

SUTTON CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL



Policy for Appraising Teacher Performance

Version 2017v1

Approved by staff February 2019

Approved by Governors February 2019

To be reviewed annually

Policy for Appraising Teacher Performance

The Governing Body of Sutton CE (VC) Primary School adopted this policy on Wednesday 8 November 2017. The policy will be subject to review by the Governing Body annually.

1. Purpose

The policy sets out how our school will work with individual teachers to ensure they are supported to deliver the best possible educational outcomes for children and young people. Appraisal in this school will be a supportive and developmental process, applied consistently and designed to ensure that 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 professional teachers.

Regular appraisals will give the teacher and their line manager the opportunity to develop a clear view of progress, recognise achievements, set new objectives and identify the support and development needed in order to meet them. Appraisal provides an excellent opportunity to recognise 'a job well done' and the appraisal process will have a direct link to consideration for pay progression.

In some cases, the appraisal process will also be used to address concerns that are raised about a teacher's performance. If concerns cannot be resolved through the appraisal process, consideration will be given to whether to commence the capability procedure.

2. Application of the policy

This policy applies to the Headteacher and to all qualified teachers employed at the school/academy except the following:

- teachers on contracts of less than one term;
- newly qualified teachers i.e. those in their induction year;
- teachers for whom the capability process is considered more appropriate.

Where a teacher is contracted to work at two or more schools, the Headteacher may agree that it would be more appropriate for the teacher to be appraised by another school on our behalf.

Teachers are entitled to be appraised on all aspects of their job role.

3. Definitions

Throughout the policy, the following definitions will apply:

- i) 'Senior Manager' : a member of the Leadership Group, as defined by the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, delegated by the Headteacher to deal with an appraisal and/or capability matter under these procedures. A senior manager may only make a decision to issue a sanction up to and including a final written warning.
- ii) 'Lack of capability': circumstances where an employee consistently fails to perform his/her duties to a wholly satisfactory standard.

4. The appraisal period

The appraisal period will run for **twelve months** from 1 November to 31 October.

Teachers who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year will receive an appraisal in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of the review period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

Where a teacher starts their employment at the school part-way through an appraisal cycle, the Headteacher or, in the case of the Headteacher, the Governing Body, will determine the length of the first cycle 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 of the Headteacher, the Governing Body will determine whether the cycle should begin again and whether to change the appraiser.

4. Appointing appraisers

All appraisers, other than those responsible for appraising the Headteacher, will be qualified teachers with current or recent teaching experience. Appraisers will receive training in order to carry out their role effectively.

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 setting his/her objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group normally comprising three members of the Governing Body. Where the Headteacher does not believe one or more of the sub-group is suitable to act as his/her appraiser, s/he may submit a written request to the Chair of Governors for the governor(s) to be replaced, explaining the reason for the request.

Teachers

The choice of appraiser for other teachers rests with the Headteacher. Normally this will be the teacher's line manager.

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.

On an exceptional basis, where a teacher objects to the Headteacher's choice, his/her concerns will be carefully considered and an alternative appraiser may be appointed.

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.

5. Setting objectives

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

Objectives for each teacher covered by the policy will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set will be SMART i.e.

specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound and will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience. 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.

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 educational opportunities of pupils at that school and also enable the professional development of the teacher. For the majority of teachers, we expect that there will be three significant objectives set each year.

Where possible, 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 and it will be recognised that factors outside teachers' control may significantly affect success.

The school operates a system of moderation to ensure that all appraisers are working to the same standards. Objectives will be moderated by the Headteacher 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 teacher may record his/her objection to an objective on the planning statement. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.

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 an extended period of 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 specific standards against which their performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. The Headteacher or Governing Body (as appropriate) will need to ensure that all teachers are assessed against the sets of standards published by the Secretary of State in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document as appropriate to their role. 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.

6. Reviewing performance

Observation

This school believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is an important way of assessing teacher performance. It forms part of the professional expectation of all teachers, although observation is not the only way in which performance should be assessed. Where lesson observation is to be used to assess performance, the aim will be to identify strengths and areas for development.

In order to be effective, the school expects observations to be carried out in a supportive manner, with professionalism, integrity and courtesy from all parties. Classroom observation will only be carried out by qualified and experienced teachers. Performance in the classroom will be evaluated objectively and reported accurately and fairly and will take account of particular circumstances which may affect the teacher's performance on the day.

