

OWLCOTES MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Appraisal Policy & Procedure



December 2019
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Table of Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Purpose.....	3
3. Scope	4
4. Policy Statement.....	4
5. Procedures.....	4
5.1. The Appraisal Period	4
5.2. Appointing Appraisers.....	5
5.3. Setting Objectives.....	5
5.4. Pay Progression	6
5.5. Reviewing Performance	7
5.6. Annual Assessment	8
5.7. Teachers Experiencing Difficulties	8
5.8. Appeals.....	9
6. Other Policies and Procedures	9
Appendix 1: Teachers Experiencing Difficulties - Guidance for Performance Support Plans	10

About Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust (OMAT)

OMAT is committed to the development of inclusive schools, sharing a common purpose to provide excellent education and improve outcomes for pupils.

OMAT strives to provide high-quality education for all children within our local communities by inspiring innovation, creativity and aspiration through an enriched curriculum.

OMAT is committed to the principles of co-operation, collaboration and sharing best practice with a strong focus on staff development.

OMAT is also committed to the preservation of the unique identity of all schools within the trust: each school will have a Local Governing Board (LGB) which is involved in decision making at school level, with autonomy to make decisions for its own school – in line with the scheme of delegation.

All trustees and any schools joining must agree to share and uphold all of these principles now and in the future.

Appraisal Policy

1. Introduction

Performance appraisal is an opportunity for individual employees and those that have responsibility for their performance, typically line managers, to engage in a constructive dialogue about an individual's performance across the reporting period, their potential and their development needs, in addition to the support required from the manager. Furthermore, in the case of teachers, there is also a requirement to assess practice against the Teacher's Standards. Objectives will be discussed, and where possible agreed following this professional dialogue and after full analysis of the needs of the staff member.

While performance appraisal is an important part of performance management, in itself it is not performance management. Appraisal is one of a range of tools that can be used to support and develop/ manage performance. In Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust we believe that performance management should be a two-way process which supports a teacher to develop professionally throughout their career. We use the terminology performance development in recognition of this.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to assess employees (teachers) against defined objectives, to give constructive feedback and to acknowledge employees for their good work. The policy will also enable medium and long term objectives to be defined for employees and, where teachers are eligible, may inform a recommendation for pay progression.

The policy also offers the opportunity to address any performance issues at an early stage, constructively discuss areas in need of improvement or further development, find solutions and agree any appropriate support /better ways to carry out tasks or improve practice.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the Headteacher of each school and to all qualified teachers employed in the at the school except those on contracts of less than one term and those undergoing induction (i.e., Early Career Teachers) or teachers on capability procedures.

This policy is designed to comply with the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 and also reflects, where applicable, provisions outlines in the School Teachers' Pay & Conditions Document.

4. Policy Statement

Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust is committed to give teachers employed at the schools and their managers an annual opportunity to review performance, to agree personal objectives, and to agree learning and development requirements.

The appraisal system aims to:

- Be a positive process
- Raise the quality of teaching, learning and leadership provided by the school through highly motivated and competent teachers and leaders
- Support the School in improving the education of pupils at the school and the implementation of any plan of the governing body / trustees designed to improve the school's educational provision and performance
- Translate and create links from high level strategy (the school improvement or trust improvement plan) into each individual's role as appropriate.
- Identify and support any relevant development needs.

5. Procedures

5.1. The Appraisal Period

The appraisal period will run **for 12 months**, normally from 1st November to 31st October each year. Teachers who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year will have their performance managed/ developed in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of the period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

Where a teacher starts their employment at the school part-way through a cycle, the Headteacher or, in the case where the employee is the Headteacher, the Governing Body in consultation with the CEO shall determine the length of the first cycle for that teacher, with a view to bringing his/her cycle into line with the cycle for other teachers as soon as possible.

Where a teacher transfers to a new post within the school part-way through a cycle, the Headteacher or, in the case where the employee is the Headteacher, the Governing Body in consultation with the CEO shall determine whether the cycle shall begin again and whether to change the appraiser.

