



# **BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL**

## **ADOPTED TEACHER APPRAISAL POLICY**

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## **BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Appraisal arrangements for schools are set out in the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations (the Appraisal Regulations). This model policy reflects these regulations and is based upon the DfE Guidance for schools on Teacher Appraisal ([Teacher Appraisal - guidance for schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/362222/teacher-appraisal-guidance-for-schools.pdf)).

### **PURPOSE**

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including school leaders, and for supporting their development within the context of the school's plan for improving education provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers.

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 procedure will be used also to address any concerns that are raised about a teacher's performance. If concerns are such that they cannot be resolved through the appraisal process, there will be consideration of whether to commence the capability procedure.

The same principles apply for school support staff for which there is a separate performance management policy.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's pay policy which refers to national agreements on pay and conditions of service.

### **APPLICATION OF THE APPRAISAL POLICY**

This policy covers appraisal, applies to all teachers and school leaders employed by the school except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. Early Careers Teachers) and those who are subject to capability procedures.

The policy should always be applied in a way that is robust whilst minimising the impact on workload for teachers, line managers, school leaders and Governing Bodies.

### **THE APPRAISAL PERIOD**

The appraisal period will run for twelve months normally 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 and an individual teachers' objectives should take account of the length of the contract.

Where a teacher starts their employment at the school part-way through a cycle, the head teacher or, in the case where the employee is the head teacher, the governing body shall determine the length of the first cycle for that teacher, with a view to bringing his/her cycle into line with the cycle for other teachers as soon as possible.

There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when teachers begin or end employment with a school.

Where a teacher transfers to a new post within the school part-way through a cycle, the head teacher or, in the case where the employee is the head teacher, the governing body shall determine whether the cycle shall begin again and whether to change the appraiser.

## **APPOINTING APPRAISERS**

The head teacher will be the reviewer for those teachers they directly line manage and will delegate the role of reviewer, in its entirety, to the relevant line managers for some or all other teachers. All appraisers of teachers, other than those appraising head teachers, will be suitably trained.

### **Head Teacher**

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.

The task of appraising the head teacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of normally 3 members of the governing body.

Where a head teacher is of the opinion that any of the governors appointed by the governing body is unsuitable to act as their appraiser, they may submit a written request for that governor to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request.

### **Teachers**

The choice of appraiser is for the head teacher to determine. Where teachers have an objection to the head teacher's choice, their concerns will be carefully considered and, where appropriate, an alternative appraiser will be offered.

Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser appointed by the head teacher will be absent for the majority of the appraisal cycle, the head teacher may perform those duties or delegate those duties to another line manager for the duration of that absence.

If the head teacher appoints an appraiser who is not the teacher's line manager, the appraiser to whom they delegate those duties will have an appropriate position in the staffing structure, together with the necessary background knowledge, skills and training to undertake the role.

Where a teacher is experiencing difficulties and the head teacher is not the appraiser, the head teacher may undertake the role of appraiser. See also section on Teachers Experiencing Difficulties.

## SETTING OBJECTIVES

The head teacher's objectives will be set by the appraisal sub-group of the governing body after consultation with the external adviser and the head teacher. The governing body has a duty to have regard to the work-life balance of the school leader 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 school leader has a duty to have regard to the work-life balance of the teacher and objectives will reflect this. 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.

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 teacher will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. The appraisee can record their disagreement on the appraisal statement and this will be taken into account at the appraisal review. Objectives should be revised if circumstances change, such as but not limited to a teacher going on maternity leave, or undergoing surgery/medical treatment, to take account of the anticipated absence and to allow the teacher to meet reduced and attainable targets.

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. Objectives should also have a strong focus on effective professional development to ensure that teachers 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 teacher will be informed of the standards against which that teacher's 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.

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

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.

## **PAY PROGRESSION**

Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the recommendation 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 statutory criteria and guidance set out in the STPCD and the relevant teacher standards.

The Governing body has agreed the pay policy of the school and has considered the implications of the appraisal policy with respect to the arrangements relating to teachers' pay in accordance with the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. The Governing body will ensure that decisions on pay progression are made by 31 December for head teachers and by 31 October for other teachers.

## **REVIEWING PERFORMANCE**

The school will set out what evidence they will take into account when making judgements about a teachers' performance and whether they have met the relevant standards and their individual objectives. This evidence will be decided upon when the objectives are being 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 teachers' performance.

It is important to our school that methods of assessing teacher performance do not add to teacher workload.

### **Observation**

The effective and efficient operation of the appraisal process requires lesson observation to be a confidential process of constructive engagement within an atmosphere of support and co-operation.

Accordingly, observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion, with professionalism, integrity, and courtesy, will be evaluated objectively and reported accurately and fairly and will take account of particular circumstances which may affect performance on the day.