Teachers can expect to be given at least 5 working days' notice of the date and time of the observation and will be provided with verbal feedback by no later than the end of the next

school day. Other than in exceptional circumstances, teachers can expect to receive written feedback within 5 working days.

For the purposes of appraisal, teachers' performance will be observed on an appropriate and reasonable number of occasions. This 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.

This 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.

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

7. 'Drop Ins' and Learning Walks

Head teachers 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 ins" 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.

8. Development and Support

As indicated earlier, 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 sourcing appropriate professional development opportunities, for example through peer observation, visiting other schools, attending courses or engaging with improvement/development projects with other schools/organisations. 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 CPD programme will be informed by the training and development needs identified as part of the appraisal process. In the annual budget planning cycle, the Governing Body will make best efforts to ensure that resources are made available for appropriate training and support agreed for the appraisees. The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that access to CPD support is provided 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:

- a) the training and support will help the school to achieve its priorities; and

- 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.

9. The appraisal meeting

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

The appraisal meeting will be conducted in a supportive and professional manner. As soon as practicable, following the appraisal meeting, the teacher will receive 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;
- an assessment of the teacher's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives, and against the relevant professional 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 (*N.B. – pay recommendations need to be made by 31 December for head teachers and 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 and to inform objective setting for the next cycle. In some circumstances an interim review meeting may be appropriate.

10. Pay progression

The Governing Body will determine the school's Pay Policy on an annual basis in accordance with the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. Decisions on pay progression will be normally made by 31 December for the Headteacher and normally by 31 October for all other teachers.

Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the recommendations made by the appraiser will be based on the assessment of their performance against the agreed objectives. The decision made by the relevant decision-making body will be based on the criteria and guidance contained in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document and the relevant teacher standards.

Where the Headteacher has not been recommended for pay progression s/he 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 (and Headteacher when the Head has not been recommended for pay progression) will be entitled to exercise the right of appeal (see Whole School Pay Policy), assisted by a companion who may be a school-based colleague or a representative of his/her trade union.

11. Teachers experiencing difficulties

When dealing with a teacher experiencing difficulties, the objective will be 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, appropriate support will be offered as soon as possible, without waiting for the formal annual assessment.

Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance the appraiser will meet the teacher to agree a support plan, which will:

- give clear feedback about the areas of concern;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns and establish the likely causes of poor performance including any outside factors;
- identify any training needs/support needed (e.g. coaching, mentoring, monitoring, structured observation including peer observation; and observation of good practice) ;
- clarify the required standards and agree any support that will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
- make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress;
- if it is appropriate to revise objectives, sufficient time will be agreed for improvement.
- the amount of time will reflect the seriousness of the concerns and the appraiser will explain 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 will be given for the teacher's performance to improve. This will depend upon the circumstances but will normally be for a period of four weeks. The aim is to ensure that the teacher can recover and improve his/her performance, so s/he will be provided with appropriate support as agreed in the support plan.

During the monitoring period the teacher will be given regular feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support plan if appropriate. If, at the end of the monitoring period, the appraiser is satisfied that the teacher has made, or is making, sufficient improvement, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through that process. The appraiser and the appraisee will keep a note of any concerns, the support given and the review judgement.

If the appraiser has evidence to show that the teacher is not making progress, s/he should consult the Headteacher so that consideration may be given to whether or not to use the school's capability procedure.

General Principles

This Policy is based on the following principles and good practice guidance:

ACAS Code Of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

The conduct of the formal capability stage will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the ACAS Code of Practice.

Consistency and Fairness

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation.

Sickness

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 normally be referred to the occupational health service to assess the member of staff's health and fitness for continued employment and 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 Headteacher will determine whether the appraisal or capability process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and appraisal or capability cases are related it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

Confidentiality and Professional Relationships

The appraisal and capability processes will be treated with in confidence. 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.

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.

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' objectives and written appraisal records personally – to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers. The Headteacher will also be entitled to review any pay recommendations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Governing Body and Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements via the Headteacher's annual report. The Headteacher will provide the Governing Body with a written report on the operation of the school's appraisal and capability policies, which will include an assessment of the impact of the policies on the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act, 2010 i.e.

- 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 of records

The Governing Body and Headteacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed