

ASTON FENCE J & I SCHOOL



APPRAISAL POLICY

January 2023

Performance management and appraisal A model policy for schools

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1 Introduction

Revised appraisal arrangements came into force with effect from 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).

The Appraisal Regulations set out the principles that apply to teachers (including headteachers) in all maintained schools and unattached teachers employed by a local authority, in each case where they are employed for one term or more. It is also good practice for academies to follow the appraisal regulations although they are not legally required to do so.

The School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) gives schools the freedom to differentiate pay progression for teachers based on performance. This places particular importance on the appraisal process and on any recommendations on pay contained with the annual appraisal statement in informing the decisions of the governing board on pay progression.

Schools and local authorities must stay within the legal framework set out in the Appraisal Regulations and in other relevant legislation that affects all employers (for example legislation on equality, employment protection and data protection).

Schools and local authorities must have an appraisal policy for teachers and a policy, covering all staff, which deals with capability. This model policy, updated in September 2021, applies specifically to teachers and headteachers, but schools might wish to adapt it for use with all staff and so where relevant reference has been made to employees to facilitate its use in this way. It has been written in the context of schools, but the same principles apply to unattached teachers. It is good practice for schools to consult staff on their appraisal and capability policies. This model policy has been provided as an optional resource for schools and others to which they can refer as they wish as they review and develop their own policies.

It is important that the appraisal process is managed in a way that avoids increased workload for all parties concerned, for example, reviewing the number and frequency of meetings, and ensuring the process for collecting evidence is always proportionate.

In the model policy:

Text in bold indicates statutory requirements contained in the Appraisal Regulations or the School Staffing Regulations.

Text in italics acts as additional advice for schools. In this model policy text in italics has also been the subject of consultation between the Local Authority and the relevant trades unions and is provided as examples of good practice.

For the purposes of this model policy the term governing board should be considered to include reference to governing bodies. If an academy trust adopts this model, all references to governors should be changed to trustees and boards of trustees.

The governing board of Aston Fence J & I School adopted this policy September 2021.

Reviewed annually.

1.1 Purpose of the model policy

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the headteacher, and other employees for supporting their development within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of them. There is a clear link between the operation of the appraisal policy and the operation of arrangements for performance related pay specified within the school's pay policy. This policy also sets out the arrangements that will apply when employees fall below the levels of competence that are expected of them.

1.2 Application of the policy

The policy covers appraisal which applies to the headteacher and to all teachers employed by the school or local authority, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. ECTs) and those who are subject to the capability procedure. *In this school it also applies to employees.*

2 Appraisal

Appraisal in this school will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all employees have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It will help to ensure that employees are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop. Governors will have regard to the outcomes of the annual appraisal process in making any decisions on pay progression.

The appraisal period will run for twelve months. *The appraisal cycle in this school will be completed for all teachers by 31st October and for headteachers by 30th September (from 2022). In this school, other employees will be appraised by June.*

Employees 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 appraisal period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

Where an employee ceases employment other than at the end of the appraisal period which applies in this school, the appraisal period ends with the last day of such employment. In this situation an appraisal statement will be produced by the school to reflect performance against the relevant standards and progress against objectives.

Where an employee joins the school prior to the beginning of the appraisal period which applies in this school a shorter or longer appraisal period will be applied with a view to bringing the cycle into line with that of other employees at the school as soon as possible.

2.1 Appointing appraisers

The headteacher will be appraised by the governing board, supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the governing board for that purpose.

In this school the task of appraising the headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of three members of the governing body. It will be expected

that this group will work within this policy and any additional relevant requirements of the regulations.

2.2 Annual assessment

Each employee's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the headteacher, the governing board 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 interim meetings which will take place *at least once mid-year*.

The employee will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period – and can comment in writing on - a written appraisal report. In this school, teachers will receive their written appraisal reports by *31 October*.

Although the statutory timeframe for governing boards to complete the written appraisal for the headteacher is 31st December, the guidance that accompanies this policy expects that the written report will be agreed by the end of September in the relevant appraisal period. This is to ensure that the process is completed before other members of staff. In this school, headteachers will receive their written appraisal reports by *30th September*.

The appraisal report will include:

- Details of the employee's objectives for the appraisal period in question
- An assessment of the employee's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives
- An assessment of the employees' training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them
- A recommendation on pay

The assessment of performance and of training and development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period.

2.3 Objective Setting

The headteacher's objectives will be set by the governing board after consultation with the external adviser. The governing board has a duty to have regard to the work-life balance of the headteacher and objectives will reflect this.