5.2. Appointing Appraisers

All appraisers of teachers, other than those appraising Headteachers, will be qualified teachers and will be suitably trained. In Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust all appraisers will have a role in school more senior to the member of staff they are appraising.

Headteacher

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

The task of appraising the Headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a committee consisting of normally three members of the Governing Body/Trust Board

Where a Headteacher is of the opinion that any of the governors /trustees appointed to the committee is unsuitable to act as his/her appraiser, s/he may submit a written request for that committee member to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request. This request will be considered by the CEO and a panel of trustees.

Teachers

The choice of appraiser is for the Headteacher. Where teachers have an objection to the Headteacher's choice, their concerns will be considered.

Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser appointed by the Headteacher will be absent for the majority of the appraisal cycle, the Headteacher may perform those duties herself/himself or delegate those duties to another teacher for the duration of that absence.

If the Headteacher appoints an appraiser who is not the teacher's line manager, the appraiser to whom she/he delegates those duties will have an appropriate position in the staffing structure, together with the necessary background knowledge, skills and training to undertake the role.

Where a teacher is experiencing difficulties and the Headteacher is not the appraiser, the Headteacher may undertake the role of appraiser. See also section on Teachers Experiencing Difficulties.

5.3. Setting Objectives

The Headteacher's objectives will be set by the appraisal committee after consultation with the CEO/ external adviser and the Headteacher.

Objectives will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives and the support required to achieve the objectives will be recorded in the planning statement. The objectives set will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the appraisee's role and level of experience. In setting the objectives, reviewers will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in the context of roles, responsibilities and experience, consistent with the school's strategy for achieving a work/life balance for all staff. Appraisees may at any point append their comments alongside their objectives.

The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change. The school operates a system of moderation to ensure that all appraisers are working to the same standards. Targets will be moderated across the school to ensure that they are consistent between teachers with similar experience and levels of responsibility. Should the objectives not be agreed, the final decision on allocation of objectives rests with the Headteacher.

The agreed objectives will contain a description of what success may look like. Agreed objectives will be linked to the school improvement plan. Where use of numerical targets is appropriate, these will be reasonable, in the circumstances in which the teacher works and it will be recognised that factors outside teachers' control may significantly affect success. Numerical targets will not be linked to teacher assessment information of pupils or internal tracking assessment systems.

Setting more than three objectives, or using sub-targets, may lead to difficulties in achieving objectives set. Therefore, other than in exceptional circumstances and by agreement, no teacher will be given more than three objectives.

The appraiser will take into account the effects of an individual's circumstances, including any disability, when agreeing objectives. For example, this might include a reasonable adjustment to allow an individual slightly longer to complete a task than might otherwise be the case. When staff return from a period of extended absence, objectives may be adjusted to allow them to readjust to their working environment.

The objectives set for each teacher are intended to contribute to the school's plans for improving the school's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at that school and will take into account the professional aspirations of the teacher.

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 e.g., the Teachers' Standards.

5.4. Pay Progression

Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the recommendation made by the appraiser will be based on the assessment of their performance against the agreed objectives and the relevant standards. The decision made by the relevant decision-making body will also be based on the statutory criteria and guidance set out in the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD)*.

The Board of Trustees has agreed the pay policy of the school and has considered the implications of the appraisal policy with respect to the arrangements relating to teachers' pay in accordance with the *STPCD*. The Governing Body will ensure that decisions on pay progression are made by 31 December for Headteachers and by 31 October for other teachers.

Where the Headteacher has not been recommended for pay progression he/she will be informed by the appropriate Governor/ Trustee. The Headteacher will notify any teacher who has not been recommended for pay progression of the date when the Governing Body meets to consider pay recommendations. Details of the appeals process can be found within the School Pay Policy.

5.5. Reviewing Performance

5.5.1. Observation

The effective and efficient operation of the appraisal process requires lesson observation to be a confidential process of constructive engagement within an atmosphere of support and co-operation.

