

APPRAISAL POLICY – SUPPORT STAFF

PURPOSE

The Trust recognises the importance of staff engagement and the value that an effective appraisal brings to support staff to help them to develop and grow in their role.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Trust recognises the importance of staff engagement and the value that an effective appraisal brings to support staff to help them to develop and grow in their role. An effective appraisal process acknowledges the contribution of support staff, the work that they do and helps them understand how their role contributes to improving outcomes for children/students and to the Trust’s overall vision. Evidence has shown that a formal appraisal process has a positive impact on staff engagement and service outcomes, but it is only one of several informal mechanisms for staff engagement.

2. PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 A ‘Values Based Appraisal’ approach and documentation has been adopted by the Trust which reflects the importance that our values and behaviours have and underpins our aspiration for all pupils/students, staff and academies. It will encourage staff to reflect on how they have demonstrated the Trust values in their work in the past year in addition to their other achievements and challenges in their role.
- 2.2 The appraisal procedure will also be used to address concerns that are raised about a member of staff’s performance. If concerns are such that they cannot be resolved through the appraisal process, these will be addressed as detailed in the guidance under the “Employee experiencing difficulties” section of this policy.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to all non-teaching employees of the Trust who are employed on contracts of employment lasting more than one term and to unqualified teaching staff. This policy does not apply to those who are serving a probation period with the Trust. As soon as the probationer has successfully completed their probation period, they will automatically be placed on the appraisal cycle at the relevant point.
- 3.2 There is no requirement to submit any documentation for this initial review.

4. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES/DELEGATED AUTHORITIES

- 4.1 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has overall responsibility for:
- 4.1.1 Ensuring the effective implementation of this policy;
 - 4.1.2 Providing Local Advisory Board and Trust Board with a written report on the operation of the Trust’s appraisal and capability procedures on an annual basis

4.1.3 Reporting on whether there have been any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination.

4.2 Headteachers and other appropriate senior managers are responsible for:

4.2.1 Ensuring that the policy is implemented effectively within their Academy or area of responsibility;

4.2.2 Ensuring disputes about appraisal objectives are resolved;

4.2.3 Deciding upon pay awards or the with-holding of incremental increases where appropriate;

4.2.4 Ensuring the pay appeal process is administered effectively and fairly.

4.3 Headteachers and line managers (appraisers) have a responsibility to:

- Provide clarity and confirmation of Academy/Trust objectives, vision, values and behaviours and ensure that objectives and priorities are aligned to them. This will provide clarity and guidance for the appraiser and appraisee when setting team and individual objectives.
- Adhere to the guidance set out in this policy to ensure a robust and consistent annual appraisal process within their Academy.
- Ensure that appraisers and appraisees understand their responsibilities in preparing for the appraisal as set out in the appraisal documentation and the appraisal process is applied consistently and fairly across all support staff members.
- Ensure that they and the appraisers in their teams have appropriate skills in delivering effective appraisals and undertake training if required, to ensure that high standards for appraisal are maintained.
- Ensure that appraisers keep up to date records of appraisals and PDPs for all their staff for monitoring purposes.
- Check support staff are up to date with mandatory training.
- Liaise with other manager(s) and share information regarding support and development to ensure efficient use of resources if the employee has another or several job roles.

4.4 Support staff (appraisees) have a responsibility to:

- Be aware of the Academy/Trust objectives, visions, values and behaviours and individual team/service priorities and objectives. Consider how their job and role contributes to the wider Trust purpose and priorities.
- Be aware and understand the importance and value of an effective appraisal process and the potential benefits for improvements to children/students.
- Participate in the appraisal process, understand and adhere to guidance set out in this policy.
- Prepare for their annual appraisal and review meetings and understand their responsibilities in the process.
- Undertake training, learning and development as identified in their PDP.
- Meet the agreed objectives set as part of the appraisal process.
- Seek help and support to prepare for the annual appraisal where appropriate. Be proactive in the process

5. POLICY STATEMENT

The Trust has developed this procedure to reflect the importance it places on providing a supportive and developmental process for employees. The fundamental principle of the policy is to ensure that all employees are able to fully develop their skills and have access to the support they need to undertake their role to the highest standards required within their role. It will also help to ensure employees improve their practice on a continuous basis. Employees will be provided with appropriate support and offered any reasonable adjustments required in accordance with individual needs linked to the Equality Act (2010).