Objectives for each teacher will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set for each employee will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound and will be appropriate to their role and level of experience. Objectives can be set in relation to robust assessment data; however, these will not be used in isolation and other factors will also be considered when making decisions about pay progression. *Consideration will be given to appropriate support and training needed to achieve objectives and this will be recorded in appraisal documentation. Consideration will also be given to the necessary monitoring arrangements which will also be recorded.*

In the case of the headteacher, the appointed governors and headteacher will seek to agree objectives but, if that is not possible, the governors, with the support of the external adviser, will determine objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.

The objectives set for employees will clearly align with the school's plans for improving its educational provision and performance, therefore improving the education of pupils at that school.

Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, each employee will be informed of the standards against which their performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. *With the exception of those who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding and maintaining Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status, all teachers must be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called "Teachers' Standards" published in July 2011.*

The headteacher's performance management committee may use the DfE Headteacher's Standards 2020 to support with this.

For teachers who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding QTLS status, it is for the governing board or headteacher to decide which standards are most appropriate.

2.4 Reviewing performance

2.4.1 Observation

This 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 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 supportive fashion and not add to teacher workload. (Specific guidance on the conduct of classroom observations in this school is contained within the classroom observation protocol which can be found in Appendix 2).

To evaluate the standards of teaching and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained, teachers' performance will be regularly observed but the frequency 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. Observation may be formal, or informal and on a "drop in" basis. The length and frequency of "drop in" observations will vary depending on specific circumstances.

Teachers (including the headteacher) who have responsibilities outside the classroom, and other employees should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities monitored.

2.4.2 Monitoring of the performance of the headteacher

The Headteacher Performance Management Committee will monitor the work of the headteacher over the course of the appraisal period. This will include at least one formal midterm review meeting. The committee will also use other information, including that provided for the whole board or its committees, in evaluating progress towards meeting the appraisal objectives set. The objective setting meeting should detail the range of information and evidence the committee may expect to receive in order to support them in making judgments about successful performance at the end of the appraisal period.

2.4.3 Development and support

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to determine decisions on pay and inform continuing professional development. The school wishes to encourage a culture in which all employees take responsibility for improving their performance through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individuals.

2.4.4 Feedback

Employees (including the headteacher) will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after any relevant evidence has come to light. *In the case of formal observations for the purposes of appraisal, oral feedback should be provided as soon as possible following the observation. Written feedback will be provided within five working days.* Feedback will highlight areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

Where there are concerns about any aspects of an employee's performance the appraiser will meet the employee formally to:

- Give clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns
- Allow the opportunity for comment and discussion about the concerns
- Agree any support (e.g. coaching and mentoring) that will be provided to help address those specific concerns
- Make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress (*it may be appropriate to revise objectives, and it will be necessary to allow sufficient time for improvement; the amount of time is up to the school but should reflect the seriousness of the concerns*)
- Explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made

When progress is reviewed, if the appraiser is satisfied that there is sufficient improvement, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through that process.

2.4.5 Transition to capability

If serious concerns remain regarding performance that have not been addressed within the appraisal process, the employee will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the capability procedure, and they will be invited to a Stage 1 capability meeting. Capability issues will be conducted as per the separate policy on capability.

3 General principles underlying this policy

3.1 Confidentiality

The appraisal process will be confidential to the employee, their appraiser and the headteacher, and governing board which will have limited access to the contents of appraisal statements for the purpose of making decisions on pay, and to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

Objectives can be shared with other members of staff and the governing board with the agreement of the individual. In the case of the headteacher, objectives set will be in line with the strategic aims of the school as agreed by the governing board and will necessarily inform the objectives of other members of staff.

3.2 Consistency of treatment and fairness

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

Grievances

Where an employee is aggrieved in relation to the application of this policy, they will have recourse to the school's grievance procedure.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The governing board and headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements. *To facilitate this, the headteacher will provide the governing board with a written report on the operation of the school's appraisal policy annually. The report will not contain any information which would enable any individual to be identified.*

Retention

The governing board and headteacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained and stored in a secure place in line with their Retention and Disposal Policy. *In this school appraisal records will be retained for a period of six years and then destroyed.*

Appendix 1

ADDENDUM TO THE APPRAISAL POLICY TO ENABLE GOVERNING BODIES TO ADOPT A SINGLE POLICY FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL WORKFORCE.

Support Staff

The provisions set out within the school's Appraisal Policy relate to the statutory requirements for the appraisal processes and the links to pay progression that have been established for staff employed on School Teacher's Pay and Conditions.

