undertake the role. The Headteacher will ensure that their number of appraisees is manageable.
- 3.3 If a member of support staff has a concern about their nominated appraiser they may write to the Headteacher to request a replacement, providing reasons for this request. Where legitimate concerns are raised these will be considered by the Headteacher who may appoint an alternative appraiser. The decision of the Headteacher will be final.

- 3.4 The appraiser will conduct all aspects of the appraisal, including making a recommendation to the Headteacher inform pay progression for support staff who are eligible.

4. The Planning Meeting

- 4.1 The annual planning meeting will include:
- setting / agreeing objectives;
 - determining evidence to be collected;
 - defining success criteria;
 - identifying professional development

5. Setting objectives

- 5.1 Objectives for each member of support staff will be set as soon as practicable after the start of each appraisal period.
- 5.2 Each school / academy operates a system of moderation led by the Headteacher to ensure that all appraisers are working to the same standards and to ensure that objectives are consistent between employees with similar experience and levels of responsibility.
- 5.3 The objectives set for each member of support staff will:
- Be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound. The measure of success for meeting the objectives and how progress will be measured will be as clear as possible.
 - Pay regard to what can reasonably be expected of the employee in the context of their role, responsibilities and experience and be consistent with the principle of achieving a satisfactory work/life balance.
 - Be appropriate to the employee's role and level of experience.
 - Be fair and equitable.
- 5.4 The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives. Where that is not possible the employee may refer the matter to a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team who has responsibility for overseeing appraisal. Where dispute occurs the final decision on objectives rests with the Headteacher.
- 5.5 Objectives may be revised if circumstances change. Any amendment to the objectives or supporting requirements will be recorded in writing and the expectations of the employee clarified.
- 5.6 The objectives set for each employee will, if achieved, contribute to the school / academy plans for improving educational provision and performance and improving the education of students.
- 5.7 The agreed objectives will contain a description of what success should look like and identify the support/professional development required.

6. The Objectives

- 6.1 Full time support employees will normally have 3 objectives each year, but by agreement this number may be varied. It is recognised that some objectives incorporate greater scope and breadth than others, but in all cases will address the key areas of professional practice.
- 6.2 Where support staff have returned to work following a period of extended absence, objectives and timescales may be adjusted as part of the reintegration to work and adjustments may need to be taken into account when setting objectives for support staff who have a disability.

- 6.3 All staff will have equal access to the support required in the areas identified for development.
- 6.4 The expected level of performance will be reflected and specified in the wording of the success criteria. The success criteria may include a focus on the following, taking into account the responsibilities of the support staff member's post:
- Impact on student progress;
 - Impact on wider achievements for students;
 - Improvements in specific elements of practice;
 - Impact on effectiveness of other staff;
 - Wider contribution to the improvement of the school / academy / Trust

7. Development and support

- 7.1 The Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all support staff take responsibility for improving their practice through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to improvement priorities and to the ongoing needs and priorities of individual employees.
- 7.2 Each CPD programme will be informed by development needs identified as part of the appraisal process.
- 7.3 The Headteacher will, as far as possible, make appropriate budgetary provision for development needs arising from the appraisal process.
- 7.4 Where CPD is identified as key to the improvement of an individual, account will be taken of where it has not been possible for an employee to fully meet the performance required, against their agreed priorities, if the resources have not been available. This will be recorded at a review meeting.

8. Feedback

- 8.1 Support staff will receive developmental feedback on their performance throughout the year through a formal interim review and informal feedback as appropriate.
- 8.2 Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention. It is expected in the main that appraisal will highlight strengths and contribute to school / academy / Trust improvement in a developmental way.

9. Interim review meeting

- 9.1 It is good practice to hold a short formal mid-year meeting to review progress towards objectives and the impact of support provided in order to ensure that plans are on track and there are no issues which require attention, particularly those which left unattended could impact on the appraisal outcome to ensure that there are no surprises at year end..
- 9.2 Where there is lack of progress towards objectives, or concerns exist that standards are not being met, and as such there is a risk that the employee's annual appraisal review may result in unsatisfactory performance, and as a result pay progression may not be recommended, this will be made clear to the employee in writing. Relevant support and development will be put in place with the aim of rectifying the situation as soon as possible.

10. Annual assessment

- 10.1 This assessment is the end-point to the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed on a regular basis throughout the year as described above.

- 10.2 The annual assessment will clearly relate to the success criteria set for each objective and the expectations of the role as outlined in the job profile (job description and person specification)
- 10.3 The content of the appraisal report will be drawn up following discussion between the appraiser and the appraisee.
- 10.4 At the annual assessment point there will be:
- details of the employee's objectives for the appraisal period;
 - an assessment of performance against the objectives
 - an assessment of training and development needs including the impact of professional development undertaken and any further action;
 - a recommendation to inform pay progression.
- 10.5 The employee will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period a written appraisal report and will have the opportunity to comment on this in writing.
- 10.6 The assessment of performance and of professional development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period.