The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 (as amended 2012) places responsibility on the Trust for establishing appraisal procedures and taking appropriate steps to make them known to staff at the Trust.

6. PROCEDURE/PROCESS THE APPRAISAL PERIOD

6.1 The appraisal period will run for twelve months normally from 1 October to 30 September. The general principles include Annual Assessment, Setting Objectives and Reviewing Performance.

6.2 The Trust Values Based Appraisal outlines the process through a '5 step' approach:

Step 1 - Preparation for the appraisal process.

Step 2 - Undertake the appraisal process (Appendix 1): review job role, objectives and achievements from the last year.

Step 3 - Values and Behaviours (Appendix 2). Discuss how the appraisee has have demonstrated each of the Trust values in their work during the past year.

Step 4 - Discuss and agree objectives for the next year.

Step 5 - Discuss and agree appraisee's learning and development needs for a PDP and agree strategies to meet them.

6.3 The appraisal process will take the form of a two-way discussion/conversation between the appraiser and the appraisee about achievements, successes and concerns during the previous year. It will reflect on and discuss how the appraisee has demonstrated the Trust values in their work during the past year and it will review progress towards achieving the set objectives.

6.4 There should be 'no surprises' during the annual appraisal and any concerns that the appraiser may have, should have been addressed as and when such concerns/issues arose during the year as part of the line- management role. The job description and the previous objectives and PDP should be available for reference.

6.5 **New starters:** All employees including new employees should have an annual appraisal within the appraisal window. Where employees join the Trust outside of the appraisal window they should have an initial review with their manager, set objectives and a PDP within 3 months of starting. This will ensure they are clear on how their role aligns with their team/function and Academy/Trust priorities and identifies the learning and development they need in their role. The objectives would then formally be reviewed as part of the annual appraisal during the appraisal window.

6.6 Support Staff with more than one role: There are a number of support staff who hold more than one role. Sometimes the roles are very different with different job descriptions and duties and sometimes the roles may be very similar. Managers of support staff with more than one role may choose to liaise with each other and share information to compliment skills development and ensure efficient use of resources.

6.7 It is expected that all support staff will have at least one appraisal. It is for local managers to determine whether the roles require a different set of objectives and therefore a separate appraisal.

6.8 One to One/Review and Team Meetings: These are an important aspect of the appraisal process as they provide regular contact with the line manager and ongoing support for employees. They are an opportunity for managers (appraisers) to have a two-way/team conversation about current issues or concerns, celebrate and acknowledge success and provide ongoing feedback for staff. It provides time to have discussions about progression of objectives and any learning or development required.

6.9 It is recommended that a minimum of 2 meetings are arranged throughout the year between the appraiser and the appraisee/s at a time and venue to support both parties/teams. Meetings should be recorded, including any actions required by who and when and a copy kept by both appraiser and appraisee.

THE APPRAISEE DOCUMENTATION '5 STEP' APPROACH

6.10 Step 1 – Preparation for the appraisal process 6.10.1 Appraiser gives 2 weeks' notice of the appraisal to enable the staff member to prepare.

6.10.2 Appraiser to direct appraisee to the Appraisal Policy and documentation.

6.10.3 Allocate sufficient time and provide privacy.

6.10.4 Both review last year's PDP/objectives

6.10.5 Appraiser and appraisee to consider progress towards achieving objectives and personal development for discussion. Complete prior to appraisal if appropriate.

6.10.6 Appraisee completes (appraiser to consider in preparation for a discussion) paperwork demonstrating how they have displayed each of the Trust Values in their work over the last 12 months.

6.11 Step 2 – Undertake the appraisal process: review job role, objectives and achievements from the last year

6.11.1 Discuss what has gone well and the challenges faced during the last year.

6.11.2 Discuss the extent to which the individual has met the objectives set and PDP.

6.12 Step 3 – Values and Behaviours

Discuss how the appraisee has demonstrated the Trust values in their work in the past year.
Discuss areas for development.

6.13 Step 4 - Discuss and agree objectives for the next year

- Identify personal objectives for the coming year. Discuss how these will fit with the priorities and objectives of the Academy/Trust.
- Discuss how the appraisee will demonstrate Trust values and behaviours with areas for development.
- Ensure that the objectives are SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and to a timeline.

6.14 Step 5 - Discuss and agree training/learning and development needs to meet objectives

Discuss and agree training/learning and development needs as part of the PDP and agree strategies to meet those needs.