It is important, however, that this school acknowledges and formally records that whilst these statutory elements do not apply to support staff, all of the principles underpinning appraisal as outlined in the school's Appraisal Policy apply equally to those staff.

This school is committed to ensuring that all staff receive the appropriate support to enable them to develop professionally in their respective roles and maximise their contribution to the school's overall efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, support staff in this school will be provided with a comparable appraisal process to that of teachers.

Whilst all the principles underpinning appraisal as outlined in the school's appraisal policy apply equally to support staff, specific differences will exist in the practical application of the policy to those staff. These differences are outlined below.

The Appraisal Process for Support Staff

1. Reviewing Progress

Rotherham's pay and grading structure provides opportunity for annual incremental pay progression, within the grade, for all support staff, linked to performance.

Progression will be dependent upon:

- having a successful appraisal
- no formal final written warnings (sickness warnings not included).

Increments are awarded each year following an assessment of performance based on an assessment of the previous year. In this school the appraisal *cycle for support staff will be completed no later than June*.

If an increment is to be withheld, then the Headteacher will need to inform their payroll provider.

Once awarded, increments will not be removed.

For employees who on assessment may be judged not to have fully met their appraisal objectives there are a number of considerations to be made, and options available:

- In the case where an increment is withheld due to an unsuccessful appraisal, unachieved performance objectives may be carried forward into the next appraisal cycle and appropriate support and development planned. Should it be appropriate, the position could be reviewed at a 6-month interim review and subject to satisfactory assessment, can be awarded from a date prior to the end of the formal cycle.

- Other issues such as inability or unwillingness to perform should be considered under the school's capability or disciplinary procedures as applicable. This is assuming the individual has been provided with sufficient notification and opportunities to improve performance.

New Starters

- In the case of new starters, promotions, regrading's and redeployees assessment includes successful completion of an induction programme, basic training and the probation period (where appropriate).
- Employees with less than 6 months service in the band by 1st July i.e. those people appointed between 1 February and 30 June will be assessed 6 months after their date of appointment. Pay progression may be awarded at that time based on performance.
- If the start date or appointment date into new grade falls between 1 July and 31 January, then the normal appraisal cycle should be used for assessment.

Long Term Absence (Sickness or Maternity)

- If an employee has had a long period of absence of 6 months or more i.e. maternity or sickness, then incremental progression will not be withheld for this reason alone.
- In rarer situations of longer periods of absence e.g. a full year due to maternity or sickness, providing a satisfactory assessment period has been completed on return to work then increments can be awarded to place the employee at exactly the same point as they would have been had they not been absent. i.e. up to 2 increments awarded from the one assessment.

Appendix 2 - OBSERVATION OF TEACHING

PROTOCOL

A headteacher has a duty to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to ensure that proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained. In order to inform their monitoring of the quality of learning, headteachers have the right to observe teachers teaching and this can range from short and infrequent "drop-ins" to capture the progress of a lesson for a few minutes, to formally arranged observations of an entire lesson.

The governing board is committed to ensuring that any observation of teaching is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:

- *Carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy*
- *Evaluate objectively*
- *Report accurately and fairly*
- *Respect the confidentiality of the information gained*

The degree of observation for each teacher should reflect and be proportionate to the needs of the individual.

The arrangements for observation will be included in the plan in the appraisal statement and will include details of any formal observations, specify their primary purpose, any particular aspects of the teacher's performance which will be assessed, the duration of the observation, when during the appraisal cycle the observation will take place and who will conduct the observation.

Where evidence emerges about the appraisee's teaching performance which gives rise to concern during the cycle, further formal observations may be arranged in addition to those recorded at the beginning of the cycle.

Information gathered during general and formal observation will be used, as appropriate, for a variety of purposes including to inform school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies in accordance with the school's commitment to streamlining data collection and minimising bureaucracy and workload burdens on staff. In keeping with the commitment to supportive and developmental observation, those being formally observed will be notified in advance.

Formal observation will only be undertaken by persons with QTS. In addition, in this school observation will only be undertaken by those who have had adequate preparation and the appropriate professional skills to undertake observation and to provide constructive oral and written feedback and support, in the context of professional dialogue between colleagues.

Oral feedback will be given as soon as possible after any formal observation, and no later than the end of the following working day. It will be given during directed time in a suitable, private environment. Written feedback will be provided within five working days of the observation taking place.

If issues emerged from observation that were not part of the focus of the observation as recorded in the plan, these should also be given as written feedback.

The written record of feedback also includes the date on which the observation took place, the lesson observed and the length of the observation. The teacher has the right to append written comments on the feedback document. No written notes in addition to the written feedback will be kept.