St Johns & St Nics Appraisal Procedure for Support Staff

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Change History

Version	Date	Review Date	Description
1.0	June 2026	June 2029	New procedure developed to clarify the appraisal process for support staff

1. Purpose

a) This procedure sets out a framework for the clear and consistent assessment of performance of staff in the school, and for supporting their development within the context of the schools plan for improving educational provision and performance.

b) This procedure applies to all support staff employed by the school or local authority, except those on contracts of less than one term[1], those undergoing induction and those who are subject to formal capability procedures.

c) Appraisal in this school will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all staff have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It will help to ensure that staff are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop in their roles.

2. Principles

a) All maintained schools are required to have a procedure which sets out how appraisal for support staff will be managed. It is recommended to schools for adoption by the governing body.

b) Appraisal in this school will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all employees have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively and continue to improve their professional practice.

c) The school wishes to encourage a culture in which all staff take responsibility for improving their practice through appropriate professional development.

d) This procedure is a non-contractual procedure and may be amended at the discretion of the school.

3. Scope

a) This procedure applies to all support staff within the school, except those on contracts of less than one term, those who are subject to a probationary period and those who are subject to formal capability processes.

4. The appraisal period

a) The appraisal period will run for twelve months from 1 September to 31 August[2].

b) Staff 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 appraisal period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

[1] One term refers to the three main terms of the school year as set out in Conditions of Service for School Teachers in England and Wales (the Burgundy Book).

[2] The Relevant Body may decide a different cycle, it would also be possible to decide different cycles.

c) Employees who start their employment part-way through the appraisal cycle will have their performance managed over a longer or shorter appraisal period as the head teacher determines most appropriate, with the aim of bringing them into line with the cycle for all other support staff as soon as possible.

d) If an employee transfers to a new post within the school part-way through the appraisal cycle, the head teacher will consider whether it is appropriate to continue with the current cycle and/or to revise the objectives in line with the new post.

5. Appointing appraisers

a) The Headteacher will decide who will appraise support staff. Where the head teacher decides to delegate appraisal responsibility to line managers, this will include all aspects of the process.

b) Where the Headteacher appoints an appraiser who is not the employee's direct line manager, the appraiser should, where the school structure allows it, be a member of the leadership team and have the relevant knowledge to undertake the role.

c) Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser will be absent for the majority of the cycle or is unsuitable for professional reasons, the Headteacher may perform the duties or delegate them in their entirety to another member of staff. If the appraiser changes this will not mean the performance management cycle begins again.

d) All appraisers should be suitably trained/experienced in carrying out appraisals.

6. Setting objective

a) Objectives will be set before 31st October, or as soon as practicable after, the start of the appraisal period. The objectives set will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) and will be appropriate to the employee's role, job description and level of experience. They should be such that, if they are achieved, they will contribute to the overall process of School improvement.

b) The appraiser and member of staff 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 Headteacher will ensure objectives are moderated, so they are consistent across employees with similar roles, experience and levels of responsibility.

c) The number and the level of targets should be appropriate to the employee, their individual circumstances and role in School. The process for monitoring staff progress against the objectives will be specific to each School and will be dependent upon the role the employee has.

d) The appraiser can suggest a review of the job description if they feel the employee's role has changed significantly during the appraisal period.

e) At the end of the appraisal period, assessment of performance against the objectives will be on the basis of the performance criteria set at the beginning of the

cycle. Good progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective, even if the performance criteria have not been met in full, will be assessed favourably.

7. Reviewing performance

a) There are a variety of ways to assess the employee's performance and development against the objectives set during the appraisal process. This will depend on the following:

- If the employee has continued to undertake all aspects of their role to a satisfactory standard.
- If the employee has undertaken any additional training during the appraisal cycle.
- If, with the benefit of hindsight, the objectives set at the start of the appraisal period were relevant and if there had been any extenuating circumstances which means that certain objectives could not be met.
- The role of the employee.
- Feedback from other appropriate staff in School for example feedback from Teachers regarding Teaching Assistants, feedback from School Business Managers regarding Administrative Support and Premises Officers.

7.1 Classroom Observation for class-based Support Staff

a) Classroom observations will allow the appraiser to observe classroom practice in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development, and for gaining useful information which can inform School improvement more generally. All observations should be carried out in a supportive fashion and appropriate verbal and written feedback (when appropriate) should be provided.

The appraisal report will include:

- details of the employees' objectives for the appraisal period.
- an assessment of the employee's performance of their role and responsibilities against the relevant standards. Where the standards are being met detailed written evidence will not normally be required. However, if there are concerns that standards are not being met these should be evidenced.
- an assessment of the employee's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives.
- an assessment of the employee's professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them.
- a space for the employee's comments.
- A review meeting will take place to discuss the content of the written appraisal report and any action required, and to inform objective setting for the next cycle. The assessment of performance and of professional development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period.

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

c) Verbal feedback should be given as soon as possible after an observation and within 48 hours if possible. Written feedback (where agreed) should be provided within 5 working days of the observation taking place.

d) In addition to formal observation, the Headteacher or other Senior Leaders with responsibility for School standards may 'drop in' in order to evaluate the standards and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained.

