

APPRAISAL FOR TEACHERS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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1. INTRODUCTION

School Partnership Trust Academies (SPTA) aspires to be the best provider of education within the communities it serves and to deliver the highest outcomes for young people. To achieve its vision and mission, appraisal in SPTA will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all teachers have the skills and support needed to carry out their role effectively and to ensure they are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop as teachers.

Revised appraisal arrangements come into force with effect from 1 September 2012. They are set out in the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations) which replace the Education (School Teacher Performance Management) (England) Regulations 2006 (the 2006 Regulations).

This appraisal policy applies to teachers and Principals. The same principles apply to unattached teachers.

SPTA has a separate Capability Policy and Procedure which replaces the statutory guidance 'Capability Procedures for Teachers' issued in July 2000. These capability procedures apply to all teachers and support staff about whose performance there are serious concerns that the appraisal process, designed to be developmental and supportive, has been unable to address.

2. PURPOSE

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of:

- The overall performance of teachers, and the Principal

The policy will be supportive and developmental within the context of the academy's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of all teachers.

The Appraisal Policy will also be used to address any concerns about a teacher's performance at the earliest possible opportunity. If concerns are such that they cannot be resolved through appraisal, consideration will be given to the commencement of the capability procedure. This policy therefore sets out the arrangements within the appraisal process that will apply when teachers fall below the levels of competence that are expected of them.

Where the Principal and other teachers are eligible for pay progression, the assessment of performance throughout the cycle, against the objectives and performance criteria specified in the appraisal statement, will be the basis on which the recommendation is made by the reviewer.

3. APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

This policy covers appraisal, and applies to the Principal and to all teachers employed by the academy, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. NQTs) and those for whom the appraisal process has been suspended as they are subject to the academy's separate Capability Policy and Procedure.

Appraisal in SPTA academies 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 ensure that teachers are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop as teachers.

4. THE APPRAISAL PERIOD

The appraisal period will run for twelve months from 1 September to 31 August with the review meetings for that period running from 1 September to be completed by 31 October. Any pay decisions will be back dated annually to 1 September.

Teachers who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year but of one term or more 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 on a pro rata basis.

There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when teachers begin or end employment with an academy. Where a teacher ceases employment other than at the end of the appraisal period, the appraisal period ends on the last day of employment. Where a teacher starts their employment at the academy part way through an appraisal cycle, the Principal or, in the case where the employee is the Principal, the Regional Director, or in the case where the employee is the Regional Director, the Chief Executive, 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 all other teachers as soon as possible.

Where a teacher transfers to a new post within the academy part way through a cycle, the Principal or, in the case where the employee is the Principal, the Regional Director shall determine whether the cycle should begin again and whether the appraiser should change following consultation with the teacher/ Principal.

5. APPOINTING APPRAISERS

The Principal/Education Advisory Body (EAB) will ensure that all appraisers are qualified teachers and that a teacher's appraiser will normally be their line manager where the Principal delegates this responsibility. The Principal/EAB will ensure that all appraisers are suitably trained.

5.1 APPRAISAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PRINCIPAL

The Principal will be appraised by the Regional Director.

5.2 APPRAISAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR ALL OTHER TEACHERS

The Principal will decide who will appraise other teachers in line with 5 (para 1).

6. QUALITY ASSURANCE OF APPRAISAL STATEMENTS

SPTA is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness in the operation of the appraisal policy for all teaching staff. To be fair and transparent, assessments of performance will be properly rooted in evidence. The Principal will ensure fairness by:

Moderating a sample of appraisal reports to check that the objectives recorded and pay recommendations made in the reports of teachers at the academy:

- Are consistent between those who have similar experience and similar levels of responsibility
- Comply with the academy's appraisal and pay policies, the regulations and the requirements of equality legislation

7. SETTING OBJECTIVES

The Executive Principal's/Principal's objectives will be set by the Regional Director, after consultation with the Executive Principal/Principal and Chair of the EAB.

Executive Principals will set objectives for Heads of Academy following consultation with the Head of Academy and Chair of the EAB.

Objectives for each teacher will be set at 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 role and level of experience.

The objectives will have regard to what can reasonably be expected of the teacher in the context of their role, the Teachers' Standards, responsibilities and experience consistent with the principle of achieving a satisfactory work/life balance.

