

St James' Church of England Junior School

(Voluntary Controlled)



Policy for Appraising Teachers Performance

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1. PURPOSE

This policy sets out how the school will improve outcomes for children/students, and raise the morale of teachers, by motivating teachers to up-date their skills and improve their performance. This policy should be used alongside the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning processes.

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.

2. APPLICATION OF THE APPRAISAL POLICY

This policy applies to the Head Teacher and to all qualified teachers employed at the school except those on contracts of less than one term and those undergoing induction (*NQTs*) or teachers on capability procedures.

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.

3. THE APPRAISAL PERIOD

The appraisal period will run for twelve months normally in accordance with the school year.

Teachers who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year will be appraised in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of the period will be determined by the duration of their 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.

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.

4. APPOINTING APPRAISERS

All appraisers of teachers, other than those appraising Head Teachers, will be teachers and 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 his/her appraiser, s/he may submit a written request to the chair of governors for that governor to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request.

Teachers

The choice of appraiser is for the Head Teacher. Where teachers have an objection to the Head Teacher's choice, their concerns will be carefully considered and, where possible, an alternative appraiser will be offered. All appraisers appointed by the Head Teacher will be qualified teachers and will have current or recent teaching experience.

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 herself/himself or delegate those duties to another teacher 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 she/he delegates 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.

5. 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.

Objectives will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) and will be appropriate to the appraisee's role and level of experience. In setting the objectives, appraisers will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in the context of roles, responsibilities and experience, consistent with the school's strategy for achieving a work/life balance for all staff. Appraisees may at any point append their comments alongside their objectives.

The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives. These objectives may be revised if circumstances change. The school operates a system of moderation to ensure that all appraisers are working to the same standards. Objectives will be moderated across the school to ensure that they are consistent between teachers with similar experience and levels of responsibility. Should the objectives not be agreed, the final decision on allocation of objectives rests with the Head Teacher.

The agreed objectives will contain a description of what success may look like. Where use of numerical objectives is appropriate, these will be reasonable, in the circumstances in which the teacher works and it will be recognised that factors outside teachers' control may significantly affect success.

Setting more than three objectives, or, for example, using sub-targets can lead to teachers experiencing unreasonable workload and pressure, making the objectives more difficult to achieve. Therefore, other than in exceptional circumstances, no teacher will be given more than three objectives.

The objectives set for each teacher are intended to contribute to the school's plans for improving the school's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at that school and will take into account the professional aspirations of the teacher.

The appraiser will take into account the effects of an individual's circumstances, including any disability, when agreeing objectives. For example, this might include a reasonable adjustment to allow an individual slightly longer to complete a task than might otherwise be the case. When staff returns from a period of extended absence, objectives may be adjusted to allow them to readjust to their working environment.

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. Teachers will be assessed against the appropriate set of standards contained in the document "Teachers' Standards". The Head Teacher or governing body (as appropriate) will need to consider whether certain teachers should be assessed against other sets of standards published by the Secretary of State or other body that are relevant to them. For QTLS holders, that may include the overarching professional standards for teachers in the lifelong learning sector, held by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service.

The teacher will be provided with a written record of this first stage of the appraisal cycle.

6. PAY PROGRESSION

Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the recommendation made by the appraiser will be based on the assessment of the appraisee's performance against the agreed objectives. The decision made by the relevant decision-making body will also be based on the statutory criteria and guidance set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD) and the relevant teachers' 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 STPCD. 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.

7. REVIEWING PERFORMANCE

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 at least the end of the next school day and written feedback within 5 working days, unless circumstances make this impossible.

Qualified teachers will carry out all classroom observations.

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 be in accordance with the school's observation protocol Appendix 1 which includes provision for 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 learning walks and drop-in protocols, Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

For the purpose of professional development, feedback about lesson observations should be developmental, not simply a judgement using Ofsted grades.

This school will use the findings of each observation, including appraisal observations, for other management requirements (for example subject area reviews), thereby seeking to minimise the total number of occasions on which teachers are observed.

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 as part of the appraisal process.

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 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, will form a part of the Head Teacher's annual report to the governing body about the operation of the appraisal process in the school.

With regard to the provision of CPD in the case of competing demands on the school budget, a decision on relative priority will be taken with regard to the extent to which:

a) the training and support will help the School to achieve its priorities;
and

b) the CPD identified is essential for an appraisee to meet their objectives.

Account will be taken in a review meeting of where it has not been possible for teachers to fully meet their performance criteria because the support recorded in the planning statement has not been provided.

8. MID YEAR AND ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the Head Teacher, the Governing Body must consult the external adviser.

A formal mid-year review will take place for all teachers, including the Head Teacher. A mid-year review enables a two way discussion to take place on the progress made against the appraisal targets. It is also an opportunity to review whether the objectives set are still relevant and whether any changes need to be made. It also presents a valuable opportunity to review whether the appraisee is getting sufficient support and challenge to enable them to successfully meet their objectives.