7.2 Development and Support

a) The appraisal process is a supportive procedure that is used to inform Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The process should encourage a culture in which all Support Staff take responsibility for improving within their role. Professional development should be linked to School improvement priorities and to the ongoing needs and priorities of individual employees.

b) The School CPD programme will be informed by the training and development needs identified as part of the appraisal process. In this regard, the Governing Board will ensure that in budget planning, as far as possible, resources are made available in the School budget for appropriate development opportunities.

c) Employee's should not be held accountable for failing to make good progress towards meeting relevant performance criteria where the support recorded in the planning statement has not been provided.

7.3 Feedback

a) Staff will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation or evidence has come to light. Feedback will include discussion with the member of staff and will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention. Any appropriate action required will be determined.

b) Where, during the review cycle, there are concerns about any aspects of the member of staff's performance these may be addressed as follows:

- Continue to provide support within performance management by setting further short-term objectives
- Put in place an informal support programme and continue normal performance management arrangements
- Suspend performance management and move to the Capability Procedure.

c) When progress is reviewed, if the appraiser is satisfied that the member of staff 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.

d) Additional review meetings may take place in situations where the employee's performance becomes a cause for concern. Additional support will need to be discussed to assist the employee in achieving their objectives. During any additional

meetings, the appraiser will clearly outline the nature of the concerns, so that the employee is fully aware of what is required to achieve their objectives.

e) Performance management should be viewed as an ongoing and supportive process rather than a single annual event. Regular one to one meeting should take place throughout the review cycle to provide employees with timely feedback, discuss progress against objectives, identify any concerns at an early stage and consider any support or development required.

8. Annual Appraisal Meeting

a) The annual appraisal meeting will take place as early as possible in the appraisal period. The appraiser may wish to use the Support Staff Appraisal Policy Form.

b) The appraisee will be expected to complete the appraisal form and return it to the appraiser at least one week prior to the annual appraisal meeting. The completed form will inform the basis of the appraisal discussion and should include a reflection on performance, progress against objectives, achievements, development undertaken and any support or development needs identified.

c) At this meeting, performance during the previous appraisal period will be reviewed as will any training and development needs. Performance objectives will also be set for the forthcoming appraisal period. Some performance objectives could be carried forward into the subsequent appraisal period if necessary/appropriate. If deemed appropriate at the annual appraisal meeting the appraiser may set an interim review meeting part-way through the appraisal period. The necessity of this will depend on the nature of the role, the performance objectives and/or where there are concerns about performance.

d) Employees may fail to achieve objectives due to issues outside their control. Managers must consider this when they review performance. Managers should disregard objectives that employees could not achieve because they were outside their control.

e) After the meeting a fully signed copy should be provided to the appraisee, and a copy should be kept by the appraiser for reference purposes at the next appraisal meeting and any interim appraisal meetings.

9. Confidentiality

a) The appraisal process and the written appraisal report is confidential. However, confidentiality does not override the need for the Headteacher and relevant body to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

10. Concerns about an employee's performance – Structured Managerial Support

a) Where there are concerns about any aspects of an employee's performance at any time during the year, the appraiser will, as part of the appraisal process, meet the individual to arrange the provision of structured managerial support: The Appraiser should:

- give clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns.
- give them the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns.
- agree any support e.g. coaching, mentoring, structured observations, that will be provided to help address those specific concerns.
- identify the cause of concerns and whether the staff requires Occupational health support / referral.
- make clear how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed; ensure the timelines are realistic i.e. gives reasonable time to the staff to improve their performance with support mechanisms put in place.
- explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made.

b) A record of the meeting will be shared with the employee, including where appropriate an action plan setting out the structured managerial support. The employee's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process. It may be appropriate to revise objectives. It will be necessary to allow sufficient time for improvement; this will depend on the circumstances but will normally be for a period of not less than four to six working weeks[3].

c) 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.

d) 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 Professional Capability Procedure. The appraiser should contact their HR team for advice and guidance.

e) Full details of the procedure to be followed are contained in a separate Professional Capability Procedure

11. General Principles Underlying the Procedure

a) If a support staff's performance is referred to the capability policy, this will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the ACAS Code of Practice.

b) Performance appraisal does not replace the need to take remedial action under the School's capability policy where there is lack of capability. Where performance is below required standards managers should provide support to support staffs to bring about an improvement through normal management practice and one-to-ones. If competence issues cannot be resolved through normal management action, they should be dealt with under the School's capability policy. Where the

[3] It is for the person conducting the meeting to determine the set period which should be between four and ten working weeks. It should be reasonable and proportionate and should provide sufficient opportunity for an improvement to take place.

School's capability policy is applied, the support staff should not be appraised until use of the capability procedure is satisfactorily concluded.

c) The school is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation. The Headteacher will have overall responsibility for the quality assurance of the appraisal process across the School. This will include ensuring the consistency and equality of application of the process throughout. The Headteacher may delegate responsibility for monitoring consistency and equality of application to a member of the senior management team.

d) The Appraisee can submit information as part of the final appraisal meeting to support their case however there is no formal right of appeal against the appraiser's decision. In some cases, it may be possible to agree to disagree. Should staff still have concerns, then they are able to follow the School's grievance procedure.

e) Where a member of support staff raises a grievance during the capability procedure the capability procedure may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and capability cases are related it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.