Objectives should focus on (a) improving the education of pupils at that academy; and (b) the implementation of any plan of the EAB designed to improve that academy's educational provision and performance.

The Teachers' Standards must not be used as a checklist against which the appraisee's performance is judged. Assessment against the standards should start from the premise that all teachers are meeting the standards.

The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the final decision on the allocation of objectives rests with the appraiser.

Objectives may be revised if circumstances change, for example, objectives set are no longer a priority for the individual's professional development.

The objectives set for each teacher will, if achieved, contribute to the effective delivery of the academy's plans for improving its educational provision and performance and for improving the education of pupils at that academy. The agreed objectives set will contain a description of what success may look like and identify the support/professional development required.

At the start of each appraisal period, each teacher will be informed of the standards against which his/her performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. All teachers will be assessed against the set of standards contained in the 'Teachers' Standards' document published in July 2011, which is effective from 1 September 2012.

Every teacher within SPTA will have agreed appraisal objectives which are proportionate to need and will relate to the teachers' standards for the following areas:

1. Achievement including pupil progress and attainment
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Wider professional effectiveness including CPD
4. Leadership and Management responsibility where appropriate

Under normal circumstances teachers will agree no more than three objectives. Where teachers work part time, objectives should be set taking into account their hours of work and their part time status.

Where members of staff have returned to work following a period of extended absence, objectives and timescales may need to be adjusted as part of the reintegration to work and account may need to be taken when setting objectives for teachers who have a disability.

All teachers in the academy should have equal access to the support required in the areas identified for development.

8. REVIEWING PERFORMANCE

8.1 REVIEW AND PLANNING MEETING

The Review and Planning Meeting is a critical part of the appraisal process. At this meeting, all factors against which the teacher's performance is to be appraised should be made clear, as outlined below, and set out in the appraisal report:

- Review/Assessment against objectives set from the previous cycle
- SMART objectives
- Observations
- Evidence

- Success Criteria
- Training/Development and support, if required
- Pay recommendation (if applicable)

8.2 REVIEWING PROGRESS

Progress will be reviewed during and at the end of the appraisal cycle. Assessment of performance against all objectives will be based on the success criteria set at the beginning of the cycle or in line with any in-year adjustments to objectives which take place as part of an interim review.

8.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The academy believes that monitoring and evaluation 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 academy improvement more generally. All monitoring and evaluation will be carried out to support the individual to achieve the agreed objectives or address any performance concerns and be delivered in a supportive fashion.

Evidence relevant to the objectives will be used and discussed with the teacher at the review and planning meeting.

8.4 LESSON OBSERVATIONS

There will be a limit of three hours observation per year for all purposes unless a teacher's practice is causing concern.

There will be a maximum of three observations unless a teacher's practice is causing concern.

Both the focus and the timing of observations will be agreed at the planning meeting but this can be reviewed at any point throughout the cycle by either the appraiser or the appraisee, through agreement.

There is no requirement to use any or all of the three hours. The amount and focus of the classroom observation should be discussed at a planning meeting at the start of the appraisal cycle. The amount should be proportionate to the individual's need. This information should be recorded in the planning and review statement/appraisal report.

Written feedback on any observation should be provided within five days of the observation.

9. DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

SPTA recognises the importance of appraisal and that it is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development and 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 academy improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

10. FEEDBACK

For the purpose of professional development, the appraisee (Principal and other teachers) will receive constructive developmental feedback on their performance throughout the appraisal period. This will also include feedback, as soon as practicable, after any monitoring and evaluation activity has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas of concern that need attention.

11. CONCERNS ABOUT PERFORMANCE

Discussions regarding poor performance should not come as a surprise to the teacher as concerns should have been raised appropriately and informally wherever possible during normal working hours. Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance, SPTA recommends that prior to entering the formal capability procedure; a support programme is put in place in consultation with the employee. The support programme should be scheduled to take place over a six week period and followed with a review meeting to reflect on the programme.

The employee will be invited to a meeting, in writing, to discuss the concerns and to agree the appropriate support programme.

During the meeting, the Principal/Senior Leader, or nominated person, should:

- Discuss aspects of work performance that do not meet the required standard(s)
- Listen to the employee's responses
- Identify required support and training
- Identify and agree targets
- Identify the timetable for improvement
- Agree an action / support plan
- Agree record keeping and evidence gathering measures
- Set a date for the support programme review meeting (six weeks)

All of the above should be recorded in writing and made available to relevant parties.

