



TEACHER APPRAISAL POLICY

1. Purpose

1.1

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the Headteacher, and for supporting their professional development within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision and performance, the teacher's job description and the standards expected of teachers, including the most recent Teachers' Standards published by the Department for Education.

The arrangements that will apply when teachers fall below the levels of competence expected of them are dealt with under the separate Teacher Capability (Performance) Policy.

1.2

The policy applies to the Headteacher and to all teachers employed by Abbot's Lea School, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (ECTs) and those who are subject to the Teacher Capability (Performance) Policy.

1.3

Appraisal in this school will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all teachers have the skills and support they need to carry out their roles effectively. It will help to ensure that teachers are able to continue to improve their professional practice, develop as teachers and foster professional dialogue between colleagues.

1.4

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Pay Policy.

2. The Appraisal Period

2.1

The appraisal period will run for twelve months in accordance with the dates outlined within the school's Pay Policy.

2.2

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 for assessment will be determined by the duration of their contract.

2.3

There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when teachers begin or end employment with the school or when a teacher changes post within the school.

2.4

Where a teacher starts their employment part way through an appraisal cycle, the Headteacher or nominated deputy will determine the length of the first cycle for that teacher, with a view to bringing the cycle into line with the cycle for other teachers at the school as soon as possible.

2.5

Where a teacher transfers to a new post within the school part way through an appraisal cycle, the Headteacher or nominated deputy will determine whether the cycle should begin again, depending upon the post, responsibilities and other relevant circumstances.

3. Appointing Appraisers

3.1

The Headteacher will be appraised by the Governing Board, supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the Governing Board for that purpose.

3.2

The task of appraising the Headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of three members of the Governing Board.

3.3

The Headteacher will decide who will appraise other teachers. Where possible, the designated appraiser will have line management responsibility for the teacher they are appraising.

Where a teacher has objections to the appointed appraiser, these should be put in writing to the Headteacher, who will give due consideration to the concerns and respond to the teacher accordingly.

3.4

Except in the case of the Headteacher being the appraiser, it is advised that the maximum number of teachers that any appraiser should be expected to review per cycle should be no more than five.

4. Setting Objectives

4.1

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

4.2

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

The objectives set will be rigorous, challenging, achievable, time-bound, fair and equitable in relation to teachers with similar roles, responsibilities and experience.

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

Objectives may be revised if circumstances change. Due consideration will be given to the need to maintain a healthy work-life balance for both the appraiser and the teacher.

Any teacher wishing to raise a formal objection to their objectives may do so via the Appeals Procedure set out at Appendix 1.

4.3

No teacher, including the Headteacher, will have more than three objectives, with no subdivisions. Teachers will not necessarily have the same number of objectives.

When setting objectives, consideration should be given to the full-time or part-time status of the teacher. For example, the number or range of objectives may be modified for part-time staff.

4.4

The objectives set for each teacher will contribute towards the school's plans for:

- improving the school's educational provision and performance; and
- improving the education and attainment of students.

The Headteacher / Governing Board will quality assure objectives against the school's improvement priorities.

4.5

When appraising teachers, appraisers will refer to the most recent Teachers' Standards documents.

4.6

The Headteacher or Governing Board, as appropriate, will consider whether certain teachers should also be assessed against other sets of standards published by the Secretary of State that are relevant to them, for example SENCO standards.

4.7

Although the appraisal process is an assessment of the overall performance of teachers and the Headteacher, objectives cannot cover the full range of a teacher's roles and responsibilities.

Objectives will therefore focus on both school and individual priorities whilst also being informed by the Teachers' Standards.

4.8

Every effort should be made to meet objectives in full. However, an appraiser may conclude that significant progress has been made towards achieving objectives and, in these circumstances, the teacher may be assessed favourably.

The rationale for this conclusion should be recorded on the Teacher Appraisal Form.

5. Reviewing Performance

5.1

A holistic approach should be taken to appraisal in order to identify particular strengths and areas for development that a teacher may have and to gain useful information that can inform school improvement generally.

5.2

Methods of appraising teacher performance could include:

- reviewing students' work;
- contributions to the development of teaching and learning;
- lesson observations; and
- review meetings or professional discussions.

5.3

Teachers, including the Headteacher, who have responsibilities outside the classroom should expect to have their full range of responsibilities assessed as part of the appraisal process.

5.4

The Headteacher or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards may drop into lessons in order to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained.

Drop-ins will not be used for the purpose of classroom observation, will not be recorded and individual written feedback will not be provided for the purpose of appraisal.

