

Appraisal Policy

Devoran School



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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Set out the arrangements for appraising teachers, including the process and the responsibilities of individuals
- Ensure consistency and fairness across the school
- Create a process where teachers' professional development is supported and encouraged, in the context of the school's latest Ofsted report, our school improvement plan and the Teachers' Standards
- Ensure teachers have the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil and excel in their role and provide an excellent education to our pupils

The policy applies to all teaching staff employed by the school or local authority, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction and those undergoing capability procedures.

2. Legislation and Guidance

The minimum national requirements for teachers' appraisal in maintained schools are set out in [The Education \(School Teachers' Appraisal\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#).

This policy is based on the [Model Appraisal Policy](#) produced by the Department for Education (DfE).

3. Definitions

In this policy, the term 'teacher' refers to classroom teachers, middle and senior leaders, and the Headteacher.

Where relevant, we have added further detail regarding arrangements for Headteachers.

4. The Appraisal Period

The appraisal period will run for 12 months, beginning on the first day of the autumn term. Appraisals will be held during the autumn term.

For teachers on fixed-term contracts of less than 12 months, the appraisal period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

Teachers who start at or leave the school during the appraisal period may have a longer or shorter appraisal period in that appraisal round.

It is intended that teachers will have had their annual appraisal meeting and received their appraisal report by 31st October.

It is intended that the Headteacher will have had their annual appraisal meeting and received their appraisal report by 31st December.

5. Setting Objectives

Teachers' objectives will be set before, or as soon as possible after, the start of the appraisal period.

The Headteacher's objectives will be set by the governing body in consultation with the external adviser (see section 9 for more information on appointing an external adviser).

Objectives will:

- Contribute to improving the education of pupils at the school and the implementation of any school improvement plans. To ensure this happens, the Headteacher will quality assure all objectives against the school improvement plan
- Be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART)
- Be appropriate to the teacher's role and career experience
- Be revised if circumstances change throughout the year

When objectives are set, teachers will also be informed of the standards their performance will be judged against.

The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree the objectives; however, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives.

6. Standards

Teachers will be assessed against the [Teachers' Standards](#). The headteacher, and other school leaders where relevant, will also be assessed against the [National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers](#).

Teachers' performance will also be assessed against the career stage expectations that [BlueSky Education](#) have developed.

7. Reviewing Performance (Including Observation Protocol)

We will use a range of evidence to judge a teacher's performance:

- Formal and informal ('drop-in') lesson observations
- Observations and results from wider school activities, if applicable
- Performance of their pupils
- Reviews of planning and marking
- Parent and pupil voice, if applicable

7.1 Observation Protocol

We believe that observations are an important way of assessing teachers' performance. Observations can help to identify a teacher's strengths and areas for improvement, and can help senior leadership to identify areas of good practice that can be shared across the school.

There will be both formal and drop-in observations. Teachers with responsibilities outside of the classroom will also have these responsibilities observed.

All observations will:

- Be carried out in an objective, fair, professional and supportive manner
- Be carried out by teachers with Qualified Teacher Status
- Provide constructive feedback
- Remain confidential to those who need to know details as part of their jobs

7.2 Drop-In Observations

Drop-in observations will usually be conducted by the senior leadership team or subject leaders in order to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

Notice of drop-in observations will be given via the monitoring cycle.

Drop-in observations will usually last around 30 minutes, and may involve the observer talking to pupils and looking at their work.

The frequency of drop-in observations will depend on the individual teacher and the school's needs at the time.

Generally, verbal feedback will be given the following day.

The observers will use all reasonable endeavours to provide written feedback within 5 working days.

Please note that the school also carries out drop-in observations where fellow teachers observe a lesson for their own professional development. Notice may not be given and evidence will not be used as part of the appraisal process.

7.3 Formal Observations

The purpose of formal observations is to assess the teacher's performance and progress against their objectives and the relevant standards.

The number of formal observations will be agreed with the teacher during their appraisal meeting, and will be determined by the teacher's individual circumstances and the needs of the school at the time.

For example, Newly Qualified Teachers and less experienced teachers who have recently started at the school will receive a number of formal observations to establish their strengths and areas for development. A very experienced teacher will typically receive fewer observations.

Teachers will not receive more than three formal observations over the year.

Generally, verbal feedback will be given the following day.

The observers will use all reasonable endeavours to provide written feedback within 5 working days.

7.4 Additional Observations

Additional formal observations will take place if:

- The teacher requests them
- There are concerns that the teacher's performance is not up to standard. This may be triggered by poorly-performing or poorly-behaved pupils.

- The teacher is subject to formal capability proceedings

The protocols relevant to formal observations will still apply to these additional observations.

7.5 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 Continued Professional Learning. This will be linked to school improvement priorities and to individual ongoing professional development needs.

7.6 Feedback

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as possible 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 development.

Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance the appraiser will meet the teacher 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 (e.g. coaching, mentoring, structured observations, support plans), 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 at the discretion of the appraiser but should reflect the seriousness of the concerns;
- 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. If insufficient progress is made then capability procedures may commence.

8. Annual Assessment

Performance will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year via informal meetings, with more formal meetings set up for those where there are concerns regarding the teacher's performance. There will be a more formal mid-year appraisal with the line manager around March.

The appraisal meeting is the end point of the annual appraisal process and will take place in the autumn term. In this meeting, the appraiser will:

- Review the relevant evidence
- Assess performance in the appraisal period against the relevant standards
- Assess performance in the appraisal period against objectives
- Discuss the teacher's professional development needs and identify action that should be taken
- Discuss the teacher's wellbeing, career aspirations and any difficulties they may be facing
- If necessary, discuss the teacher's underperformance and put a plan in place to address it. They should also inform the teacher that if performance does not improve, where applicable, capability proceedings may begin

9. Conducting Annual Appraisal Meetings

The Headteacher's appraisal meeting will be conducted by the governing body. To support the Headteacher appraisal, the governors will appoint an external adviser with relevant skills and experience. The adviser may be from the local authority, a neighbouring local authority, or an external consultant.

The governing body will typically delegate the Headteacher's appraisal to a sub-group of three governors with a wide range of experience and knowledge of the school. This will not include any staff governors.

There must also be three non-staff governors, including either the Chair or Vice-Chair, who are not involved in the appraisal whatsoever, to enable them to sit on an appeals panel if necessary.

The Headteacher will decide who will appraise teachers. Unless there is a good reason not to, this will normally be a teacher's line manager. By way of example, a 'good reason' could be a poor or deteriorating working relationship between the teacher and line manager, including where a formal grievance has been lodged by the teacher citing their line manager.

All appraisers will be provided with appropriate training.

Appraisal meetings will take place within the teacher's normal working hours and will typically last for at least an hour. Scheduling appraisal meetings for an hour and a half is therefore recommended.

10. Appraisal Report

The school has adopted the use of BlueSky to support our appraisal process. BlueSky Education is an online software, endorsed by ASCL, that allows the appraisers to manage all professional development and appraisals online. The appraisees are then able to upload evidence to demonstrate where they are meeting their objectives.

The purpose of using BlueSky for the appraisal cycle is:

- To map individual targets against the school improvement plan and bespoke professional objectives;
- To connect lesson observation information with these objectives;
- To understand and communicate training needs and compile training evaluations inline with the Standard for Teachers' Professional Development (July 2016);
- To monitor and collate development needs and evidence of progress against the standards for appraisal and threshold assessments.

The BlueSky appraisal format will include:

- An assessment of the teacher's performance against their objectives and the relevant standards;
- An assessment of the teacher's training and development needs, and the action that should be taken to address them;
- Where relevant, a recommendation on pay progression.

There will be space in the report for the teacher's own comments.

After the report has been issued, review meetings will be held where teachers can discuss the contents of their report if they wish.

Through the BlueSky online system teachers will be able to review and accept the contents of the appraisal report. Teachers can appeal to the Headteacher, and the Headteacher can appeal to the governing body, if they disagree with the contents of the report or the pay recommendation it makes.

11. Concerns about a Teacher's Performance

If it becomes clear a teacher is having difficulties at any point during the appraisal period, they will be provided with additional support.

This will begin with a meeting with their line manager, where the problem will be discussed and potential solutions identified. A performance improvement plan may be created.

The nature of the support will be based on the individual's circumstances. For example, teachers whose difficulties are linked to a long-term health condition may be referred to the occupational health service. Teachers new to the school may be given a mentor or coach.

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. The teacher will be invited to a formal capability meeting under the schools adopted capability procedure. In these cases, refer to our capability policy.

12. Confidentiality

The appraisal process and relevant documents are strictly confidential. Only staff members who need the information in order to do their jobs will have access to the information.

Appraisal information will be anonymised when information is reported to the governing body.

Appraisal records will be kept securely on the BlueSky online system.

13. Monitoring Arrangements

The governing body will monitor and review the effectiveness of the appraisal arrangements. The Headteacher will monitor objectives and assessments to ensure consistency.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

14. Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's capability and pay policies.

The capability policy will be used where this policy has not been able to address concerns with a teacher's performance. The capability policy applies to all staff (not just teaching staff).

The pay policy sets out how pay increases will be awarded, based on the results of a teacher's appraisal.

Appendix 1: Appraisal Timeline

Date	Action
End of July	Discuss and set objectives, inform teachers of the standards their performance will be assessed against
First day of Autumn Term	Appraisal cycle begins
September - October	Appraisal meeting held to review the previous appraisal period
31 October	Appraisal process is completed for teachers, deadline for appraisal reports to be sent
31 December	Appraisal process is completed for the Headteacher, deadline for appraisal report to be sent
January - March	Meetings held within the Spring Term to review progress
Throughout the Year	Formal and drop-in observations and monitoring take place, constructive feedback is provided