



Teacher Appraisal Policy

Core Values

Readiness

Resilience

Respect

School Values

Independence

Ambition

Compassion

Co-operation

Initiative

Enjoyment

Responsibility

Confidence

Celebration

Kindness

Honesty

Individuality

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Review: Autumn 2027

Statement of intent

This policy sets out the framework for clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the headteacher. It is designed to support teachers' development, within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers.

Unless indicated otherwise, all references to "teacher" include the headteacher.

From the 2024/25 academic year, the requirement for objectives and the appraisal process to lead to performance-related pay outcomes for teachers and leaders will be removed. The statutory requirement to make a pay decision following the completion of the appraisal process remains.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 (as amended)
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'
- DfE (2019) 'Teacher appraisal and capability: A model policy for schools'
- DfE (2011) 'Teachers' Standards'
- DfE (2021) 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'
- DfE (2019) 'Implementing your school's approach to pay'
- DfE (2018) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Teacher Capability Policy
- Staff and Visitor Confidentiality Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Records Management Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Teachers' Pay Policy
- School Development Plan

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the effectiveness of this policy by monitoring and reviewing it annually.
- Ensuring that the appraisal process is managed in a way that avoids increased workload for all parties concerned.
- Ensuring that all members of staff have read and understood the provisions in this policy.
- Appraising the headteacher and setting their objectives, with advice from an appropriate external adviser.
- Ensuring all objectives contribute towards the School Development Plan and improve the education of pupils at the school.
- Taking advice from an external adviser on the assessment of the headteacher's performance.
- Providing the headteacher with their agreed appraisal report.
- Ensuring all members of the board are informed that the appraisal process has taken place.
- Ensuring all members of the board are informed that that the review process has taken place.
- Making a recommendation on headteacher's pay, where relevant.

- Ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and abiding by all relevant equality legislation.
- Ensuring all delegated responsibilities are carried out.
- Determining the appraisal period that applies to teachers (including the headteacher).
- Ensuring that appraisal evidence informs other decisions, including decisions related to professional development and pay.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring that the appraisal process is managed in a way that avoids increased workload for all parties concerned.
- Deciding who will appraise teachers.
- Informing teachers of the standards against which their performance in the set appraisal period will be assessed.
- Conducting drop-in observations, where necessary, to evaluate standards of teaching and ensure high standards of professional performance are maintained.
- Providing teachers with their appraisal reports or delegating this task, as appropriate.

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Improving their teaching through proactive engagement in appropriate CPD opportunities.
- Voicing concerns where they believe the appraisal process is causing unnecessary challenges, eg in terms of wellbeing or workload.

General principles underlying this policy

Confidentiality

The appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality; however, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the headteacher and the governing board to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

This will be achieved by the headteacher and governing board:

- Personally, reviewing a sample of teachers' appraisal records for consistency.
- Being informed of any pay recommendations that have been made and the rationale behind these.

Consistency of treatment and fairness

The governing board is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness throughout the appraisal process.

It is also committed to ensuring that all teachers, regardless of their protected characteristics, are treated fairly, and recognises that identical treatment and evaluation processes may not be fair for all teachers. The governing board will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to the appraisal process where appropriate and necessary, eg for teachers with disabilities.

Delegation

Normal rules (as set out in The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009) apply in respect of the delegation of functions by the governing board and headteacher.

Performance appraisal

This section of the policy applies to the headteacher and to all teachers employed by the school, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction and those who are subject to capability procedures.

Appraisal at this school will be supportive, and the developmental process is designed to ensure that all teachers have, or fully develop, the skills and access to 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. Appraisal outcomes will be used to inform pay progression decisions.

The appraisal period

The appraisal period will run for 12 months from 1st September to 31st 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 this period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

The school will amend the appraisal period's length in certain circumstances. Where a teacher starts their employment at the school during the course of an appraisal period, the headteacher, or governing board in the case of a new headteacher, will determine how long their appraisal process will be. The aim will be to ensure that all teachers are brought onto the same appraisal cycle as soon as is practicable.

Appointing appraisers

The headteacher will be appraised by a panel of the governing board, ideally an odd number but a minimum of three, supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the governing board for that purpose.

The headteacher will decide who will appraise other teachers on a case-by-case basis; however, all appraisers of teachers will be suitably trained and have QTS.

