



St. Barnabas
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST
Creating Unique Possibilities

Appraisal Policy

Approved by MAT Board

11 February 2019



Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to set out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of employees and for supporting their development within the context of the school's development plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers. The policy should be read in conjunction with the Pay Policy.

Applicability

This procedure applies to all employees of the MAT whether permanent or on a fixed term contact with the following exceptions:

- Those employed for a period of less than one term
- Those teachers undergoing induction (i.e. NQTs)
- Support staff within their probationary periods where concerns should be dealt with under the Probation Procedure
- Agency workers, contractors or volunteers
- Employees subject to the formal Capability Procedure.

Roles and Responsibilities

Line managers are responsible for:

- Implementing this procedure within their areas of responsibility
- Ensuring that they set realistic and measurable standards of performance
- Supporting staff to achieve the standards set.

Employees are responsible for complying with the requirements of this procedure and for performing their duties to an acceptable standard. Where an employee is suffering from an ill health condition that is affecting their performance at work they should speak to their manager as soon as possible.



Principles

The MAT needs the effective performance of its entire staff in order to deliver the aims and vision of each school. The appraisal process should be a supportive and developmental process to ensure that all employees have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. For teachers in particular the process should enable them to continue to improve their professional practice and develop.

Employees should be provided with appropriate information, support and advice during induction and probation to achieve the required standards of performance. For support staff please see the Probation Procedure for further details.

The appraisal process will remain confidential between the appraiser and employee and the employee's line manager (if this is different to the appraiser). The Head of School/Executive Principal may access the documents as part of quality assurance.

The MAT will try to resolve issues of underperformance informally through meetings between the employee and their line manager. However, where this approach has been tried and has not worked or the performance concerns are more serious, formal action under the Capability Procedure will be considered.

The employee will be given reasonable notice of any meetings under this procedure.

This procedure complies with the revised appraisal arrangements for teachers which came into force on 1 September 2012 – Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Appraisal Period

The appraisal period runs for twelve months from 1 September to 31 August each year. The annual audit against national standards should be completed no later than 31 July each year other than in exceptional circumstances.

Teachers and support staff 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 procedure. The length of the period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

Where an employee joins partway through the normal appraisal period an adjustment to the period will be made.



Appointing Appraisers

The Executive Principal will be appraised by a sub-group consisting of the Chair of the MAT Board and another Director. They will be supported by a suitably skilled and experienced external adviser.

The Head of School will be appraised by the Executive Principal.

The Head of School/Executive Principal will decide who will appraise teaching and support staff. Where they delegate this role for some or all teachers and support staff for whom they are not the line manager they will moderate a sample of the documents to ensure consistency and compliance with this procedure.

Setting Objectives

The Executive Principal/Head of School's objectives will be set by the MAT's Board of Directors in consultation with the Local Governing Body.

Objectives for each teacher and member of support staff will be set before or as soon as practicable after the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) and be appropriate to the employee's role and level of experience. They shall also take account of professional aspirations and any relevant pay progression criteria. The appraiser and employee 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 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. All appraisers should therefore make reference to the school development plan prior to setting objectives. For teachers this link will be made:

- By ensuring that the pupil progress objective addresses the key attainment priority
- By ensuring that the professional development objective addresses the key development propriety identified by the annual audit against teacher standards (see Appendices A and B)
- By ensuring that the professional development objective (all teachers with paid leadership responsibilities) addresses the key development priority identified by consideration of each leader's impact on relevant school improvement priorities – with reference to any leadership standards.



Under normal circumstances there will be a maximum of 4 objectives set in any one period, the number of objectives set will take into account the difficulty and complexity of the objectives. However, for teachers, who are found not to be meeting standards at the appropriate level for their career stage (Appendix B) by the annual standards audit (Appendices A and B) may be given additional objectives as are required to ensure that the most appropriate support can be provided.

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. For qualified teachers this will normally be against the 'Teachers' Standards' contained within the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. It is for the appraiser to decide which standards are most appropriate.

Reviewing Performance

Observation

The school believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas of development an individual may have and of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion, see Appendix 1.

In this school performance will be regularly observed but the amount and type of classroom observation will depend on the employee's individual circumstances and the overall needs of the school. When observing a teacher, the observation should be carried out by someone with QTS.

In addition to formal observation, Head of Schools/Executive Principal 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 in" observations will vary depending on specific circumstances.

Teachers (including the Head of School 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 appropriate professional development and where support staff are able to grow through professional development. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the on-going professional development needs and priorities of individuals. (See the Training and Development Policy).

Feedback

Employees 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 an employee's performance, the appraiser will meet with them formally to:

- Give clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns
- Give the employee the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns
- Agree any support (e.g. coaching, mentoring, structured observations, training) 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 will need to reflect the seriousness of the concerns)
- Explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made.

This constitutes the informal stage of the Capability Procedure.

When progress is reviewed, if the appraiser is satisfied that the employee 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 employee 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. (For further details see Capability Procedure).

Annual Assessment

Each employee's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. 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, normally once a term. Template forms exist which may be used as part of the appraisal process.

The employee 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. This should be received by 31 October (31 December for the Executive Principal/Head of School). The appraisal report should include as appropriate:

- Details of the employee's objectives for the appraisal period in question
- An assessment of the employee's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and relevant standards
- An assessment of the employee's professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them
- A recommendation on pay where that is relevant.