11. Appeals

- 11.1 If appraisees are not satisfied with their appraisal, they should seek to resolve this by discussing the matter informally with the appraiser as soon as possible and in all cases initiate a discussion within 5 working days.
- 11.2 Appraisees have a formal right of appeal and the Pay Policy for support staff contains the procedure for appeals.

12. Support staff experiencing difficulties

- 12.1 When working with a member of staff who is experiencing difficulty the aim is to provide support and guidance through the appraisal process in such a way that performance improves and the problem is resolved, thereby avoiding the need for formal proceedings. Employees who are experiencing difficulties are encouraged to contact their Trade Union representative for advice and support at the earliest opportunity.
- 12.2 Where it is apparent that an employee's personal circumstances are leading to difficulties, support will be offered as soon as possible and without waiting for a formal review meeting.
- 12.3 Before initiating this procedure for staff experiencing difficulties, the appraiser will discuss their concerns with the Headteacher and gain their agreement to enter into these informal proceedings. The Headteacher will not be involved in the informal process; however they will nominate a member of the Senior Leadership Team to maintain an overview of the support provided and progress being made.
- 12.4 The appraiser will give clear feedback to the employee about the nature and seriousness of the concerns and give them an opportunity to comment and discuss the matter. The appraiser will arrange a further meeting at a mutually convenient time, giving 5 working days' notice to meet the employee to discuss targets for improvement and any support needed to address the concerns. Employees may bring a trade union representative or work colleague to this meeting to support them.
- 12.5 In consultation with the employee at the meeting a support plan will be established. The appraiser will make it clear how progress will be monitored, when it will be reviewed and the implications if insufficient or no improvement is made.

- 12.6 The documented support plan (a template support plan is found at Appendix 1) will include:
- The aspects of concern;
 - The standard to be achieved
 - The evidence base which will be used to measure progress and achievement
 - Attendance at training and support to meet the standards required;
 - The review period. This will be a minimum of 6 working weeks and a maximum of 10 working weeks depending on the individual circumstances, given what is reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances.
 - The date of a mid-term interim and final review
- 12.7 In addition to the formal mid-term review, the employee will be given regular / informal feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support plan if appropriate.
- 12.8 At the end of the review period it is normally the case that either:
- performance has improved;
 - improvements are being made, but more time is needed to assess. In these cases a further review period should be agreed, the outcome at which time would normally be that performance has improved or matters are still not improving;
 - matters are not improving
- 12.9 Before any further action is taken, the appraiser will discuss and agree the next steps with the Headteacher.
- 12.10 If sufficient progress is made such that the employee is performing at a level that indicates there is no longer a possibility of capability procedures being invoked, the employee should be informed at a formal meeting with the appraiser at which they have a right to be accompanied by their trade union representative or work colleague. Following this meeting the appraisal process will continue as normal.
- 12.11 If no, or limited improvement has been made over the period the appraisal process will be suspended whilst the capability procedure is initiated. The employee will be informed of this decision at a formal meeting with the appraiser at which they have a right to be accompanied by their trade union representative or work colleague
- 12.12 The employee will receive written confirmation of the outcome.

13. Transition to capability

- 13.1 Transition to the capability procedure is not automatic. Where performance concerns emerge, the nature and seriousness of those concerns will be discussed as soon as possible with the teacher.
- 13.2 Every effort will be made to resolve performance concerns within the appraisal process through the provision of targeted additional support agreed in discussion with the employee as outlined above.
- 13.3 Employees will not be placed on the formal capability procedure before they have had time to take on board the concerns raised about their performance and given an opportunity to change their practice with support or training.

14. Grievances

- 14.1 Where a member of support staff raises a grievance during the appraisal process, the appraisal process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and appraisal or capability cases are related it will normally be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently and a grievance should not interrupt the prescribed timescales.

15. Confidentiality and retention of records and the General Data Protection Regulation

- 15.1 The appraisal process and the statements generated within it will be treated as confidential at all times. The Headteacher will ensure that access to appraisal records is restricted to enable the manager to undertake their line management responsibility and that appropriate arrangements are in place for all appraisal records to be retained securely and confidentially in accordance with the retention schedule.
- 15.2 All data within this policy will be processed in line with the requirements and protections set out in the General Data Protection Regulation.

Review cycle:	Annually
Next review due:	August 2021
Policy owner	Head of Human Resources
Approving body:	Board of Trustees
Equality Analysis reviewed:	9.7.2020

Appendix 1

SUPPORT PLAN

Employee..... Appraiser Meeting date

Nature of concern: <i>Explain what the performance concern is</i>				
What is the standard to achieve?	Which skills need to be developed?	What support is needed?	What evidence will be used to decide if the standard has been achieved?	Timescale
<i>Specific, clear targets should be used so that all parties are completely clear what is required.</i>	<i>Focus on what needs to change required to meet the standard</i>	<i>Both parties should come with ideas on support and opportunities to meet the standards for example CPD, peer support,</i>	<i>What will be used to determine progress and achievement</i>	<i>Target achievement date</i>

Interim review (s) scheduled for: (date, time, venue)

Final review scheduled for: (date, time, venue)