The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each 12 month appraisal period and have the opportunity to comment on a written appraisal report. 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 against the relevant standards;
- an assessment of the teacher's training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- a recommendation on pay where that is relevant (N.B. pay recommendations need to be made by 31 December for Head Teachers and by 31 October for other teachers);
- a space for the teacher's own comments

A review meeting will take place to discuss the content of the report and any further action required and to inform objective setting for the next cycle. In some circumstances an interim review meeting may be appropriate.

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

9. TEACHERS EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES

The following section does not apply to teachers who, whilst seeking to achieve challenging objectives, are consistently meeting the teachers' standards.

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, that the teacher is experiencing difficulties, the appraiser, the Head Teacher (or a member of the leadership team), will, meet with the teacher (as part of the appraisal process) to:

- give clear written feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns;
- give the teacher at least 5 working days' notice that a meeting will be held to discuss targets for improvement alongside a programme of support, and inform the teacher that he/she has the right to be assisted by a representative of an independent trade

union or work place colleague, and at any future meetings where capability will be discussed;

- in consultation with the teacher at the above meeting, an action plan with support will be established (for example coaching, training, in-class support, mentoring, structured observations, visits to other classes or schools or discussions with advisory teachers), that will help address those specific concerns;
- make clear how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed;
- explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made.

The teacher's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and a reasonable time given for the teacher's performance to improve. This will depend upon the circumstances, but will be for a period of specified weeks, with appropriate support as agreed in the action plan, in order that the aim of recovering and improving performance can be achieved. During this monitoring period the teacher will be given regular feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.

If sufficient progress is made such that the teacher is performing at a level that indicates there is no longer a possibility of capability procedures being invoked the teacher should be informed of this at a formal meeting with the appraiser or Head Teacher. Following this meeting the appraisal process will continue as normal.

If no, or insufficient, improvement has been made over this period, the teacher will be invited to a transition meeting to determine whether formal capability proceedings need to be commenced or the appraisal process remains in place. The teacher may be assisted by a trade union representative or work colleague and will have at least 5 working days notice of the meeting.

Appeals

Appraisees have a right of appeal against any of the written stages of the appraisal process. This should be through use of the grievance procedure. Following pay determination, the teacher can exercise their right of appeal using the pay appeal procedure. At appeal hearings, teachers may be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague.

10. GENERAL PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THIS POLICY

ACAS Code Of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

The conduct of the formal capability stage will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the ACAS Code of Practice.

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

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 policy and will normally be referred to the Occupational Health Service to assess the member of staff's health and fitness for continued employment and the appropriateness or otherwise of continuing with monitoring or formal procedures. In some cases it may be appropriate for formal procedures to continue during a period of sickness absence. However, the views of the Occupational Health Physician will always be taken into account before a decision is reached.

Grievances

Where a member of staff raises a grievance during the appraisal or capability process, the appraisal or capability process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and appraisal or capability cases are related it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

Confidentiality & Professional Relationships

The appraisal and capability processes will be treated with confidentiality. Only the appraiser's line manager or, where s/he had more than one, each of her/his 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 her/his 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 appraiser will consult with, and seek to secure the agreement of, the appraisee before seeking information from other colleagues about the work of the appraisee.

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.

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 and capability policies 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
- 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.

Retention

The Governing Body and Head Teacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed, (see confidentiality above).

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND FEEDBACK PROTOCOL

Introduction

Classroom observation is an important tool in the appraisal process. All assessments must be rooted in evidence. The most valuable and informative evidence is that which is obtained first hand. Observations are intended to be part of a non-threatening process, which is intended to enhance teacher performance, support teachers' personal and professional development and improve pupil achievement.

Observations should be proportionate and multipurpose, in that they should provide information for a variety of schools monitoring purposes.

a) Arranging Observations

1. Set a definite day and time for the observation with staff. Agree the maximum length of the observation. These arrangements should be made five working days in advance.
2. Clearly define and share with staff the purpose of the observation, e.g. observing classroom management, level of standards of pupil's attainment and / or progress, progress in particular subject, newly qualified teacher support.
3. Agree how the feedback will occur: (within 1265 hours) e.g. end of the lesson, after school, non-contact time.
4. Define your role in the classroom before the observation e.g. to observe and ask question of the pupils, not to help teach a small group, not to judge pupils final work or give out stickers etc
5. Ask staff to make it clear to pupils you are coming to the lesson. Get them to share the purpose e.g. to look at how well they are doing in writing, science, how well they are behaving etc.

b) During Observations

1. Find a comfortable place where you can see both the teacher and pupils and record your observation and impressions.
2. Don't interact with pupils immediately. Set the tone of the type of observation you are doing at the beginning.
3. Have a checklist of things to observe but have room for flexibility. Don't try to do too many things at once.