Any recommendations on pay will be referred to the Head of School (or the Executive Principal where it involves an employee on the leadership scale) for a decision. Where the decision relates to either the Head of School or Executive Principal the decision would be made by the MAT's Board of Directors.

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

Retention of Records

The Local Governing Body and Head of School will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.



Review

This procedure will be reviewed annually in order to respond to any changes in the employment legislation.



Appendix 1 – Observation Protocols

The MAT is 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; and
- Respect the confidentiality of the information gained.

The total period for observation arranged will be proportionate and have regard to the individual circumstances and needs. In this school 'proportionate to need' will be determined by the Head of School.

The arrangements for observation will be included as part of the setting of objectives and will include the amount of observation, specify its primary purpose, any particular aspects of performance which will be assessed, the duration of the observation, when during the appraisal period the observation will take place and who will conduct the observation.

Where evidence emerges which gives rise to concern during the appraisal period, additional observations may be arranged those recorded at the beginning of the period subject to a meeting between the appraiser and individual employee.

Information gathered during the observation will be used, as appropriate, for a variety of purposes including to inform school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies in accordance with the school's commitment to streamlining data collection and minimising bureaucracy and workload burdens on staff.

In keeping with the commitment to supportive and developmental observation those being observed will be notified in advance. Where classroom observations of teachers take place they will only be undertaken by persons with QTS. In addition, observation will only be undertaken by those who have had adequate preparation and the appropriate professional skills to undertake observation and to provide constructive oral and written feedback and support, in the context of professional dialogue between colleagues.



Oral feedback should 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. Written feedback should 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 original objective setting these should also be covered in the written feedback and the appropriate action taken in accordance with this procedure. The written record of feedback should also include the date on which the observation took place, the lesson observed and the length of the observation. The member of staff has the right to append written comments on the feedback document. No written notes in addition to the written feedback will be kept.

The Head of School has a duty to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to ensure that proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained and have a right to drop in to inform their monitoring of the quality of learning. Clearly the appraisal process is integral to fulfilling this duty and therefore agreed observations as part of this process may be sufficient however, "Drop ins" can be undertaken by members of the leadership team. "Drop ins" will only inform the appraisal process where evidence arises which merits the revision of the original objectives set.



Appendix 2 - Procedure for Conducting National Standards Audit

The aim of the annual audit against national standards will be to identify, through professional dialogue, the standards which represent the most appropriate areas for professional development for individual teachers in the upcoming appraisal cycle. Wherever possible, these audits will take place in the Summer Term, so that the most helpful professional development appraisal objectives can be identified, and any necessary arrangements made, in good time for the new school year.

Teachers must be informed about the standards against which their performance in any appraisal cycle will be assessed. The school therefore needs to adopt a fair and evidence-based procedure for deciding whether or not standards are met and are consistent across the school.

The key stages of the procedure are as follows:

- Time will be provided for teachers to conduct a self-audit against the National Standards (Preamble, Part 1 and Part 2) at the level indicated by the career stage expectations.
- Each teacher's appraiser paired with the Head of School/appropriate senior leadership team member will complete the audit in exactly the same way. Wherever this paid indicates that performance may not be at the level required, either or both will need to be in a position to back up their judgment by reference to either written evidence previously shared with the teacher indicating that a standard is not met, or by reference to a lack of positive evidence that a standard is met.
- The audits will then be exchanged. At least a week will be allowed for the teacher and the appraiser/SLT member to assemble any necessary evidence.
- Teacher and appraiser will then attend a Professional Dialogue meeting of 45-60 minutes. The aim of the meeting will be to agree the standards against which the teacher's performance will be assessed in the next appraisal cycle. Where the initial audit (or examination of evidence at the Professional Dialogue meeting) results in agreement that all relevant standards are met, the teacher will be free to identify the national standard against which s/he would like to be assessed by means of the professional development objective.



- Where the initial audit (or examination of evidence at the Professional Dialogue meeting) results in agreement that particular standards are not met, these standards will become those against which the teacher's performance will be assessed in the next appraisal cycle.
- Where teacher and appraiser cannot reach agreement as to whether or not a standard is met, the matter will be referred to the Head of School, who will meet with the teacher, consider all available evidence, and inform the teacher of their decision.
- A teacher dissatisfied with the Head of School's decision will have the right of appeal to the local governing body under existing procedures.
- The objectives decided at or following the Professional Dialogue meeting will form the basis of the next year's objective setting.

Provision of additional support where national standards are not met

Where professional standards are found not to be met at the appropriate career stage during the audit, special arrangements will be made to ensure that the appropriate support can be provided. These may include:

- The appointment of an appraiser from the senior leadership team
- The setting of an appropriate number of additional performance objectives above the school norm
- Further lesson observations, which may be unannounced.

Where information comes to light during the course of an appraisal cycle that leads the Head of School to conclude that national standards are not met at the appropriate career stage expectation level, the arrangements outlined above, which may include a change of appraiser, will come into force as soon as possible after the decision has been made.

Where national standards are identified as not being met at the appropriate career stage expectation level by either means, performance objectives will be action planned to a much shorter timescale, typically one term but less if the situation warrants this. At the end of each such period, progress will be reviewed and a decision made on whether:

- To end the support programme and resume normal appraisal arrangements
- To continue to provide support within appraisal by setting further short-term objectives
- To suspend performance appraisal and move immediately into the formal capability procedure.