



# Appraisal Policy

## Homerswood Primary and Nursery School

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

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

## **2. SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of this policy is to set out a framework for clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of all employees.

The framework also seeks to support an individual's development within the context of the plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected.

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

This policy applies to all employees except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (e.g. ECTs) and those who are subject to capability procedures. It does not form part of an individual's contract of employment and may be varied at any time.

## **3. THE APPRAISAL PERIOD**

The appraisal period will run for twelve months from 01 September to 31 August.

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, however the length of the period and nature of the objectives will be determined by the duration of their contract.

## **4. APPOINTING APPRAISERS**

The Headteacher will be appraised by a subgroup of 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 Headteacher will decide who will appraise other employees, this will usually be in line with normal reporting structures.

## **5. SETTING OBJECTIVES**

Objectives for each employee will be set by the appraiser as soon as practicable after the start of each appraisal period. Due consideration should be given to the work-life balance of the employee. The objectives set for each employee will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the role and level of experience. Objectives and appraisal discussions will not be based on employee generated data and predictions, or solely on the assessment data for a single group of pupils.

The objectives set for each employee will, if achieved, contribute to the plans for improving the educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils. Objectives should also have a strong focus on effective professional development to ensure that employees stay up to date with the latest methodologies, technologies, and educational research.

The appraiser and employee 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 significantly, such as but not limited to an employee going on maternity leave, or undergoing surgery/medical treatment, to take account of the anticipated absence and to allow the employee to meet reduced and attainable targets.

Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, each employee will be informed of the standards against which that employee's performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. All teachers will be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called "Teachers' Standards" published in July 2011. All other employees in roles where there are national standards will be measured against those as part of their appraisal.

Performance is assessed against their objectives, and relevant standards applicable to the role.

The appraiser will need to set out what they will take into account when making judgements as to whether employees have met their objectives and the relevant standards.

Evidence to be used in the performance management process should relate to objectives, be agreed in advance and be readily available from day-to-day practice. Numerical targets should not be set if it is beyond the employee'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.

## **6. OBSERVATIONS**

We believe that observation of classroom, leadership and work practice and other responsibilities can be important, both as a way of assessing employees' performance to identify strengths and areas for development, and as a way of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion.

For support staff, work scrutiny will be carried out by those with knowledge of the employee's work as far as reasonably practicable. Where support staff are delivering lessons, for cover or supervision purposes for example, lesson observations may be necessary to assess objectives where relevant.

The amount of observation that takes place will not normally exceed 3 hours of formal observation in a particular appraisal cycle. Formal observation will usually be with prior notification, most likely agreed as part of objective setting.

Additional formal observation may be deemed necessary in circumstances where concerns arise such that it is felt appropriate to facilitate and monitor the effectiveness of management support. This would usually be explained at the time concerns are raised with an employee.

Formal observation outlined above excludes school reviews, Ofsted visits, learning walks with a specific focus e.g., pupil premium provision or a department review. The areas excluded cover circumstances where it is a whole school or department focus rather than an individual focus.

Informal drop in observations and wider school or department reviews will not result in formal outcomes being given. These are not documented for an individual employee and do not form part of a measure against an employee's annual appraisal. Anything identified as an issue outside of formal observation will be revisited in accordance with this policy and/or the capability policy as appropriate.

## **7. DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT**

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. We wish to encourage a culture in which all employees take responsibility for improving their practice through appropriate professional development.

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

## **8. FEEDBACK**

Employees will receive constructive feedback on 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 areas of strength as well as any areas that require further development.

## **9. REVIEWING PERFORMANCE**

The school will set out what evidence they will take into account when making judgements about an employee's 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.

We believe that a range of different methods should be utilised, in a supportive fashion, to assess performance.

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

## **10. ASSESSMENT AGAINST STANDARDS**

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

## **11. ANNUAL ASSESSMENT**

Each employee's performance will be assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the school leader, 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 employee will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period – and have opportunity to comment on – an appraisal report. The appraisal report will include:

- details of the employee's objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- an assessment of the performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards;
- an assessment of their 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, and in keeping with the Pay Policy and/or relevant terms and conditions of employment;

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

Recommendations on pay will be referred to the school leader before being submitted to the Governing Body for consideration.

Disputes concerning pay arising from the appraisal process will be dealt with through the appeal process set out in the Pay Policy.

## **12. INFORMAL SUPPORT**

Except in the most serious cases of persistent failures to meet job expectations and standards, resulting in negative consequences on the 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 the employee's performance the appraiser will meet the employee to:

- inform them that they are going to be receiving informal support due to performance concerns;
- give clear and specific feedback to the employee about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the employee 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 employee in a collaborative manner to establish objectives and timelines, considering the employee'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. We may 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 employee 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 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.

## **13. TRANSITION TO CAPABILITY**

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.