Appraisal Policy for Schools

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1. Aim

This policy sets out the framework for
(a) a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of **all school employees**, and
(b) to support the development of **all school employees** within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of employees.

2. Scope

This policy covers all employees at the school with the exception of:

- Those employed for less than one term.
- Teachers undergoing induction or support staff in their probationary period (e.g., newly qualified teachers and new starters);.
- Employees who are subject to the Capability Policy.

For teachers there are certain legislative requirements which must be adhered to, shown in **bold**. Teachers holding QLTS status may be subject to this policy, but it is not mandatory.

Note: the requirements shown in bold are not mandatory in academies.

3. Purpose of Appraisal

At Ashurst CE Aided Primary School, appraisal is a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all employees have the skills they need to carry out their role effectively, and access to the training and education required to fully develop those skills. For teachers, appraisal will help them to ensure that they are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop in their role.

4. Appraisal Period

The appraisal period will run for twelve months from September to August following the Academic Year.
In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to set a shorter or longer appraisal period, for example when an employee begins or ends employment with the school or a change their role.

Employees 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 and the objectives should also take the length of contract into account.**

5. Appointment of Appraisers

The headteacher will be appraised by the governance board, who may be supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the governance board for that purpose.
The task of appraising the headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of two members of the governance board.

If the headteacher believes that any of the governors appointed as an appraiser is unsuitable to act as an appraiser they may submit a written request for that governor to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request.

The headteacher will determine who will appraise other employees.

Note: it is important that appraisers are trained and are familiar with this policy.

If the appraiser is absent for the majority of the appraisal cycle the headteacher may appoint another appraiser or take on the role of appraiser. Likewise, where an individual is experiencing difficulties, the headteacher may take on the role of appraiser.

Where an employee has an objection to the choice of appraiser the headteacher will consider their concerns and where required appoint an alternate appraiser.

6. Setting Objectives and Specifying Standards

The headteacher's objectives will be set by the Governing Body after consultation with the external adviser (if requested by the Governing Body) and the headteacher. The governing body has a duty to have regard to the work-life balance of the headteacher and objectives will reflect this.

Teachers' Objectives and Standards: Teachers' performance is assessed against their objectives, and the relevant standards. The appraiser will need to set out what they will take into account when making judgements as to whether teachers have met their objectives and the relevant standards.

Evidence used in the performance management process must relate directly to objectives and should be agreed in advance and be readily available from day-to-day practice. Numerical targets should not be set if it is beyond the teacher's control to achieve them. This might but does not have to include:

- improvements in specific elements of practice, such as behaviour management, development of pedagogy or providing feedback,
- impact on effectiveness of teachers or other staff,
- wider contribution to the work of the school.

The headteacher has a duty to have regard to the work-life balance of the school's employees and objectives will reflect this.

Effective Objective Setting

The objectives set will be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) and will be appropriate to the employee's role and level of experience. For teachers, objectives and appraisal discussions will not be based on teacher generated data and predictions, or solely on the assessment data for a single group of pupils. The appraiser and employee will seek to meet and agree the objectives but, if agreement is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. The employee being appraised (i.e., the appraisee) can record their disagreement on the appraisal statement and this will be taken into account at the appraisal review.

The objectives set 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 the school. This will be ensured by ensuring that objectives are linked to the Schools Development Plan. For teachers, their objectives should also have a strong focus on effective professional development to ensure that they stay up to date with the latest methodologies, technologies, and educational research.

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 will be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called "Teachers' Standards" published in July 2011, to a level that is consistent with what should be reasonably expected in the relevant role and at the relevant stage of their career. For teachers who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding QTLS status, it is for the governance board or headteacher to decide which standards are most appropriate.

Reviewing Objectives

Objectives should be reviewed if circumstances change, or to take account of an anticipated absence and to allow the teacher to meet reduced and attainable targets.

Examples of when such an approach should be taken includes but is not limited to an employee going on maternity leave, an employee undergoing surgery or medical treatment.

It is important for schools to review, and adjust as necessary, an employee's objectives when they change role during the appraisal cycle. The school may also consider whether the appraiser should change. In the event of a role change, progress made against any objectives which are no longer relevant to the new role should be fully discussed, agreed, and documented.

Developing Objectives, Standards and Targets

When setting objectives and considering the number of objectives, appraisers will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in the context of the employee's role, responsibilities, and experience, consistent with the school's aim to achieve a work-life balance for everyone working at the school.