The PDP will be confidentially held by the appraiser and the appraisee and reviewed at agreed meetings. However, there may be occasions when this document will be made available should other circumstances demand, e.g. for capability and/or disciplinary purposes.

LINKS TO PAY

6.15 The Headteacher/appropriate senior manager will take account of the performance management outcomes in making recommendations on salary, where appropriate in accordance with the employee's terms and conditions of employment. This may include recommending the award of any honorarium where the employee's performance exceeds that which could reasonably be expected, and the employee has made a sustained and substantial contribution to the Academy/Trust.

6.16 In exceptional circumstances the Headteacher/appropriate senior manager may recommend withholding an increment where the employee's performance has been unsatisfactory. This will only occur when the employee was previously made aware of the concerns and has been given the opportunity and support to improve his/her performance.

PAY APPEALS

6.17 Appraisees have a right of appeal against any of the entries in the written appraisal report if this would lead to a non-pay progression recommendation. The employee may exercise the right of appeal, assisted by a companion who may be a colleague, a trade union official or a trade union representative.

6.18 The order of proceedings for dealing with appeals is as follows:

6.18.1 The employee receives written confirmation of the pay determination and where applicable the basis on which the decision was made.

6.18.2 If the employee is not satisfied, he/she should seek to resolve this by discussing the matter informally with the decision-maker within ten working days of the decision. This is the manager with ultimate responsibility for the decision and may not be the appraiser where this role has been delegated.

6.18.3 Where this is not possible, or where the employee continues to be dissatisfied, he/she may follow a formal appeal process.

6.18.4 The employee should set down in writing the grounds for questioning the pay decision and send it to the person (or committee) who made the determination, within ten working days of the notification of the decision being appealed against or of the outcome of the discussion referred to above.

6.18.5 The committee or person who made the determination should provide a hearing, within ten working days of receipt of the written appeal, to consider the appeal and give the employee an opportunity to make representations in person. Following the hearing the employee should be informed in writing of the decision. This is the final stage of appeal in respect of pay appeals under this policy.

EMPLOYEES EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES

6.19 Application of this part of the Appraisal procedure should be made only where normal appraisal reviews have been undertaken and the employee has been provided with reasonable feedback and support as part of the appraisal process. In most cases there is an expectation that the employee will have in place an informal support plan or agreement which should be in the form of written evidence, e.g. e mails from the appraisal or line manager, action plans etc. This ensures the employee is clear about expectations of them and alerted to any early warning signs about concerns to do with their performance.

6.20 Where, following annual appraisal or during the review cycle, there are significant concerns about any aspects of the employee's performance these will be addressed via the procedure set out in this section and this is referred to as the employee experiencing difficulties stage.

6.21 When dealing with any employee experiencing difficulties, the objective is to provide support and guidance through the appraisal process in such a way that their performance improves and the problem is, therefore, resolved.

6.22 The employee will be subject to a support plan approach under the employee experiencing difficulties stage where:

- the employee's objectives are found not to be met, including management responsibilities where applicable, and/or
- there is concern that the employee is not making sufficient progress towards achieving their objectives or performing at the appropriate level for their career stage, and/or
- the employee is not demonstrating the values and behaviours of the Trust or is demonstrating behaviours contrary to the intentions of the Trust.

SUPPORT PLAN MEETING

6.23 Under these circumstances, the employee will be given a formal support plan under this employee experiencing difficulties stage of the Appraisal procedure.

6.24 The appropriate senior manager and the employee's appraisal manager will call the employee to a meeting to discuss the concerns. The employee may bring a Trade Union representative or workplace colleague to this meeting, provided this does not unduly delay the meeting taking place, and will be provided with a minimum of 5 working days' notice of the meeting.

6.25 The purpose of the meeting is to clarify areas of concern and put in place special arrangements for the employee by way of an action/support plan. The appraisal manager will attend to provide clarification on areas of concern.

6.26 In consultation with the employee at the meeting, an action plan with support will be established (for example coaching, training, in-class support (if applicable), mentoring), that will help address the specific concerns. The employee will be informed how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed and the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made. This, along with the detailed plan, will be issued in writing to the employee providing clear expectations and warning of the possibility that the employee may be subject to the capability procedure if improvements are not made within the set timescale.

6.27 In exceptional cases, as a result of the support plan meeting, the senior manager may allow a further period of informal review, rather than proceeding to any formal part of the procedure. Such exceptions may include compassionate grounds. Normally, however, the senior manager will put in place a formal support/action plan, which the employee must adhere to.

