



Appraisal Policy for Schools

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Document summary

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

This policy sits alongside the [Model Capability Procedure for Schools and Appendix 1 and 2 of this Policy](#).

Enquiries

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Contents

1.	Introduction.....	3
2.	Model Appraisal Policy for Schools	5
3.	Application of the Policy	5
4.	Appraisal	5
5.	The appraisal period.....	5
6.	Appointing Appraisers	5
7.	Setting Objectives.....	6
8.	Reviewing Performance: Observation	6
9.	Development and Support.....	7
10.	Feedback.....	7
11.	Transition to the capability procedure.....	8
12.	Annual Assessment.....	8
13.	Pay progression.....	8
14.	Support Staff.....	9
	Appendix 1 Joint Statement of Principles on Teacher Appraisal and Capability	10
	Appendix 2 Model Classroom Observation Protocol.....	11

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Appraisal Policy for Schools

1. Introduction

1.1. The appraisal arrangements come into force with effect from 1 September 2012. They are set out in the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations)

1.2. Appraisal Regulations set out the principles that apply to teachers in all maintained schools and centrally employed (or unattached) teachers employed by a local authority, in each case where they are employed for one term or more. These Regulations do not apply to any teacher undergoing an induction period or are subject to capability procedures. It is also good practice for academies to follow the appraisal regulations, although they are not legally required to do so.

1.3. Maintained schools and local authorities must stay within the legal framework set out in the Appraisal Regulations and all schools (including academies) must adhere to any other relevant legislation that affects all employers (for example legislation on equality, employment protection and data protection).

1.4. Schools and local authorities must have an appraisal policy for teachers and a policy, covering all staff, which deals with lack of capability. The ESCC model policy is based on the DfE model policy which applies only to teachers (including Headteachers), however the ESCC model policy sits alongside policies that are in place for support staff and schools may wish to insert the details of the school's own appraisal or performance management scheme for support staff

1.5. The appraisal process should be intrinsically supportive and developmental, conducted within a school culture that values openness and fairness. Appraisal should be a non-bureaucratic process that recognises, encourages and validates a teacher's commitment to professional development, pedagogical excellence and effective performance. It should offer a supportive and safe environment where individual teachers and their line managers can have open and honest conversations about successes and areas for improvement. It should also address the support that will be provided to enable all teachers to achieve their objectives and continue to meet the teacher's standards. Reducing unnecessary workload should be at the forefront to any considerations around implementing appraisal processes (see DfE Teacher Appraisal Guidance for schools – July 2024 – page 8).

1.6. It is good practice for schools to consult staff/union representatives on their appraisal and capability policies. Trade unions have taken part in the consultation process led by HR Advisory on behalf of maintained schools and have contributed to both the model appraisal and the model capability policies.

1.7. Where there are concerns about aspects of the teacher's work performance, at any point throughout the appraisal process, teachers should receive informal focused support. In most cases this should be separate and come before any capability procedures are considered. This might include mentoring, training, shadowing, resources to address specific needs.

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1.8. Teachers and school leaders should normally only enter capability procedures when there is unsatisfactory progress made with their work performance that the appraisal process, including the informal support mechanisms have been unable to address. See separate Model Capability Policy on Capability and the DfE Guidance.

1.9. This policy should be read in conjunction with the separate Model Capability Policy and Procedure which sets out the procedure to be followed where there are serious concerns about a member of staff's performance that the appraisal process has been unable to address.

1.10. It is important that the appraisal process is managed in a way that avoids increased workloads for all parties concerned, for example, reviewing the number and frequency of meetings and observations, and ensuring the process for collecting evidence is always proportionate. Please refer to the DfE Workload Reduction Toolkit: [Reducing school workload - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reducing-school-workload)

2. Appraisal Policy for Schools

The Governing Body of Woodlands Federation adopted this policy on 3rd September 2025. It will review it in September 2026.

3. Application of the Policy

(OPTION ONE)

3.1. This policy applies to the headteacher and to all teachers employed by the school or local authority, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. NQTs employed prior to 1st September 2021 and still undergoing statutory induction, or Early Careers Teachers (ECTs) employed from 1st September 2021) and those who are subject to [Capability Procedure](#).

3.2. This policy also applies to

(OPTION TWO)

3.3. This policy applies to the headteacher and to all teachers employed by the school or local authority, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. NQTs or ECTs) and those who are subject to [Capability Procedure](#).

4. Appraisal

4.1. 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 role effectively. It will help to ensure that teachers are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop as teachers.

5. The appraisal period

5.1. The appraisal period will run for twelve months from September to July

5.2. 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 will be determined by the duration of their contract.

5.3. *There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when teachers begin or end employment with a school or local authority or when unattached teachers change post within the same authority.*

5.4. *For the purposes of accessing the upper pay range and for progression on the upper pay range you should refer to the School Teachers Pay & Conditions Document (STPCD) and the school's Pay Policy.*

6. Appointing Appraisers

6.1. 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.

