

St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

# Teacher Appraisal Policy



“Doing our best for God”

**Signed:** Karen Pearson (Assistant Headteacher)

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## **The Appraisal Cycle**

The below sets out the key elements that should be adhered to during the appraisal process, which spans the academic year. In addition to these key elements, teachers will benefit from regular and ongoing dialogue with their line manager throughout the appraisal cycle to support their development, performance and wellbeing. The model policy provided later in this document elaborates on the specific areas that your policy should address.

### **Autumn term**

All objectives, success criteria, and evidence to be used will be finalised between the appraiser and appraisee. If agreement cannot be reached, they are set by the appraiser. The appraisee can record their disagreement in writing which should then be taken into account at the review stage.

### **Spring and Summer term**

Performance is reviewed against objectives and standards as set out in the school's appraisal policy (such as through lesson visits and ongoing professional dialogue between the relevant parties and mid-year reviews).

Additional support can be provided to the teacher if a need is identified at any point in the appraisal cycle, and this should be documented. Further information can be found in the informal support section of this guidance document.

### **Summer and Autumn term**

At the end of the appraisal year, teachers must receive an appraisal report which includes (amongst other things) an assessment against their objectives and success criteria and the relevant standards.

In addition to assessing a teacher's achievement of objectives, it is important for line managers to also discuss workload, wellbeing, working hours, flexible working opportunities, and career aspirations in a supportive manner. This can help the teacher identify strategies to effectively manage their workload and wellbeing, as well as provide feedback to management for further improvement and retention.

The appraisals process should be intrinsically supportive and developmental, conducted within a school culture that values openness and fairness. Throughout the appraisal cycle, teachers should receive informal feedback on their performance and development areas. There should be early dialogue with teachers that have emerging performance issues, with prompt support put in place to ensure teachers have the appropriate guidance and opportunity to improve in the relevant areas. Guidance on Informal Support is set out on pages 10 & 14.

## **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 educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers.

## **Application of the policy**

"The policy covers appraisal, applies to all teachers and school leaders employed by the school, trust or local authority, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. ECTs) 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 policy also applies to ... (insert any other staff, if appropriate, or delete).

## **Appraisal**

Appraisal in this school will be a supportive and developmental process 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.

## **The Appraisal Period**

"The appraisal period will run for twelve months" from Autumn to Summer. 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 teacher's objectives should take account of the length of contract."

There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when teachers begin or end employment with a school or local authority or when unattached teachers change post within the same authority.

## **Appointing Appraisers**

"The headteacher"/CEO of trust "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."

In this school the task of appraising the school leader, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of three members of the governing body.

The school leader will decide who will appraise other teachers.

## **Setting objectives**

"The headteacher/CEO of trust's objectives will be set by the governing body after consultation with the external adviser". 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.

## **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.

## **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. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

## **Feedback**

Teachers 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 particular areas of strength as well as any areas that require further development.

## **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 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 a HR provider.

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.

### **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”;
- (schools to say here what else, if anything, their appraisal reports will include).

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

***This policy is based on the model policy provided by the DfE.***