6.28 Given the support provided already under the appraisal process, typically, the support plan will be for a short period of time, normally a maximum of 5 working weeks after the action plan is put in place, depending on both the nature of the job and concerns about performance. The employee's progress will continue to be monitored during the support plan period, with appropriate support as agreed in the plan, in order that the aim of recovering and improving performance can be achieved. During this monitoring period, the employee will be given regular (usually weekly) feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.

6.29 Following completion of the support plan period, the support plan will be reviewed at a meeting with the employee by the appraisal manager and appropriate senior manager.

6.30 Five days prior to the end of the support plan period the employee should be notified in writing of the review date and that, as before, they may be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or workplace colleague to the meeting. In addition, any documentary evidence which the senior manager will refer to at the meeting will be provided to the employee.

6.31 The review meeting is to determine whether the employee experiencing difficulties has met the standards of improvement previously set or whether the employee should be referred to the capability procedure.

6.32 The status of the meeting must clearly be outlined to the employee; explaining that the review will determine whether they have successfully completed the support plan and addressed the performance concerns and if not, that the outcome may lead to a decision to refer the employee to the capability procedure if progress during the support plan has been insufficient.

OUTCOME OF EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTIES REVIEW – THE TRANSITION MEETING

6.33 The review meeting held at the end of a support plan period may be referred to as a “transition meeting”.

6.34 There are three possible outcomes from the transition meeting:

6.34.1 If the appraiser and appropriate senior manager are satisfied that the employee has made sufficient improvement, the employee will be informed that they have completed the support plan successfully and that the appraisal process will continue as normal. The employee is no longer classed as being an employee “experiencing difficulties”.

6.34.2 If good progress has been made but the performance of the employee is not yet at a level where they will successfully complete the support plan cycle as there remain some areas to address, the outcome of the review will be to apply an agreed continuing programme of support with a further review to be held. The employee should be informed that, in such circumstances, it may be the case that they may not be recommended for pay progression (if appropriate) in the current cycle. Good progress must be maintained, and the employee will be reviewed again on an agreed date, to determine whether they have successfully addressed the remaining concerns or whether they should then transition to the capability procedure. The employee remains classed as experiencing difficulties whilst they conclude the support plan process.

6.34.3 If no, or insufficient, improvement has been made over the support period, the senior manager will inform the employee that they have not met the standards of improvement set for them and they will therefore be referred to the capability procedure.

6.35 The outcome of this meeting will be confirmed in writing.

TRAINING

6.37 It is essential that appraisers have adequate training in this important role to ensure that they have the skills and confidence to deliver high quality appraisals and that appraisees report that the appraisal process is effective and meaningful. The appraisal process will help support, engage and enable support staff to “be the best they can be” in their role.

6.38 Training for appraisers is available. All requests should be made via the Headteacher or HR.

SICKNESS

6.39 If long term sickness absences interrupt the commencement of monitoring or a formal capability procedure, the case will be dealt with in accordance with the Trust’s absence procedures and will normally be referred to the occupational health service to assess the employee’s health and fitness. Advice will also be sought about 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

6.40 Where a member of staff raises a grievance during the appraisal process, the appraisal or capability process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the

grievance and any capability issue identified through the appraisal are related it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

6.41 The appraisal and capability processes will be confidential. Only the appraiser’s line manager or, where s/he had more than one, each of her/his line managers and the Headteacher/appropriate senior managers will be provided with access to the appraisee’s performance review plan.

6.42 The process of gathering evidence for performance review is not expected to compromise normal professional relationships between members of the team. The appraiser will consult with, and seek to secure the agreement of, the appraisee before seeking information from other colleagues about his/her work.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.43 The CEO, with assistance from the Academy Headteachers, will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the Trust’s appraisal arrangements and will provide the Local Advisory Boards and the Trust Board with a written report on the operation of the Trust’s appraisal and capability policies on an annual basis. The report will not identify any individual by name. The report will include an assessment of the impact of these policies on the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The report will include whether there have been any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination.

RETENTION OF RECORDS

6.44 The CEO or Headteacher, in the case of Academy based employees, will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.

APPENDIX 1 VALUES BASED APPRAISAL DOCUMENTATION

A good appraisal is an effective way of helping employees understand the valuable contribution they make to their Academy, their team and the Trust. It makes clear what links ‘the work that I do’ to the Vision and Strategic Priorities of the Academy and the Trust.