Setting objectives

The headteacher's objectives will be set by the governing board after consultation with the external adviser, taking into account the headteacher's work-life balance. These objectives will be agreed by the headteacher.

Teachers' work-life balance will be taken into consideration when objectives are set.

Teachers' objectives will take into account the length of their contract to ensure objectives are realistic and fair. Teachers will be informed by the headteacher or their line manager of the standards against which their performance in the set appraisal period will be assessed. The standards used in relation to appraisal are the 'Teachers' Standards'.

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 SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound), and will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience. Objectives will take note of a teacher's individual needs in relation to their professional development.

Objectives and performance management discussions will not be based on teacher-generated data and predictions, or entirely on assessment data for a single group of pupils. Objectives may be set in relation to robust assessment data, but these will not be used in isolation and additional factors will always be considered when making pay progression decisions.

The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree on the objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.

The school will take a considered approach to circumstances where a teacher's objectives are challenging, measuring progress towards objectives as well as completion.

The school will generally set no more than three appraisal targets, with four for UPS teachers, and will not set sub-targets, save for in exceptional circumstances.

Observation

The school believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important, both in assessing teachers' performance to identify any particular strengths and areas for development they may have, and for gaining useful information which could inform improvement. Observation can also enable teachers to learn from each other and collaborate.

The following guidelines will be adhered to:

- The number of official observations will not exceed three sessions per year
- Observations will not exceed one hour per session
- The focus and timing of annual observation sessions will be agreed in consultation with the teacher
- Observations will be conducted with professionalism, integrity, courtesy and objectivity
- Observation reports will be accurate and fair
- The confidentiality of the information in the report will be respected
- Observations will not add to teachers' overall workload
- At least five working days' notice will be given of the date and time of the observation
- Verbal feedback will be provided by the end of the next school day
- Written feedback will be provided within five working days

The governing board have determined that teaching staff cannot refuse to share their lesson plans during observations – this decision will be communicated to all teaching staff by their appraisers. Classroom observation will be carried out by those with QTS.

Evidence

The range and level of evidence collected for the purposes of appraisal and pay determination will always be proportionate and consider the impact on workload.

Evidence used will relate directly to the pre-agreed objectives. The form of the evidence will be agreed with the teacher in advance, and will be material, or contain material, which is readily available from day-to-day practice.

Development and support

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform CPD. The school encourages a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development.

Professional development will be linked to improvement priorities in the School Development Plan where possible, and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

Feedback

Teachers will receive constructive, supportive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place, or when other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that require attention. Teachers will also receive an assessment of their professional development requirements and any action that should be taken to address them.

Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance, 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 an opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns.
- Agree any support that will be provided to help address those specific concerns.
- Make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress.

- Explain the implications and process if no or insufficient improvement is made, for example, the impact on pay progression and the potential for movement into formal capability proceedings.
- Set clear objectives to be met to achieve the required improvement.

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 the teacher's progress, the teacher will receive formal written notification that their performance will be managed under the capability procedure instead of the appraisal system and will be invited to a formal capability meeting. The capability procedures will be conducted in accordance with the school's Teacher Capability Policy.

Annual assessment

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the headteacher, the governing board will consult the external adviser. This assessment is the final stage of the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year in interim meetings and a mid-term review.

The teacher will, as soon as practicable, receive and have the opportunity to comment on an appraisal report – this may be written in hard copy format or made available online. Teachers will receive their appraisal reports by 5th September and the headteacher by 1st October. 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 their 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 progression where that is relevant.
- The assessment of performance and of professional development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period.

Monitoring and review

The governing board and headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements, including monitoring the impact on workload.

The governing board and headteacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years in line with the school's Records Management Policy and in accordance with DfE guidance.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis. The next scheduled review date for this policy is September 2025.

Appendix: guidance from *nationalcollege.com*

What does the new government guidance mean for schools and teacher performance?

Changes to the Teacher Appraisal guidance for schools announced in July 2024, alongside the approval of pay rises for teachers and school leaders, were welcome news, and echo a significant shift in approach that we have been observing with BlueSky member schools for a while now.

The refreshed guidance emphasises that the appraisal process “should be intrinsically supportive and developmental, conducted within a school culture that values openness and fairness. Appraisal should be a nonbureaucratic process that recognises, encourages and validates a teacher’s commitment to professional development, pedagogical excellence and effective performance.”