6.2. In this school the task of appraising the headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of two/three members of the Governing Board.

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6.3. The headteacher will decide who will appraise other teachers.

7. Setting Objectives

7.1. Headteacher objectives will be set by the Governing Board after consultation with the external adviser.

7.2. 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 (SMART) and will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience (not normally more than 3 for classroom teachers). In setting objectives, the appraiser will consider what can reasonably be expected in the context of roles responsibilities and experience and consistent with the school's strategy for achieving a work/life balance for all staff. The appraiser will take into account the effects of an individual's disability when setting objectives. 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 by mutual agreement if circumstances change.

7.3. 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. If a teacher's line manager(s) is not his/her assessor, the line manager can see the teacher's objectives.

7.4. 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. *With the exception of those who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding and maintaining Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status, the appraisal process for all teachers should be informed by the set of standards contained in the document called "Teachers' Standards" published in July 2011 ('Teachers' standards' updated to reflect changes in terminology and teacher induction duration related to the Early Career Framework reforms): [Teachers' standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/teachers-standards).; The head teacher or governing body (as appropriate) will need to consider whether certain teachers should also be assessed against other sets of standards published by the Secretary of State that are relevant to them.*

7.5. *For teachers who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding QTLS status, it is for the governing body or head teacher to decide which standards are most appropriate. Such teachers may be assessed against the [Teachers' Standards](#), against any other sets of standards issued by the Secretary of State, against any other professional standards relevant to their performance or any combination of those three. Some schools may already be using effective in-house CPD programmes to develop improved practice.*

8. Reviewing Performance: Observation

8.1. 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 (schools may like to be more specific here about how observations will be conducted –see [Appendix 2 – Model Classroom Observation Protocol](#)). In this regard, school teachers' performance will be regularly observed but the

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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 those with QTS.

8.2. In addition to formal observation, head teachers or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards may “drop in” 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 ins” will vary depending on specific circumstances (see [Appendix 2 - Model Classroom Observation Protocol](#)).

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

9. Development and Support

9.1. 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 professional development. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

10. Feedback

10.1. 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 acknowledge good and outstanding performance and highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

10.2. If at any point during the usual appraisal cycle concerns arise about any aspect of a teacher's performance, the appraiser will invite the teacher in writing to meet with 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 (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 (it may be appropriate to revise objectives, and it will be necessary to allow sufficient time for improvement, which will not usually be less than 6 weeks, although this period may be shorter if there are serious concerns;
- explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient improvement is made.

10.3. A written summary of the meeting should be sent to the teacher following the meeting covering all the above points.

10.4. The school should consider contacting HR for advice when a teacher's performance is of cause for concern. Where concern is being raised in accordance with paragraph 10.2 above in relation to a staff member who is a trade union representative, it is advisable to

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consult with HR to raise the matter with a senior trade union representative or full-time official.

10.5. 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.

11. Transition to the capability procedure

11.1. If the appraiser is not satisfied with the progress in the focused support period agreed, 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 then be invited to a formal capability meeting.

12. Annual Assessment

12.1. 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.

12.2. 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.

12.3. 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. In this school, teachers will receive their written appraisal reports by 31 October (31 December for the headteacher). 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;
- a recommendation on pay where that is relevant (*NB – pay recommendations need to be made by 31 December for head teachers and by 31 October for other teachers*) please note that with effect from 1st September 2025 for the 2024/25 academic year, the requirement for objectives and the appraisal process to lead to performance-related pay outcomes for teachers and leaders has been removed.

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

13. Pay progression

13.1 The governing body must consider annually whether or not to increase the salary of teachers who have completed a year of employment since the previous annual pay determination and, if so, to what salary within the relevant pay ranges.

13.2 From the 2024/25 academic year, the requirement for objectives and the appraisal process to lead to performance-related pay outcomes for teachers will be removed in accordance with the STPCD 2024.

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13.3 Schools can choose whether or not to retain some or all elements of performance-related pay, but a school's pay policy should minimise the impact on workload for individual teachers, line managers, school leaders and governing boards. In East Sussex the model pay policy for schools and centrally employed teachers will not retain performance-related pay to maintain consistency across educational settings. If a school wishes to retain performance-related pay they will need to consult individually with regional trade unions on their school pay policy.

13.4 The statutory requirement to make a pay decision following the completion of the appraisal process remains. A pay recommendation must be made in writing as part of a teacher's annual appraisal report. The school's pay policy should clearly set out how pay progression will be awarded and, for any school wishing to retain performance-related pay, this should be clear in the policy, along with the criteria that will be used to assess performance.

13.5 Schools who have chosen to remove the performance-related pay requirement are under no obligation to increase an individual's pay where a teacher is in formal capability procedures.

13.6 Schools who have retained performance-related pay should only without pay progression in the event of poor performance as set out in their pay policy, e.g. the formal capability procedures have been invoked. Schools should ensure that teachers whose performance is unsatisfactory are supported appropriately and advised of the school's decision regarding the withholding of pay progression whilst they are on capability procedures, in time for the teacher to appeal in accordance with the appeal process set out in the school's pay policy.