The appraisal should not be done in isolation, it should be linked to regular conversations and monitoring (1-1) meetings with the manager/team leader or supervisor. It should also be linked to professional and or any development frameworks relevant to the appraisee’s role. Ongoing issues should be addressed during regular meetings.

This document should be used to record the annual appraisal during the appraisal window. Progress towards achieving objectives will be reviewed through regular meetings (which could be individual or team meetings).

Name	
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Job title	
Department	
Date of Appraisal	
Name of Appraiser	
Job title of Appraiser	

Both the Appraiser and the Appraisee will keep a copy of all appraisal documentation for their own records. To ensure that the Trust and your team has an accurate record of the number of completed appraisals, it is important that you send a completed copy of this appraisal to: Headteacher/appropriate senior manager

The Appraisal Process – 5 Steps

Step 1 - Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give adequate notice of the appraisal to enable staff to prepare • Review job role, last years' objectives and Personal Development Plan (PDP) • Consider and acknowledge current training, professional requirements and monitoring notes • Allocate sufficient time and provide privacy
Step 2 – Undertake the appraisal process: Objectives/Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on what has gone well, what hasn't, and the challenges faced during the last year • Discuss the extent to which the individual has met the objectives set in last year's objectives and Personal Development Plan (PDP)

Step 3 – Undertake the appraisal process: Trust Values and Behaviours	<input type="checkbox"/> Discuss the extent to which the individual has demonstrated the Trust values expected of everyone in their role
Step 4 – Discuss and agree objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the Academy's/Trust's Strategic Priorities identifying individual and/or team objectives for the coming year (relevant to role) • Agree with individuals their contribution to the Trust and team objectives and link to Trust Values and Behaviours • Objectives to be SMART
Step 5 – Discuss and agree learning and development needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify their learning and development needs necessary to support delivery of the identified objectives • Identify learning and development needs necessary to demonstrate Trust Values • Agree strategies to meet their learning and development needs as part of their Personal Development Plan (PDP)

Review of the past twelve months (to be completed by end of September) A: Summary of progress towards achieving objectives and Personal Development Plan

- Appraiser and Appraisee to reflect on the past 12 months.
- **Consider:** Overall achievements, what has been done well, what has been done less well: low and high points, work-life balance and personal wellbeing.
- **Consider:** Last years' objectives and PDP and to what extent these have been achieved

Appraisee comments

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Appraiser comments

Performance / PDP objectives	Not met	Partially met	Fully met

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B: Values: - Appraiser to consider and Appraisee to complete in preparation for the appraisal meeting.

Academy Values <i>(will need to be listed by the School prior to finalising this policy, including some bullet points stating what behaviours the Trust would expect to see under each Value)</i>	Give an example of how you have demonstrated each of the Trust Values in your work over the last 12 months. <i>(This will be discussed with the Appraiser during the appraisal meeting)</i>	Detail any areas for further development. <i>(This will be discussed with the Appraiser during the appraisal meeting)</i>
Value 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour expected • Behaviour expected • Behaviour expected 		
Value 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour expected • Behaviour expected • Behaviour expected 		
Value 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour expected • Behaviour expected • Behaviour expected 		

Appraisee Signature:	
Appraiser Signature:	
Date:	

Pay progression (if applicable) recommended by Appraiser: YES / NO	Pay progression (if applicable) approved by the Trust: YES / NO
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Signature:	Signature:
Date:	Date:

Annual Objectives & Personal Development Plan (To be completed by end October)

Both the Appraiser and Appraisee consider in preparation for the appraisal. It is helpful to think of a maximum of 3 objectives (individual or team) that are aligned with the Academy's and the Trust's Strategic Priorities and also include individual learning and development needs. Appraiser and Appraisee to agree the final objectives chosen.

SMART Objective (individual or team)	Learning development / support required (use to develop PDP)	Evidence

Support required	How will this be provided?	Who will provide this?	Timescales	Expected outcome

Appraisee signature	
Appraiser signature	
Date	

Document Control		Linked Policies, Procedures and Strategies
Policy	APPRAISAL POLICY	
Responsibility	Operations Manager	

Initial Approval Date	24/1/22
Review Date	Sept 25
Next Review Date	Sept 26

Approval Group(s)	SLT	FARA	Board of Trustees
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Equality Impact Assessment		
Phase One: Initial Screening Completed		6/1/22
Phase Two: Full Impact Assessment Required?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not Applicable