An individual employee's objectives are not intended to cover the full range of their responsibilities but should focus on the school's priorities for the appraisal period.

The objectives will contain a description of what is required for the objective to be successfully met (this is referred to as the 'success criteria', and may include tasks to ensure that the success criteria are met). The objectives and the standards to be achieved will be documented.

Any learning and development needs, including those that are to be carried forward from the previous appraisal cycle or are identified as part of the objective setting process, will also be documented along with a description of how they will be met during the appraisal period.

Any targets that are set for individual employees, or a sample of targets, will be moderated across the school to ensure fairness and consistency and that all appraisers are working to the same standards.

7. Reviewing Performance

The school will set out the evidence it will take into account when making judgements about its employees' performance, and whether they have met relevant standards and individual objectives. This evidence will be decided upon when the objectives are set at the beginning of the appraisal process.

This school believes that a range of different methods should be utilised, in a supportive fashion, to assess its employees' performance. It is important to our school that methods of assessing performance do not add to employees' workload.

The document titled Managing Teachers' And Leaders' Pay states that assessments may be based on evidence from a range of sources, for example self-assessment, peer review, tracking pupil progress and lesson observations. The collection of evidence should be proportionate and not increase workload for employees, (for example, teachers should not be asked to produce written evidence against each of the Teachers' Standards).

Interim Review Meetings

Interim Review Meetings (usually in the Spring term) provide a formal opportunity for the employee and the appraiser to take a checkpoint during the review period and to review progress against the objectives and standards, and the employee's learning and development needs.

Updates on progress against objectives and standards, the learning and development needs, plus any actions and changes agreed during the Interim Review Meeting between the employee and the appraiser must be documented.

If the view of the appraiser at an Interim Review Meeting is that the employee is not making sufficient progress towards the achievement of their objectives, or is not meeting the required standards, their concerns should be addressed as described in the Feedback section below.

Where an employee has been unable to fully meet their objectives or the required standards and support has been identified but not yet provided or completed, this will be taken into account by the appraiser at the Interim Review Meeting.

Interim review meetings should be set-up with reasonable notice to allow preparation time for both the employee and the appraiser. Meetings should be held at a mutually convenient time, in a suitable location (e.g., a private office) and for a suitable duration (e.g., for one hour).

Observation

Ashurst CE Aided primary School believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important as a way of assessing employees' performance to identify particular strengths and areas for development, identifying information which may inform school improvement more generally, and enabling employees to learn from each other and collaborate. All observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion and will not add to teacher workload.

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 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 individual employees.
For specific information on professional development for teachers refer to the guidance document that accompanies this policy.

Feedback
All employees will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year. Verbal feedback should be given a soon as possible and confirmed in writing within 5 working days after an observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light.
Feedback will highlight areas of strength as well as any areas that require development.

Assessment Against Teachers' Standards
Teachers' performance will be assessed against the relevant teacher standards to a level that is consistent with what should reasonably be expected of a teacher in the relevant role and at the relevant stage of their career. School leaders and other appraisers should use their professional judgement when appraising teachers' performance. It is not necessary for schools to adopt rigid models that seek to set out exactly what the relevant standards mean for teachers at different stages in their careers and teachers should not be expected routinely to provide evidence that they meet all the standards.

Informal Support
Except in the most serious cases of persistent failures to meet job expectations and the required standards, resulting in negative consequences on the school's pupils and organisation, employees should not ordinarily be placed in capability procedures without first undergoing a period of informal support as part of the appraisal process.
Where there are concerns about any aspects of an employee's performance these will be raised with them by their appraiser at the earliest opportunity. Support will be offered as soon as possible without waiting for the formal annual assessment.
The objective should be to provide support and guidance to enable improvements.

The appraiser *(or headteacher or a member of the school's Leadership Group if more appropriate)* will meet with the employee to:

- Inform the employee that they will be receiving informal support due to concerns about their performance.
- Give clear feedback to the employee about the nature and seriousness of the concerns.
- Give the employee the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns.
- Consider the employee's circumstances including any medical conditions, wellbeing support needs, or disabilities.

- Set clear objectives for required improvement.
- In consultation with the employee, agree an action plan including any support (e.g., coaching, training, mentoring, in-class support, structured observations, visits to other classes or schools or discussions with other experienced employees), 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 – e.g., *(impact on pay progression where the school has chosen to retain performance related pay and)* potential move to formal capability.

