

St John the Baptist policy for appraising teacher performance

The Governing Body of St John the Baptist C.E. (Aided) Primary School adopted this policy at a meeting of the full Governing Body on Monday 10th September 2012.

It was reviewed in October 2015.

Purpose

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

Application of the policy

The policy covers appraisal, applies to the head teacher and to all teachers employed by the school, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (*ie* NQTs) and those who are subject to Part B of the policy.

Part B of the policy, which sets out the formal capability procedure, applies only to teachers (including the head teacher) about whose performance there are serious concerns that the appraisal process has been unable to address.

Appraisal

Appraisal in this school 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 appraisal period

The appraisal period will run for twelve months from September to August.

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.

Appointing appraisers

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.

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In this school the task of appraising the head teacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of three members of the Governing Body.

The head teacher will decide who will appraise other teachers, but all appraisers will be part of the school's Senior Leadership Team.

Setting objectives

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

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 teacher, will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience. 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.

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. This will be ensured by linking objectives to areas for development mapped out in the overall school improvement plan, Phase action plans or areas for development highlighted by subject lead teachers. Overall developmental areas for appraisal objectives will also be discussed by the school's Senior Leadership Team.

Teachers will be assessed against the latest DfE standards for teachers. Teachers will be given a copy of these standards before each appraisal cycle.

Reviewing performance

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 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 supportive fashion.

In this school teachers' performance will be regularly 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.

Observations will fall into the following categories;

Formal observations which will be undertaken with notice and will be followed up with written feedback within five working days. Feedback will be supportive, will identify areas of strength and areas for development. Focus for development will be supported by clear guidance on how improvements might be made.

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“Drop in” observations made in order to evaluate the standards of teaching and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained. Drop in observations will only be made by members of the Senior Leadership Team. The length and frequency of “drop in” observations will vary depending on specific circumstances. Drop in observations may be teacher specific, but are more likely to focus on a specific year group, phase or subject area. Where the focus is teacher specific then individual written feedback will be given within five working days. Where the focus is across a year group, phase or subject area then individual verbal feedback will be given, followed by written feedback of the main strengths and areas for development of all of the observations. This more general written feedback will not identify individual teachers.

Observations to aid others in school evaluation. Other planned observations may be undertaken by subject lead teachers, or by members of the Senior Leadership Team accompanied by a member of the governing body. These observations are to aide subject lead teachers and governors to gain an understanding of subject / school performance. Verbal feedback will be given following these observations.

All observations may be shared within the school Senior Leadership Team in order to contribute to discussions about overall school strengths and areas for development and to assist in giving appropriate support and guidance. An exception to this would be if a teacher was subject to capability procedures where discussions would be limited to those identified in supporting the teacher subject to capability procedures.

All observations, in context, will form part of the picture of a teachers individual performance across the appraisal cycle.

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

Development and support

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 appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

Feedback

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place (see above) or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

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

- 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;
- agree any support (eg coaching, mentoring, structured observations), that will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
- make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress. In addition any amendments or new objectives will be discussed.
- explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made.

When progress is reviewed, if 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.

Transition to capability

If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress, a transition to capability meeting will be held. At least five working days notice will be given and the teacher will be encouraged to be accompanied by trades union representative or colleague. The employee (*and representative*), appraiser / headteacher (or chair of governors where the capability of the head teacher is in question) will be present at the meeting. The meeting will consider:

- the evidence which has given rise to specific concerns about the employee's performance;
- the seriousness of the concerns and their impact on the performance of the school;
- the support that has been provided to date;
- the time for which the concerns have persisted and over which the support has been provided;
- the degree of improvement that has been achieved and whether or not this has been sustained;
- The extent to which the employee has shown insight and engaged with the support provided through the appraisal process;
- any mitigating factors.

Once these matters have been considered, the headteacher (or Chair of governors) will adjourn the meeting for a period, to allow sufficient reflection, before reaching a decision. The decision will be communicated to the employee, in writing, normally within 5 days.

The transition to the capability procedure will only be made if there is robust evidence that:

- specific underperformance, against identified standards, has existed during for a significant amount of time (at least 6 weeks);
- the underperformance is either serious or has persisted despite the provision of appropriate support

If it is decided that the teacher has been given the opportunity but has failed to make progress then the teacher will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no

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longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the capability procedure. The teacher will be invited to a formal capability meeting. The capability procedures will be conducted in accordance with the school's capability policy.

Annual assessment

Each 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 interim meetings which will take place. There will be a minimum of two interim reviews

The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period – and have the opportunity to comment in writing on - a written appraisal report. In this school, teachers will receive their written appraisal reports 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 professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- a recommendation on pay where that is relevant (*Pay recommendations need to be made by 31 December for head teachers and by 31 October for other teachers*)

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

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.

Policy History

This policy was originally formulated and agreed in September 2012 to meet new appraisal requirements.

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In October 2012 the policy was reviewed. It was amended and separated from the 2012 “Policy for appraising teacher performance and dealing with capability issues”. Capability now stands as a separate policy. References to capability were changed to make reference to the separation of the capability policy. No other changes were made.

To be discussed by the whole Governing Body on Monday 16th November 2015

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