



SteinerAcademyExeter

TEACHER APPRAISAL AND CAPABILITY POLICY

Purpose

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, 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. It also sets out the arrangements that will apply when teachers fall below the levels of competence that are expected of them.

Part A - Appraisal

During the appraisal process we aim to be supportive of the teacher's personal and professional development, ensuring 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 October half term to October half term.

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.

Appointing appraisers

The task of appraising the Principal, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of two members of the Governing Body, supported by an external adviser who has been appointed by the Governing Body for that purpose.

The Principal will decide who will appraise other teachers.

Setting objectives

The Principal's objectives will be set by the Governing Body after consultation with the external adviser.

Objectives for each teacher will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period.

The objectives set for each teacher, will, as far as possible, be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience. The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.

The objectives set for each teacher will, if achieved, contribute to the school's plans for consistently improving teaching and learning. This will be ensured by mapping objectives against the school development plan.

All teachers will be assessed against the SACQS or SAKGQS set of standards. (See appendix) and against the requirement specified in their job description.

Objectives for New Teachers

For teachers new in post, on-going discussion in the first half term will lead to interim objectives from the second half-term onwards. These will be reviewed upon the successful completion of the probationary period.

Reviewing performance

Observation

Observation of teaching is a vital way of assessing teachers' performance in order to identify strengths and areas for development and of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion.

Teachers' performance will be observed regularly, but the amount and type of classroom observation will depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the school.

Classroom observation will be carried out by colleagues with an extensive background and experience in Steiner education or the context of the lesson (for example, specialist subject teacher observations).

In addition to formal observation, colleagues will also be required and enabled to carry out regular `peer observation` sessions.

The Principal or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards may also "drop in" in order to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning. The length and frequency of "drop in" observations will vary depending on specific circumstances.

Teachers (including the Principal) who have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

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 need attention. Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance the appraiser will meet the teacher formally to:

- give clear feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
- agree any support (eg. 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. At this point it may be appropriate to revise objectives, allowing sufficient time for improvement;
- explain the implications and process if no - or insufficient - improvement is made.

When progress is reviewed, 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 the appraiser is not satisfied with progress, 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 they will be invited to a formal capability meeting. The capability procedures will be conducted as in part B of this policy.

Annual assessment

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the Principal, 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 at least once a term.

The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period - and have the opportunity to comment in writing on - a written appraisal report. The teachers will receive their written appraisal reports by 31 October (31 December for the Principal). 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;

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

Part B - Capability Procedure

This procedure applies only to teachers or Principals about whose performance there are serious concerns that the appraisal process has been unable to address.

At least five working days' notice will be given of the formal capability meeting. The notification will contain sufficient information about the concerns about performance and their possible consequences to enable the teacher to prepare to answer the case at a formal capability meeting. It will also contain copies of any written evidence; the details of the time and place of the meeting; and will advise the teacher of their right to be accompanied by a companion who may be a colleague, a trade union official, or a trade union representative who has been certified by their union as being competent.

Formal capability meeting

This meeting is intended to establish the facts. It will be conducted by the Chair of Governors (for Principal capability meetings) or Principal (for other teachers). The meeting allows the teacher, accompanied by a companion if they wish, to respond to concerns about their performance and to make any relevant representations. This may provide new information or a different context to the information/evidence already collected.

The person conducting the meeting may conclude that there are insufficient grounds for pursuing the capability issue and that it would be more appropriate to continue to address the remaining concerns through the appraisal process. In such cases, the capability procedure will come to an end. The person conducting the meeting may also adjourn the meeting for example if they decide that further investigation is needed, or that more time is needed in which to consider any additional information.

In other cases, the meeting will continue. During the meeting, or any other meeting which could lead to a formal warning being issued, the person conducting the meeting will:

- identify the professional shortcomings, for example which of the standards expected of teachers are not being met;
- give clear guidance on the improved standard of performance needed to ensure that the teacher can be removed from formal capability procedures (this may include the setting of new objectives focused on the specific weaknesses that need to be

addressed, any success criteria that might be appropriate and the evidence that will be used to assess whether or not the necessary improvement has been made);

- explain any support that will be available to help the teacher improve their performance;
- set out the timetable for improvement and explain how performance will be monitored and reviewed. The timetable will depend on the circumstances of the individual case but in straightforward cases could be *between* four and ten weeks and;
- warn the teacher formally that failure to improve within the set period could lead to dismissal. In very serious cases, this warning could be a final written warning.