Informal support should be provided for a reasonable period to allow for performance improvement and with consideration of the specific circumstances, and support required to facilitate improvement.
The appraiser should meet with the employee regularly to assess progress and ensure the agreed-upon support is being provided.
There is more information on informal support in the guidance document that accompanies this policy.

Monitoring Progress
When progress is reviewed, if the appraiser *(or headteacher or a member of the school's Leadership Group)* is satisfied that the employee 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 employee's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and a reasonable time given for their performance to improve. This will depend upon the circumstances with appropriate support provided as agreed in the action plan. During this monitoring period the employee will be given regular feedback (e.g., by the appraiser) on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.

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, they should be informed of this at a meeting with the appraiser or headteacher. Following

this meeting the appraisal process will continue as normal. If insufficient progress has been made, please refer to the Transition to Capability section below.

8. Transition to Capability

It is expected that concerns about performance (except serious concerns which will be handled much sooner) will have been discussed with the employee, and an appropriate framework of support will have been put in place to help them achieve the required standard before moving into the Capability Policy (see Feedback and Informal Support paragraphs above).

If an employee demonstrates serious underperformance or has not responded to support provided within the informal support 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 will be invited to a formal capability meeting.

The capability procedures will be conducted in accordance with the school's Capability Policy.

The Capability Policy may be initiated at any time during the appraisal cycle.

Where an employee's overall performance at the end of the appraisal year has been assessed as having met or partially met only some of the objectives, demonstrated some positive behaviours, and significant progress has not been made against the support plan (and there are insufficient mitigating circumstances), then it is expected that the school should consider managing their performance under the formal capability procedure.

Where an employee's overall performance at the end of the appraisal year has been assessed as having not met all or some key objectives, and they've demonstrated some negative or inconsistent behaviours, it is expected that informal support will have failed, and the teacher's performance should be managed under the formal capability procedure.

9. Annual Assessment

Performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the headteacher, the governance board must consult the external adviser.

This assessment is the end point of the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year in interim review meetings which will take place. The employee will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period a written appraisal report. The employee will have the opportunity to comment in writing on the report.

In this school, teachers and support staff will receive their written appraisal reports within 2 weeks of the appraisal. There will be the opportunity to discuss the contents before finalising.

The appraisal report will include:

- Details of the objectives for the appraisal period in question.
- An assessment of the employee's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards
- An assessment of their training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them.
- Details of a discussion on wellbeing and workload and career progression/aspirations;
- A recommendation on pay where that is relevant. Pay recommendations need to be made in good time to meet the deadlines of 31 December for headteachers and by 31 October for other teachers.

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

Example Assessment Criteria For Performance
An employee's overall performance will be assessed as follows:

'Highly Successful' performance - where the employee has exceeded all or most objectives, has made a significant contribution to whole school priorities (for example through the school improvement plan), and has consistently role modelled positive behaviours.

'Successful' performance - where the employee has met all objectives and consistently demonstrated positive behaviours.

'Unsuccessful' performance - where the teacher has met or partially met only some of the objectives and demonstrated only some positive behaviours. Overall performance does not meet the required standard in some aspects.

'Unacceptable' performance - where the employee did not meet all or most key objectives and demonstrated some negative or inconsistent behaviour. Overall performance is below the required standard.

10. Pay Progression
For details on the school's approach to pay progression for teachers, refer to section 6 of the school's Pay Policy.

Annual pay progression for support staff can be subject to satisfactory performance. The governance board may also award additional increments in accordance with the agreed pay policy.

11. General Provisions

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The governance board is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation and will ensure that reasonable adjustments are put in place where necessary.

Confidentiality & Professional Relationships

The outcomes of the appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality and access to the content of the appraisal document will be restricted to only those in the line management chain who need to know.

The process of gathering evidence for performance review will not compromise normal professional relationships between employees. The governance board recognises that the reviewer will consult with, and seek to secure the agreement of an employee, before seeking information from other colleagues about their work.

However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the headteacher and governance board 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.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The governance board and headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements. The headteacher will provide the governance board with a written report on the operation of the school's appraisal and capability policies annually.

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

The governance board and headteacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.

12. Document History

This policy document came into force on 1st September 2013. It was developed in response to the document titled "Teacher Appraisal and Capability Model Policy for Schools" which was originally published in May 2012 and the document titled "Teachers' Standards" which was originally published in July 2011. It has been updated to be in line with relevant subsequent changes to these documents and the document titled "School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD)".

Written by: HR Policy & Practice Team (LRW/FR).

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