At least 5 working days' notice of the date and time of the observation will be given and verbal feedback provided by the end of the next school day, and written feedback within 5 working days, unless circumstances make this impossible. Where these dates cannot be achieved a mutually convenient time scale can be agreed.

Classroom observation will be carried out by qualified teachers.

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

account of exceptional circumstances where concerns have been raised about a teacher's performance, or where the teacher requests additional observation visits.

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 in" 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.

The school will use the findings of each observation, including appraisal observations, for other management requirements (for example subject area reviews).

Teachers (including the head teacher) whose posts 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 determine decisions on pay progression (where applicable) and 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, through peer observation for example. 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. The governing body will ensure in the budget planning that, as far as possible, resources are made available in the school budget for appropriate training, and support agreed for appraisees, maintaining access 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, may form a part of the head teacher's annual report to the governing body about the operation of the appraisal process in the school.

## **FEEDBACK**

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

Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance the appraiser will meet with 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.
- set clear objectives for required improvement.

- agree any support (e.g., coaching, mentoring, structured observations), that will be provided to help address those specific concerns.
- make clear how, and by when, the appraisers will review progress (it may be appropriate to revise objectives, and it will be necessary to allow for sufficient time for improvement to be assessed).
- 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.

## **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 teaching standards, resulting in negative consequences on the pupils and organisation, teachers 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 the teacher's performance the appraiser will meet the teacher to:

- inform the teacher that they are going to be receiving informal support due to performance concerns.
- give clear and specific feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns.
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns.
- set clear objectives and timescales for required improvement.
- agree any support (e.g. 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 (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. commencement of capability procedure.

There should be a clear relationship between the issue, the objectives set, and the planned documented programme of support put in place. The line manager/appraiser should partner with the teacher in a collaborative manner to establish objectives and timelines, taking into account the teacher's circumstances. This may include any medical conditions, well-being support needs, or disabilities protected by equality legislation.

Informal support should be provided for a reasonable period to allow for performance improvement. Schools could decide this is a minimum of 6 weeks. However, the duration

will be determined based on the specific circumstances, with appropriate support in place to facilitate improvement. The appraiser should meet with the teacher regularly to assess progress and ensure the agreed-upon support is being provided.

When progress is reviewed, after the agreed upon period, 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 a teacher demonstrates serious underperformance or has not responded to support provided within the informal support process, the teacher 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. Advice should be sought as appropriate from an HR adviser.

Disciplinary procedures will only be triggered by factors related to misconduct or breach of professional standards. Schools should be careful not to conflate these procedures but, if appropriate to the circumstances, they can run concurrently.

## **EVIDENCE**

The range and level of evidence collected for appraisal and pay determination purposes will always be proportionate and minimise workload.

## **ANNUAL ASSESSMENT**

Each teacher's performance will be assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the headteacher/ CEO, 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 (e.g. once a term).

The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period – and have the opportunity to comment on – “an appraisal report” (in practice the report could be produced using online performance management systems, which can help to reduce workload). 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;
- details of a discussion on wellbeing and workload and career progression/aspirations;
- a recommendation on pay where that is relevant;

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

Appraisees have a right to question or comment on the entries in the written appraisal report. The appraisee should take this up with the appraiser in the first instance.

## **TEACHERS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES**

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

If an appraiser identifies through the appraisal process, or via other sources of information, for example parental complaints, that the difficulties experienced by a teacher are such that, if not rectified, could lead to further action through the school capability procedure then the school should put support in place under the appraisal process / normal day to day management (see section on Feedback for examples of areas of support).

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THIS POLICY**

### **Consistency of Treatment and Fairness**

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

### **Sickness Absence**

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 management procedure.

### **Grievances**

Where a member of staff raises a grievance during the appraisal process, the process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance.

### **Confidentiality & Professional Relationships**

The appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality. Only the appraiser's line manager or, where they had more than one, each of their line managers will be provided with access to the appraisee's plan recorded in her/his statements. This will be done upon request and only where this is necessary to enable the line manager to discharge their line management responsibilities. Appraisees will be consulted on requests for access to statements in the context of this policy.

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 head teacher and governing body to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. The head teacher 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 head teacher might also wish to be aware of any pay recommendations that have been made.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The governing body and head teacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements.

The head teacher will provide the governing body with a written report on the operation of the school's appraisal policy annually. The report will not identify any individual by name. The report will include an assessment of the impact of these policies on:

- Race
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Disability
- Religion and Beliefs
- Age
- Part-time Status
- Maternity and Pregnancy

The head teacher will report on whether there have been any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination.

### **Data Protection and Record Retention**

The school process any personal data collected during the appraisal process in accordance with its data protection policy. Further details can be found in the Privacy Notice on the school's website. Any data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing the appraisal procedure.

The governing body and head teacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place in line with the Retention Policy.