Notes will be taken of formal meetings and a copy sent to the member of staff. Where a warning is issued, the teacher will be informed in writing of the matters covered in the bullet points above and given information about the timing and handling of the review stage and the procedure and time limits for appealing against the warning.

Monitoring and review period following a formal capability meeting

A performance monitoring and review period will follow the formal capability meeting. Formal monitoring, evaluation, guidance and support will continue during this period. The member of staff will be invited to a formal review meeting, unless they were issued with a final written warning, in which case they will be invited to a decision meeting (see below).

Formal review meeting

As with formal capability meetings, at least five working days' notice will be given and the notification will give details of the time and place of the meeting and will advise the teacher of their right to be accompanied by a companion who may be a colleague, a trade union official, or a trade union representative who has been certified by their union as being competent.

If the person conducting the meeting is satisfied that the teacher has made sufficient improvement, the capability procedure will cease and the appraisal process will re-start. In other cases:

- If some progress has been made and there is confidence that more is likely, it may be appropriate to extend the monitoring and review period;
- If no, or insufficient improvement has been made during the monitoring and review period, the teacher will receive a final written warning.

As before, notes will be taken of formal meetings and a copy sent to the member of staff. The final written warning will mirror any previous warnings that have been issued. Where a final warning is issued, the member of staff will be informed in writing that failure to achieve an acceptable standard of performance (within the set

timescale), may result in dismissal and given information about the handling of the further monitoring and review period and the procedure and time limits for appealing against the final warning. The teacher will be invited to a decision meeting.

Decision meeting

As with formal capability meetings and formal review meetings, at least five working days' notice will be given and the notification will give details of the time and place of the meeting and will advise the teacher of their right to be accompanied by a companion who may be a colleague, a trade union official, or a trade union representative who has been certified by their union as being competent.

If an acceptable standard of performance has been achieved during the further monitoring and review period, the capability procedure will end and the appraisal process will re-start. If performance remains unsatisfactory, a decision, or recommendation to the Governing Body, will be made that the teacher should be dismissed or required to cease working at the school.

The teacher will be informed as soon as possible of the reasons for the dismissal, the date on which the employment contract will end, the appropriate period of notice and their right of appeal.

Decision to dismiss

The power to dismiss staff in this school rests with the Governing Body.

Dismissal

Once the decision to dismiss has been taken, the Governing Body will dismiss the teacher with notice.

Appeal

If a teacher feels that a decision to dismiss them, or other action taken against them, is wrong or unjust, they may appeal in writing against the decision within five days of the decision, setting out at the same time the grounds for appeal. Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay and, where possible, at an agreed time and place. The same arrangements for notification and right to be accompanied by a companion will apply as with formal capability and review meetings and, as with other formal meetings, notes will be taken and a copy sent to the teacher.

The appeal will be dealt with impartially and, wherever possible, by managers or governors who have not previously been involved in the case.

The teacher will be informed in writing of the results of the appeal hearing as soon as possible.

General Principles Underlying This policy

ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

Part B of the policy will be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the ACAS Code of Practice.

Confidentiality

The appraisal and capability processes will be treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Principal and governing body to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. Where governors and senior teaching colleagues are given access to appraisal information in order to ensure rigour and consistency of approach, either systematically or on a spot-check basis, the teacher will be informed as to which governors and teaching colleagues have been given such access.

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The governing body is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness. It will abide by all relevant equality legislation, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled teachers. The governing body is aware of the guidance on the Equality Act issued by the Department for Education.

Definitions

Unless indicated otherwise, all references to “teacher” include the Principal.

Grievances

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

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 be referred immediately 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 monitoring and/or formal procedures to continue during a period of sickness absence.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The governing body and Principal will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school’s appraisal arrangements.

Retention

The governing body and Principal will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.

Approved by (Print name): Signature:	Date
Review Date*:	
Designated staff member:	
Designated governor:	

*Annually reviewed