4. Watch how the teacher works with pupils as groups or individually.
5. Record what they do briefly and add an evaluative comment e.g. useful interaction with pupils, good questioning, lack of clear instructions, failed to successfully address inappropriate behaviour.
6. When interacting with pupils remember your purpose e.g. to judge their understanding of teaching, appropriateness of task for pupils etc. Avoid teaching but question and interact if you need to check their understanding or whether they are being stretched etc
7. Thank the teacher and pupils before leaving the classroom. Give positive comment if you can. Leave feedback to the set time.

c) Feeding back from Classroom Observations

1. Set a convenient time and place to feedback. Preferably make it comfortable and pleasant but set a cut off time
2. Redefine the purpose of the observation and the feedback: i.e. supportive, examining implementation off the school policy, critical friend, part of appraisal, competency or discipline etc.
3. Depending on the purpose of the observation either ask the teacher's opinion of how the lesson went first or give your view and then ask for comment.
4. Make sure you list all the things that went well or that show good teaching, response, attainment etc., (they'll be waiting for but!!)
5. Make sure you say the most important things that need improving and concentrate on those. Don't get side tracked on the little things that could be improved. You may need to limit the improvements to 3-5.
6. Decide and agree upon ways in which improvements can be made and how support can be given (e.g. observing others, visits to other schools, courses etc.). Ensure that the improvements that are needed are made quite clear and linked to planned professional development.
7. Set and agree targets for improvement. Set a time for next observation to ascertain progress.

8. Before the end of the feedback reinforce the good things in the lesson.
9. The written record of the observation should be made available within five working days of the observation. The teacher observed may add a written comment if they wish.

LEARNING WALKS PROTOCOL

This document defines a learning walk as 'A planned examination of an area of school life by gathering a 'snapshot' of information'. They are valuable sources of information to support the school leadership in its self-evaluation and school improvement planning process.

Effective learning walks-

- Are focused and targeted. These can be best achieved by framing a question or 'hypothesis' to investigate.
- Target a specific area of school life. This could be a subject, an aspect of teaching and learning (e.g. consistency in the use of Afl strategies), or another area of school life (e.g. pupil participation, or behaviour).
- Are planned for. They are likely to be most effective if they are fully integrated into the school development planning and self-evaluation cycle. All members of the school community should be aware why they are taking place, and adequate notice should be given to those members of staff who are likely to be visited as part of the evidence gathering process. The frequency of learning walks for individual teachers should be taken into account in planning the programme.
- Involve more than one person, possibly from different areas of the school. This allows for discussion about the impact of the findings on future school development needs.

How does a learning walk differ from a formal appraisal observation?

- Learning walks are designed to seek evidence from a range of sources. This may include looking at classroom practice and scrutinies of planning and pupil work. The impact of the teaching and learning of one person should not be the focus of a learning walk. Feedback, and reports produced should look at a wider issue – e.g. 'Maths in year 3', 'The use of success criteria in key stage 1'.
- Learning walks should provide a snapshot of regular practice within the school. Only in extreme circumstances should staff be asked to alter their normal timetable or daily practice to facilitate a learning walk.
- It is appropriate for the practice of unqualified and newly qualified teachers to be viewed as part of a learning walk. Careful consideration, however, should be given to inclusion in the process of teachers who have been advised that they are subject to capability procedures.

What might be the outcomes of a learning walk?

- It is likely that 'whole school' issues will emerge from the learning walk, which can be fed into the school improvement and self-evaluation process.
- Sharing good practice across the school.

- Should an individual be viewed making an outstanding contributing to pupil progress then consideration should be given to acknowledging verbally their input and to seeking ways of finding opportunities for that staff member to share and model their practice to others.
- Should a cause for concern arise during a learning walk, the matter should be discussed with the teacher at the earliest opportunity and appropriate action taken using personnel procedures where necessary.
- The grading of lesson observations is not an appropriate part of the feedback.

DROP INS PROTOCOL

- To ensure that the school is operating effectively it is often necessary for school leaders to 'drop in' to classrooms.

This may take place for a number of reasons, examples include-

- To diagnose whether school policies are being followed
- To allow the leadership to make judgements about consistencies and inconsistencies within the school
- To allow leadership to look at outcomes in context.
- To ensure that staff are supported in behaviour management
- To allow postholders to get a feel of the provision relevant to their area of responsibility (this may be subject or phase or year group specific)
- As a reaction or response to recent events either within school, locally or nationally.
- Drop ins should only be carried out by staff to enable them to carry out their specific responsibilities.
- Drop ins could occur at any time and require no prior notice. Time spent in any one teaching space during a drop in would not exceed 15 minutes.
- Findings from drop ins fall outside of the school's appraisal procedures. Findings from drop ins should not be used to make Ofsted graded judgements about any individuals teaching within the school.
- Findings from drop ins could be used to inform the school's self-evaluation processes.
- The timing and nature of drop ins should be sensitive to not disturbing the learning activity.
- Should anything be observed during a drop in that suggests that the education of pupils is at risk, school policies are not being followed, or safeguarding issues are raised, the member of staff will be informed and follow up action taken. This may include unannounced classroom observations. Should an unannounced observation take place all elements of the classroom observation protocol will be followed.

Outcomes of any follow up lesson observation will be considered in the appraisal process to seek to improve teaching practice.

- Drop ins are not focused on formally assessing the teacher they are concerned with the teaching.