



STAFF APPRAISAL POLICY

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Reviewed by the SLT MAT Board

“The Trustees of the Southport Learning Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at every opportunity and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment”

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1. Introduction

Appraisal arrangements come into force with effect from 1 September 2012 for teachers. They are set out in the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations) which replace the Education (School Teacher Performance Management) (England) Regulations 2006 (the 2006 Regulations). The 2006 Regulations apply to any performance management cycle since September 2012, unless the responsible body decides to end that cycle early and to begin a new appraisal period starting on or after that date. This policy follows guidance in [Teacher Appraisal: Guidance for Schools \(July 2024\)](#).

The Appraisal Regulations set out the principles that apply to teachers in all schools where they are employed for one term or more. They provide the minimum national framework within which schools should operate. If they wish, schools may include in their own policies details that are no longer covered by the Appraisal Regulations.

Schools must stay within the legal framework set out in the Appraisal Regulations and in other relevant legislation that affects all employers (for example legislation on equality, employment protection and data protection).

This is an appraisal policy for teachers and support staff and is linked to the Capability Policy and Procedure.

2. Policy for appraising staff performance

The policy is reviewed annually taking into account the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document and Joint Union Guidance.

3. Purpose

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of employees, including the Chief Executive Officer, and for supporting their development within the context of the Trust and School Improvement Plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of employees. It also sets out the arrangements that will apply when employees fall below the levels of competence that are expected of them.

4. Application of the policy

The Appraisal Policy applies to the Headteacher and to all Trust employees except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (*i.e. Early Career Teachers (ECTs)*) and those who are subject to Capability Procedures.

5. Appraisal

Appraisal in the Trust and at its schools will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all employees have the skills and support they need to carry out and professionally grow in their role effectively. It will help to ensure that employees are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop as teachers and support staff.

6. The Appraisal Period

The appraisal period will run for twelve months from 1st November to 31st October each year for all employees except Headteachers and Chief Executive Officer for which it runs to 31st December. Employees 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.

7. Appointing Appraisers

The Chief Executive Officer will be appraised by the Chair of the Trust Board and two additional Board Members with the relevant skillset. The Chief Executive Officer will decide who will appraise staff in the Central Team.

The task of appraising a school Headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of the Chair of the school Local Governing Board, another Governor of the school Local Governing Body and the Chief Executive Officer.

The Headteacher will decide who will appraise other teachers and support staff.

8. Setting objectives

The Chief Executive Officer's objectives will be set by the Trust Board members present at the appraisal.

A school Headteacher's objectives will be set by the Chief Executive Officer and the Local Governing Body members present at the appraisal.

Objectives for each employee will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. 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 for each employee, will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the employee's role and level of experience to support their professional growth.

The objectives set for each employee 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 schools in the Trust.

Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, each employee will be informed of the criteria against which their performance in that appraisal period will be assessed.

Quality and consistency in the objectives being set will be ensured by each employee, proposed objectives being reviewed by the Headteacher or their delegate who may agree, vary or suggest alternative objectives as is deemed appropriate in the interests of fairness, consistency and the needs of the school.

9. Reviewing performance

Observation

This Trust believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing teachers and teaching assistants 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. Teaching and learning will be regularly observed in a variety of manners to support professional growth, quality assurance and the development needs of the school. .

The Chief Executive Officer and Trust Central Education Team, school Headteachers or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards may complete 'Learning Walks' in order to evaluate the standards of teaching and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained. The length of 'Learning Walks' will vary depending on their focus. These could include monitoring of pupil progress such as a Curriculum Review to ensure the school strives to deliver lessons to enable its pupils to make excellent progress.

Teachers and support staff (including the Chief Executive Officer, Central Team and school Headteacher) 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 growth. The Trust and School wishes to encourage a culture in which all employees take responsibility for improving their teaching

and area of work 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 and support staff.

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 the employee's performance the appraiser will meet the member of staff formally to:

- give clear feedback to the teacher 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), that will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
- make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress (If objectives are revised period of up to 6 weeks will be allowed to demonstrate improvement.);
- explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made.

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.

10. Transition to capability

If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress, the informal procedure as indicated in the Capability Policy will be actioned. If this does not lead to required progress, the employee will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and they will be invited to a formal capability meeting. The capability procedures will be conducted as per the Capability Policy and Procedure.

11. Annual Assessment

Each employee's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the school Headteacher, the Local Governing Body must consult the Chief Executive Officer.

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. Where there are concerns about performance meetings must be held at least once per term.

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. In this Trust, teachers and support staff will receive their written appraisal reports by 31st October. The appraisal report will include:

- 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 the 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 in line with automatic pay progression where appropriate and in line with the Trust Staff Pay Policy;
- The document will be reviewed and signed off by the Headteacher or their delegate line manager before being issued.

All eligible teachers and leaders should receive pay progression unless they are subject to formal capability procedures and, despite support being provided by the school, sufficient progress has not been made to resolve those concerns.

12. Appealing a decision

Please refer to the Appeals section of the Staff Pay Policy to appeal a decision regarding pay progression.

13. General Principles Underlying This policy

Confidentiality

The appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the school Headteacher and Local Governing Body to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. The Headteacher or appropriate colleague might review all employees' objectives and written appraisal records personally, in order to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers. The Chief Executive Officer and school Headteacher might also wish to be aware of any pay recommendations that have been made.

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The Southport Learning Trust is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation.

Definitions

Unless indicated otherwise, all references to "employee" include the Chief Executive Officer and school Headteacher.

Delegation

Normal rules apply in respect of the delegation of functions by the school Local Governing Body and school Headteacher.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Trust Board will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the Trust schools appraisal arrangements.

Retention

The CEO and Headteachers will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.