Throughout the duration of the support programme, the employee should raise any concerns regarding the provision of support, training or other resources that have been identified during the support programme, at the earliest opportunity.

At the end of the six week support programme, a review meeting must take place with the employee to review their progress against the agreed targets and action plan.

At this meeting, the Principal/Senior Leader, or nominated person, will review all of the evidence gathered during the duration of the support programme and discuss the outcomes with the employee. The employee will also be given the opportunity to respond.

The Principal/Senior Leader has the following options to consider at the end of this meeting:

- Where sufficient improvement has been made and agreed targets have been achieved, the employee will be deemed as having completed the support programme and, other than normal procedures, no further action will be taken.
- Where there is little or no improvement, the employee will be informed that they will be moved into the formal capability procedure.

The outcome of this meeting will be confirmed in writing to the employee.

12. ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period at the end of the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the appraisal period in interim meetings.

The assessment of performance will be made against the agreed objectives. Teachers will receive their written appraisal reports by 31 October and by 31 December for the Principal. The appraisal report will include:

- Details of the teacher's SMART objectives for the appraisal period in question including success criteria and timescales.
- An assessment of the teacher's performance of their role and responsibilities against their agreed objectives and the relevant standards applicable to the teacher.
- An assessment of the teacher's training and development needs and identification of any action or support that should be taken to address them.
- A recommendation on pay where that is relevant.
- A section for the teacher and appraiser to add their own comments.

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

13. PAY PROGRESSION BASED ON PERFORMANCE

Within SPTA, all teachers can expect to receive regular, constructive feedback on their performance and are subject to annual appraisal that recognises their strengths, informs plans for their future development, and helps to enhance their professional practice. The arrangements for teacher appraisal are set out in the SPTA's Appraisal Policy.

Decisions regarding pay progression will be made with reference to the teachers' appraisal reports and the pay recommendations they contain. In the case of NQTs, whose appraisal arrangements are different, pay decisions will be made by means of the statutory induction process. NQTs will be awarded pay progression on the successful completion of induction.

It will be possible for a 'no progression' determination to be made and this may be without recourse to the capability procedure. Reviews will be deemed to be successful unless significant concerns about standards of performance have been raised, in writing, with the teacher, during the annual appraisal cycle.

To be fair and transparent, assessments of performance will be properly rooted in evidence. The Principal will ensure fairness by:

Moderating a sample of appraisal reports to check that the objectives recorded and pay recommendations made in the reports of teachers at the academy:

- Are consistent between those who have similar experience and similar levels of responsibility
- Comply with the academy's appraisal and pay policies, the regulations and the requirements of equality legislation

Teachers' appraisal reports will contain pay recommendations. Final decisions about whether or not to accept a pay recommendation will be made by the Principal/SPTA having regard to the appraisal report and taking into account advice from the appraiser.

The Principal/SPTA may decide to award additional increments where performance has exceeded academy expectations.

14. APPEALS

The Principal and other teachers have a right of appeal against any of the entries in their appraisal statements following the completion of the quality assurance process. Where a teacher wishes to appeal on the basis of more than one entry on the appraisal statement this would constitute one appeal hearing.

The appeals process is set out in Appendix 2.

15. CONFIDENTIALITY AND RETENTION OF RECORDS

The appraisal process and the statements generated within it will be treated with the strictest confidentiality at all times. The Principal/EAB will ensure that access to appraisal records is restricted to enable key staff to undertake their management responsibilities and that the appropriate arrangements are in place for all appraisal records to be retained securely and confidentially for a minimum period of 6 years.

SPTA recognises that Ofsted will ask the academy to provide anonymised information of the outcomes of the most recent appraisal of all teachers. Where the application of the capability process is required, an individual teacher's appraisal information will be made available but restricted to those staff and named members of the EAB as required by the procedures.

16. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed, initially in one year and subsequently every three years or when there are changes to relevant legislation. An annual written report from the Principal recording appraisal arrangements will be provided to the Academy EAB for notification on an annual basis which will then be moderated by regional directors to ensure parity across SPTA. An annual report will be provided to the SPTA National JNC for notification and review.

A copy of the 2012 Regulations will be available for all staff on the Academy VLE.