5.5

Observation of classroom practice will be carried out in a supportive fashion and should not add unnecessarily to teacher workload.

Appendix 2 contains the principles on how classroom observation will be conducted.

5.6 Informal Review Meetings

5.6.1

Professional discussion regarding progress, concerns and feedback should be ongoing.

There is no requirement to schedule formal meetings to review the appraisal cycle for all teachers. Regular professional conversations may take place throughout the appraisal period. An interim review meeting must take place where a teacher requires additional support.

5.6.2

A record of any meetings, including details of any advice and support, will be made on the Teacher Appraisal Form and shared with the teacher.

6. Development and Support

6.1

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development.

Abbot's Lea 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.

6.2

Before commencing informal support, the appraiser should consider whether the teacher's professional performance may be affected by ill health or another external influence or concern and offer support as appropriate.

Where this is the case, the matter may be dealt with under the appropriate procedure before consideration is given to informal support.

7. Feedback

7.1

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their professional practice throughout the year and as soon as practicable where concerns come to light.

Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

Feedback on classroom observations will be given in line with the principles included in Appendix 2.

7.2

A written record of advice and support will be shared with the teacher in accordance with paragraph 5.6.2.

8. Identifying Concerns

This section describes the informal approach to addressing concerns. This approach will be followed before movement to formal capability, where appropriate.

It does not form part of the Formal Capability Procedure and should be fully managed as an integral part of the appraisal process by the teacher's appraiser.

Where required improvements are not evident by the end of the interventions agreed under this section, the matter may be referred to the Headteacher, if not the appraiser, for management under the separate Teacher Capability (Performance) Policy.

8.1

Ongoing professional dialogue, as referred to in Sections 5 and 7, may be as useful, or more useful, in achieving the required positive outcomes for all parties and this option should be given serious consideration.

8.2

Where significant evidence arises that previous advice and support provided under Sections 5 or 7 has not resulted in improvement as agreed, a written record must be shared with the teacher and that record will form the basis of the discussions under this section.

8.3

The appraiser will invite the teacher to a Formal Review Meeting.

In such circumstances, the teacher should be advised to contact their trade union or professional association for advice, guidance and support both before and after the review meeting.

8.4

Written records produced under this section must include details of the concerns, evidence of professional discussions and details of the support provided.

8.5

The purpose of the Review Meeting is:

- for the appraiser to give clear feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns, with reference to the evidence;
- to give the teacher the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns;
- to agree any support, such as training, coaching, mentoring or structured observations, that will be provided to help address the specific concerns. It is not sufficient simply to refer to the Teachers' Standards. The discussion and support agreed must be meaningful, with the intention of achieving acceptable and sustainable improvements in performance;
- for the appraiser to make clear how, and by when, progress will be reviewed;
- to revise appraisal objectives, where appropriate. In this case, sufficient additional time for improvement must be allowed and the amount of time will be determined by the appraiser;
- to advise the teacher of the timescales for improvement. These will be set by the appraiser and should be reasonable and ensure sufficient opportunity for the teacher to improve, whilst also reflecting the seriousness of the concerns. The period should normally be a minimum of six weeks and a maximum of 13 weeks. If performance improves and the issue is resolved before the end of the agreed period, the appraisal process should continue as normal; and

- for the appraiser to explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made, with reference to the Teacher Capability (Performance) Policy.

8.6

A written record of the meeting, including any revised objectives, support and timescales, must be sent to the teacher.

This must include advice to contact their trade union or professional association representative and must confirm that the advice in paragraph 8.3 has been given.

8.7

During the agreed period for improvement, discussions should be ongoing.

A midpoint meeting and a further meeting must be held at the end of the agreed period to review progress.

8.8

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.

It may be appropriate to extend the timeframe where ongoing support is still required.

8.9

Where the appraiser has serious concerns that the teacher's performance is having an immediate detrimental impact on the education, health, safety or wellbeing of students or colleagues, the timescales for improvement and level of support for the teacher should reflect this.

9. Transition to Capability

9.1

If the appraiser, having followed Section 8 of this policy, remains concerned about serious underperformance, the teacher will be notified in writing that the appraisal process will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed by the Headteacher, if not the appraiser, under the Teacher Capability (Performance) Policy.

10. Annual Assessment

10.1

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period.

In assessing the performance of the Headteacher, the Governing Board must consult the external adviser.

10.2

The formal assessment is the end point of the annual appraisal process.

The school will operate a “**no surprises**” appraisal process. Although there is no requirement to schedule formal meetings to review the appraisal cycle for all teachers, regular conversations and professional discussions may take place throughout the year.