This approach chimes strongly with the developmental approach that we explored in our 2021 research fact file ***The Emerging Revolution Research Report***, and as outlined in the guidance paper we published in collaboration with the Association of School and College Leaders last year: ***Changing approaches to performance management***.

Meanwhile, the new guidance release by the government for Managing Teachers’ and Leaders’ Pay included the long-awaited announcement that schools will no longer be required to implement a policy for performance-related pay (PRP):

“From the 2024/25 academic year, the requirement for objectives and the appraisal process to lead to performance-related pay outcomes for teachers and leaders will be removed. The statutory requirement to make a pay decision following the completion of the appraisal process remains.”

What does this mean for schools and teacher performance?

While many schools have already shifted their approach to appraisal, we believe this will have a significant positive impact in schools. The link between teacher pay and performance criteria that is based on numerical data targets, can produce a ‘high-stakes’ culture that increases stress and discourages creativity and collaboration. Many sector experts believe this has contributed to the teacher recruitment and retention crisis.

Removing this link opens up the opportunity for teacher appraisal to focus on activity that will truly have an impact on student outcomes: targeted and ongoing professional development. It goes without saying that strategic school improvement cannot exist without staff development; teachers need to be supported to be the best they can be and understand how their work contributes to the achievement of the school’s priorities.

Most schools are already undertaking this process to ensure staff are up to date with evidence-based approaches to classroom practice and to support students, for example with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), as well as addressing staff well-being and retention. However, some schools still do not link CPD with performance management, which can mean it is not the focus in appraisal conversations. These schools may be considering how to measure success if there is no longer a requirement for performance criteria based on quantitative data.

How can schools measure teacher performance based on development?

Teacher appraisal is still key to this process; schools need a robust and rigorous approach that enables leaders to evaluate teachers' skillsets and identify areas for development, as well as areas of expertise. If we look at the guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), the following points may be helpful for schools that are shifting their approach at this time:

- Teacher objectives should be aspirational yet achievable, and based on success criteria which **are in their control**.
- Throughout the appraisal cycle, teachers should receive **informal feedback** on their performance and development areas.
- Ensure that appraisers alongside appraisees identify **relevant sources of evidence**, at the point of objective setting, including those that will routinely be gathered as part of normal school activity, including monitoring the quality of provision.
- Policies and processes should be proportionate and use evidence in appraisal decisions that is readily available from **day-to-day practice** in school.

Of course, all teachers will be regularly assessed against the National Teachers' Standards, and may already receive training and development that supports them to attain and improve these skills, but schools may also set targeted objectives that are linked to specific school priorities, such as overcoming behaviour challenges. It is important to note that what successful achievement of appraisal objectives looks like will depend on the specific context of the school.

A core element of the developmental approach to appraisal is informal feedback – the opportunity for ongoing, non-judgemental conversations with a line manager, mentor or coach to discuss incremental progress on appraisal objectives and gain guidance on the next steps or training required to ensure those goals are achievable. These conversations are fundamental to ensuring that progress stays on track, but also ensure that objectives can be 'agile' and change if circumstances require.

Key to the success of this approach is documenting conversations so that appraisees can reflect back on their progress throughout the appraisal cycle and see the impact on their practice, as well as maintaining an open and fair process.

Supporting continuous development without adding to workload

In many schools, these conversations already take place, alongside regular quality assurance or evaluation practices such as lesson visits, instructional coaching, work scrutiny and peer feedback. Unlike the formal 'high-stakes' lesson observation practice of the past, these school monitoring processes are designed to offer focused, specific feedback that feeds into line manager or coaching conversations, without creating additional stress through having to 'perform' for a one-off event.

Ideally these processes are built into day-to-day practice so that they become routine, and a range of methods will be used, so that the focus is not limited to one area of teaching practice. It is important to note that feedback gathered through monitoring and coaching should be recorded and shared with the teacher/appraisee in a manner that allows them to review it with their line manager or mentor. Appraisees and Appraisers should maintain a shared record of the steps taken to improve practice, whether that is professional learning or a coaching conversation, that provides evidence when it comes to the review at the end of the appraisal cycle.

However, it is also important to note that the DfE guidance states that appraisal should be a "non-bureaucratic" process, and "that methods of assessing teacher performance do not add to teacher workload."

We are delighted to see that the guidance recommends the use of **online solutions to support the practice of recording and managing appraisal processes.**