

SHELTON INFANT SCHOOL

APPRAISAL & CAPABILITY POLICY

This policy complies with the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 and the revisions made by the DfE in March 2019 (Teacher Appraisal & Capability – May 2012, revised March 2019).

Text in bold indicates statutory requirements contained in the Appraisal Regulations.

The Governing Body adopted this policy on 30th September 2019 and will review it annually.

Purpose

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the head teacher, 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

Part A of the policy, which covers appraisal, applies to the head teacher and to all teachers employed by the school, trust or local authority, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (*ie* NQTs) and those who are subject to Part B of the policy. Employees are responsible for actively participating in the appraisal process.

Part B of the policy, which sets out the formal capability procedure, applies only to teachers (including the head teacher) about whose performance there are serious concerns that the appraisal process has been unable to address.

The principles underpinning this policy will be applied to teaching assistants.

Both parts of the policy should always be applied in a way that is robust whilst minimizing the impact on workload for teachers, line managers, headteachers and governance boards.

Part A - Appraisal

Appraisal is an entitlement for all staff in this school and will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all staff have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It is a process that supports the work of individuals and teams by setting and reviewing objectives within the context of school improvement plans and pupil progress targets. 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 1st September to 31st August. The appraisal period for teaching assistants will for twelve months from 1st January to 31st December.

Teachers and teaching assistants 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.

Appointing Appraisers

The head teacher will be appraised by the governance board, supported by a suitably skilled external adviser who has been appointed by the governance board for that purpose.

The task of appraising the head teacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of at least two members of the governance board.

The head teacher will decide who will appraise other teachers. Members of the Senior Leadership Team will appraise teaching assistants.

Setting objectives

The head teacher's objectives will be set by the governance board 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 governance board has a duty to have regard to the work-life balance of the headteacher 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 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 can be set in relation to robust assessment data, however, these will not be used in isolation and other factors will also be considered when making decisions about pay progression. The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. Objectives should be revised if circumstances change.

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. This will be ensured by quality assuring all objectives against the school improvement plan and whole-school pupil progress targets.

The headteacher may moderate objectives set for teaching assistants (normally within 10 days of the objectives being agreed) to ensure consistency between those of similar levels of responsibility and similar levels of experience, and to ensure compliance with the policy, and requirements of equality legislation.

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.

Reviewing Performance

Observation

This school believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing teachers' performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development they may have and of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion and in accordance with the school's Monitoring Policy.

In this school teachers' performance will be regularly observed 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 of teachers will be carried out by those with QTS. In addition to formal lesson observations the head teacher and/or other leaders in school with responsibility for teaching standards may undertake monitoring observations and "drop ins" in order to evaluate the standards of teaching and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained. The length and frequency of "drop in" observations will vary depending on specific circumstances.

Observation is also appropriate for the appraisal of roles supporting teaching and learning in the classroom, both for monitoring and development, and will be carried out in a supportive fashion, usually by members of the Senior Leadership Team.

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

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 professional development. All staff will be given the opportunity to engage in appropriate development activities to improve performance. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

Feedback

All staff will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after any 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 staff member's performance the appraiser will meet them to:

- give clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the staff member the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
- set clear objectives 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;
- explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made, eg. impact on pay progression and potential move to formal capability.

When progress is reviewed, if the appraiser is satisfied that the staff member 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.

Evidence

The range and level of evidence collected for appraisal and pay determination purposes will always be proportionate and minimise workload.

Transition to capability

If a teacher demonstrates serious underperformance, and has not responded to support provided within the appraisal 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. The capability procedures will be conducted as in part B of this policy.

Annual assessment

Each teacher's performance and teaching assistant's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the head teacher, the governance board 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 throughout the year and formally reviewed with each teacher during the Spring term.

The teacher or teaching assistant will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period – and have the opportunity to comment in writing on – an appraisal report (in practice the report could be produced using online performance management systems, which can help reduce workload). Teachers will receive their written appraisal reports by 31st October, the Headteacher by 31st December and teaching assistants by 31st March. **The appraisal report will include:**

- details of the teacher's/teaching assistant's objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- **an assessment of the teacher's/ teaching assistant's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards;**
- **an assessment of the teacher's/teaching assistant's professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;**
- **a recommendation on pay where relevant for teaching staff** (*NB – pay recommendations need to be made by 31 December for head teachers and by 31 October for other teachers*);

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

Part B – Capability Procedures

This procedure applies only to teachers or head teachers 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. Teachers are entitled to request an alternative date which is within five days of the original date.

Formal capability meeting

This meeting is intended to establish the facts. It will be conducted by the Chair of Governors (for head teacher capability meetings) or head teacher (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.
- 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 or other serious implications such as no pay progression.

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 governance board, will be made that the teacher should be dismissed or required to cease working at the school.

Before the decision to dismiss is made, the school may discuss the matter with the local authority.

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 decide that members of staff should no longer work at this school rests with the governance board.

Dismissal

Once the governance board has decided that the teacher should no longer work at the school, it will notify the Local Authority of its decision and the reasons for it. Where teachers work solely at this school, the Local Authority must dismiss them within fourteen days of the date of the notification. Where they work in more than one school, the local authority must require them to cease to work at this school.

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 head teacher and governing body to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The governance board 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 of Education.

Definitions

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

Delegation

Normal rules apply in respect of the delegation of functions by governance boards, head teachers and local authorities.

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 governance board and head teacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements. This will ensure that the arrangements minimise the impact on workload for all parties involved.

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.