An invitation to attend an interim review must be made where a teacher requires additional support.

10.3

The teacher will receive, as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period, a written appraisal report and will have the opportunity to comment in writing on the report.

In this school, teachers will receive their written appraisal reports by **31 October** and the Headteacher by **31 December**.

10.4

The appraisal report will include:

- details of the teacher’s objectives for the appraisal period;
- 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; and
- where objectives have not been met in full but the appraiser is satisfied that significant progress has been made, the rationale for this decision.

Pay recommendations will be made in accordance with the school’s Pay Policy.

10.5

Pay progression for teachers within the appraisal process will be automatic, subject to the arrangements set out in the school’s Pay Policy.

10.6

Where a teacher is applying to move from the Main Pay Scale to the Upper Pay Scale, applications should be made in accordance with the school’s Pay Policy.

10.7

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

10.8

The appraisal process is confidential to the Headteacher, appraiser and teacher.

However, this does not override the need for the Headteacher and Governing Board to quality assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

11.1

The Governing Board will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

11.2

The Headteacher will provide the Governing Board with a written report on the operation and effectiveness of the Teacher Appraisal Policy annually, including compliance with equality legislation.

The report will not identify anyone by name and will include an assessment of the impact of the policy on:

- race;
- gender;
- sexual orientation;
- disability;
- religion and belief;
- age;
- part-time status; and
- maternity/pregnancy.

11.3

The Headteacher will also report on whether there have been any appeals or representations on the grounds of any of the categories above.

12. Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the school website;
- the school intranet; and
- new employee induction.

13. Equality Impact Assessment

13.1

Under the Equality Act 2010, Abbot's Lea School has a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of protected characteristics.

13.2

This policy has been equality impact assessed and the school believes that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010. The policy is intended to ensure that appraisal arrangements are fair, consistent and supportive and do not unfairly disadvantage any employee.

14. Policy Management and Review

Review of Policy

The policy may be amended from time to time to reflect changes in legislation, guidance or local arrangements.

Management of Policy

The Governing Board and Headteacher have overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy.

The school will maintain appropriate records of appraisal, concerns raised and outcomes in accordance with its data protection and confidentiality requirements.

Appendix 1 – Appeals Procedure

It is the intention that the Appeals Procedure will be dealt with promptly, thoroughly and impartially.

Where a teacher feels that any aspect of their appraisal objectives is unfair or unjust, they may appeal against the objectives and present evidence to support their argument for consideration.

Teachers should put their appeal in writing to the Headteacher. The Headteacher should put their appeal in writing to the Governing Board.

Any appeal should include sufficient details of its basis.

Appeals should be heard without unreasonable delay and at an agreed date, time and place.

Teachers have the right to be accompanied at any stage of an appeal hearing by a companion who may be either a work colleague or a trade union or professional association representative.

A) Review Stage

1. The teacher receives written confirmation of their appraisal objectives.
2. If the teacher is not satisfied, they should seek to resolve the matter by discussing it informally with the appraiser within ten working days of the decision.
3. Where this is not possible, or where the teacher continues to be dissatisfied, they may follow the formal appeal process.

B) Formal Appeal Stage

1. The teacher should set out in writing the grounds for appeal and send this to the appraiser.
2. Within ten working days of receipt of the appeal, arrangements for the appeal hearing will be communicated.
3. Any appeal should be heard by a panel of three Governors, normally within 20 working days of receipt of the written appeal notification.

The teacher will be given the opportunity to make representations in person.

The decision of the appeal panel will be given in writing within ten working days and, where the appeal is rejected, will include a note of the evidence considered and the reasons for the decision.

The decision at the Formal Appeal Stage is final.

The procedure for the conduct of formal meetings will be in line with the school's general appeals arrangements.

Appendix 2 – Principles for Classroom Observations

Classroom observations will be carried out by those with QTS and will not exceed three hours or exceed three separate observations for appraisal purposes.

This does not preclude additional observations during the appraisal cycle where they are considered necessary by both parties under Sections 5 or 8.

Consideration should be given to the full-time or part-time status of the teacher.

The focus and timing of observations will be discussed and agreed by the appraiser and teacher.

Notice will be given to the teacher at least one week in advance of which lesson will be observed in all circumstances. Part-time staff may need more than one week's notice.

Oral feedback will be given as soon as possible after an observation and no later than the end of the following working day.

Written feedback will be provided within five working days of the observation taking place.

School leaders and Governors are committed to ensuring that classroom observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
- evaluate objectively;
- report accurately and fairly;
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained; and
- ensure that observations are not excessive but are reasonable, proportionate and supportive.