Accordingly, observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion, with professionalism, integrity and courtesy, will be evaluated objectively and reported accurately and fairly and will take account of particular circumstances which may affect performance on the day.

At least five working days' notice of the date and time of the observation will be given and verbal feedback provided by at least by the end of the next school day and written feedback within 5 working days, unless circumstances make this impossible.

Classroom observation will be carried out by qualified teachers.

For the purposes of appraisal, teachers' performance will typically be observed on three occasions throughout the year. The number and duration of appraisal observations is detailed in the planning statement and is in accordance with the school's observation protocol which does enable a teacher to request an additional observation within 3 weeks of an initial observation if the teacher feels that their lesson is not a true reflection of their usual performance. This is an option available and is not a requirement of performance management. No more than 3 hours of classroom observations will take place for appraisal purposes for any teacher in Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust. In many circumstances, the duration of observations will typically be shorter than this.

For the purpose of professional development, feedback about lesson observations will be developmental and will include a professional dialogue with the appraiser and the appraisee. We will not use Ofsted grades within the Owlcotes Multi-Academy Trust.

Where possible and appropriate school will limit the need for additional observations during the appraisal year and may, if appropriate, use the findings of each observation, including appraisal observations, for other management requirements (for example subject area reviews).

Teachers (including the Headteacher) whose posts have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

5.5.2. Development and Support

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. The trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all teachers in all its schools take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development e.g., through peer observation, engaging with external and internal training, working collaboratively to develop planning and resources, engaging with coaching etc. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the on-going professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

The Trust's CPD programme at central and at school level will be informed by the training and development needs identified as part of the appraisal process along with training and development needs identified by

individual staff or staff teams. With regard to the provision of CPD in the case of competing demands on the school budget, a decision on relative priority will be taken with regard to the extent to which:

- The training and support will help the school to achieve its priorities; and
- The CPD identified is essential for a staff member to meet his or her objectives.

During the review meeting consideration will be given where it has not been possible for teachers to fully meet their performance criteria because the support recorded in the planning statement has not been provided.

5.6. Annual Assessment

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the Headteacher, the Governing Body must consult the CEO/external adviser.

The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period – and have the opportunity to comment on – a written appraisal report. 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 against the relevant standards;
- An assessment of the teacher's training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- A recommendation on pay where that is relevant (**N.B. – pay recommendations need to be made by 31 December for Headteachers and by 31 October for other teachers**);
- A space for the teacher's own comments.

A review meeting will take place to discuss the content of the report and any further action required and to inform objective setting for the next cycle. In some circumstances an interim review meeting may be appropriate.

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

Appraisal is not limited to an annual assessment meeting and will be part of ongoing professional dialogue.

5.7. Teachers Experiencing Difficulties

When dealing with a teacher/ Headteacher experiencing difficulties, the objective is to provide support and guidance through the performance management process in such a way that the teacher's/Headteacher's performance improves and the problem is, therefore, resolved. In some instances, it is entirely appropriate for a teacher to be offered a second observation if the teacher and/or appraiser believes the first did not give a true reflection the appraisee's performance. In this case, the first observation may be disregarded if the further observation provides evidence of improvement.

Where it is apparent that the teacher's/Headteacher's personal circumstances are leading to difficulties at the school, support will be offered as soon as possible, without waiting for the annual appraisal meeting.

If an appraiser identifies, through the performance management process, that some difficulties being experienced by a teacher/headteacher are such that they can be addressed by immediately agreed actions, a

professional conversation should be held to discuss and implement steps and support to rectify the situation as outlined in the attached Guidance (see Appendix 1).

If it is identified through the performance management process that the difficulties experienced by a teacher/Headteacher are of concern/having an impact on their performance the appraiser, Headteacher or a member of the leadership team will meet the teacher/Headteacher to agree an informal support plan in accordance with the Guidance (see Appendix 1). The agreed plan of support should be documented and shared with both parties. Trade union support at this meeting should be accommodated should the appraisee request it.