14. Support Staff

(Optional paragraphs for schools to link this policy with a separate policy that applies to manage the performance of the support staff group)

14.1 Insert details your own school's current appraisal process for support staff.

14.2 Alternatively, please see the revised [Performance Management Policy](#) (Support Staff) which is available on the Websites.

Appendix 1 Joint Statement of Principles on Teacher Appraisal and Capability

- This statement is produced by the ASCL, ATL, NAHT and NEU
- Appraisal is a thorough yet supportive and developmental process which assists teachers in improving their performance by concentrating on key objectives and must include open and honest discussions between the appraiser and the appraisee;
- The above unions believe that schools should have separate appraisal and capability policies in order to facilitate the discussions needed to ensure the effectiveness of the appraisal process in managing performance. Capability procedures would not normally commence until it is clear that it is necessary, following on from the appraisal process;
- Objectives should be set following consultation with teachers and should be clearly defined, with appraisers and appraisees clear what success will look like and how progress will be measured;
- Observation for appraisal should be planned, with sufficient notice given and a clear focus linked to agreed objectives;
- Feedback should be given swiftly after any observation;
- Observation should be kept to the minimum needed to determine that objectives are met and in accordance with local agreements;
- Implication of insufficient progress should be clearly explained to the teacher;
- Where concerns are raised the teacher will receive appropriate support as part of the appraisal process. The support to be offered will be agreed in advance and may include classroom observation alongside other support for example additional training and visits to other classes. The length of any period of support will be subject to locally agreed protocols;
- If after the period of support sufficient progress has not been made, then the school may consider moving to capability. A clear distinction must be made when the teacher moves from the supportive appraisal process to capability;
- The DfE capability model should not be used for capability concerns arising as a result of ill-health (schools must have a separate policy for this);
- Care will be taken to ensure that appraisal and capability procedures are used in such a way as to avoid discrimination, with monitoring for equality purposes.

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Appendix 2 Classroom Observation Protocol

- 1.1. The Governing Body of Woodlands Federation is committed to ensuring that classroom observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:
 - 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), that will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
 - explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient improvement is made.
- 1.2. Although the national limit of 3 hours of classroom observation during an annual performance review cycle has been removed from 1 September 2012, the Governing Body is committed to ensuring that the amount of observation (and time between observations irrespective of their purpose) for each teacher should be appropriate, and reasonable.
- 1.3. In accordance with these principles, the arrangements for classroom observation and/or task observation will be included in the appraisal planning statement. In this sense, it is advisable for the Headteacher to consult with staff/union representatives over the pattern and planned approach for observation.
- 1.4. Where concerns emerge about a teacher's performance during the annual cycle, additional classroom observations may be arranged.
- 1.5. In keeping with the Governing Body's commitment that classroom observation should be both supportive and developmental; those being observed will be notified at least 5 working days in advance of the time and date of the observation. Every effort will be made for an observation to be made at the agreed time.
- 1.6. Classroom observations of teachers will only be undertaken by persons with QTS who have had adequate preparation and the appropriate professional skills to undertake observation and to provide constructive oral and written feedback and support.
- 1.7. Oral feedback will be given as soon as possible after the observation and no later than the end of the following working day. It will be given during directed time in a suitable, private environment.
- 1.8. Written feedback will normally be provided within five working days of the observation taking place. If issues emerged from an observation that were not part of the focus of the observation as recorded in the planning and review statement these should also be covered in the written feedback and the appropriate action taken.
- 1.9. The written record of feedback also includes the date on which the observation took place, the lesson observed and the length of the observation. The teacher has the right to append written comments on the feedback document.

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2. For ongoing monitoring purposes

- 2.1. A headteacher has a duty to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to ensure that proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained throughout the school. Headteachers have a right to drop in to classrooms to inform their monitoring of the quality of learning throughout the school.
- 2.2. Learning walks and other short visits such as drop ins may take place in order to collect evidence about teaching and learning, evidence of progress and areas for school staff development.

In this school:

Option 1:

Drop ins can be undertaken by the Headteacher or subject champions.

- 2.3. While information gathered during the appraisal process may be used, as appropriate for a variety of purposes including informing school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies, the headteacher may determine that it is necessary to collect such evidence as their professional judgment dictates and this may include additional classroom observations.
- 2.4. Monitoring may take a form that is not accurately described as lesson observation, which is usually of teaching and learning. Instead for example, it may have a focus on the standards of attainment by the children, the impact of programmes of study on learning or pupil behaviour. The monitoring might, for example, involve work scrutiny, analysis of assessment results or an examination of lesson planning records. It may also be 'light touch' and relatively informal.
- 2.5. Reasonable notice will be given of additional observations but depending on the particular circumstances, it may not be practicable to provide advance notice of the monitoring activities that are carried out for purposes other than appraisal.
- 2.6. The number and duration of monitoring activities will be for the headteacher to determine as appropriate.