If, by the end of the period of support, sufficient progress is made and as such, the teacher/Headteacher is performing at a satisfactory level, the teacher/Headteacher should be informed of this in a meeting and this will be followed up in writing by the appraiser or Headteacher. The performance management process will then continue as normal.

If, by the end of the support plan period, the appraiser is not satisfied with progress, they should liaise with the Headteacher or in the case of the Headteacher, the CEO/Chair of Governors. It may be appropriate at this stage to commence capability procedures, in which case the teacher/Headteacher will be notified at a review meeting that their performance will be managed under the Schools Capability Policy and Procedure and the normal performance management systems will no longer apply.

5.8. Appeals

Appraisees have a right of appeal against any of the entries in the written appraisal report. Details of the appeals process are available from the Headteacher or from the school governing body.

6. Other Policies and Procedures

The following policies are related to this policy:

- Capability Policy;
- Pay Policy.

The following documents are related to this policy:

- The School Teachers' Pay & Conditions Document;
- The Teachers' Standards;
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012.

Appendix 1: Teachers Experiencing Difficulties - Guidance for Performance Support Plans

Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is to promote early intervention and to ensure that teachers/Headteachers experiencing difficulties are provided with appropriate support:

In particular that teachers / Headteachers have:

- Agreed and meaningful support appropriate to the concerns raised
- The opportunity to receive structured feedback and to understand and respond to evidence of underperformance
- Reasonable and realistic timeframes within which to improve performance
- The opportunity should they wish to have trade union support including at the meeting referred to in paragraph 5.7.4 and subsequent review meetings.

Procedure

Headteachers/appraisers should raise their concerns of underperformance in a professional conversation with the teacher/Headteacher in accordance with paragraph 5.7.3. Support may be discussed at this stage to help the teacher or Headteacher make immediate improvements to their performance.

If, after implementing 5.7.3 the concerns are not resolved the teacher/Headteacher will be invited to a meeting to plan appropriate support. The teacher/headteacher will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting.

At the meeting:

- There should be a professional discussion referring to the aspects of work performance that do not meet the required standards. Clear evidence will be provided by the school and the teacher may bring their own evidence
- The teacher/Headteacher should have the opportunity to respond to these concerns and to highlight any mitigating reasons/circumstances for the difficulties being experienced.
- In consultation with the teacher/Headteacher, an informal plan of support should be established that will help address the specific concerns.
- Objectives for improving performance should be specific and agreed.
- Support, coaching and training should be identified, for example: coaching, training, in-class support, mentoring, structured observations, visits to other classes or schools or discussions with advisory teachers. Support must be manageable and relevant to the specific concerns raised.
- A timetable for improvement, including the means of monitoring improvement, should be agreed and a date for a meeting to review progress confirmed. The timescales for improvement should be reasonable, realistic and appropriate to the performance concerns, for example: 8-10 weeks unless the concerns are of a minor nature that can be dealt with quickly.
- The main points of the meeting should be recorded in writing and written records, including evidence, should be kept and be available for all those involved in the process.
- The implications and process, if insufficient improvement is made, will be explained.

This Appraisal Policy was adopted by Owlcotes Multi Academy Trust on 10/12/2019

Chair of Trustees: Mrs Judith Norfolk		
Signature:		Judith Norfolk
Frequency of review:	2 years	
To be reviewed and approved by:	OMAT Full Board	
Date of next review:	December 2025	

REVIEW RECORD

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review
09/12/2021	Updated in line with Leeds City Council model policy.	December 2023

Name:		Signature:	
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on behalf of OMAT Full Board

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review
12/12/2023	Agreed review schedule.	December 2025

Name:			
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on behalf of OMAT Full Board

Date of review	Reason for review	Date of next review

Name:		Signature:	
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on behalf of OMAT Full Board