

Policy C6 - Staff Appraisal Policy

- specified staff

This policy applies to staff at the following academies:

Blackthorns Community Primary Academy

Desmond Anderson Primary Academy

Holmbush Primary Academy

Lindfield Primary Academy

Pound Hill Infant Academy

The Burgess Hill Academy

1. Aim

- 1.1. This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of all staff in the trust and its academies (including principals¹); and for supporting their development within the context of the trust's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of staff.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy covers all staff employed by each specified academy in the trust and centrally employed by the trust with the exception of:
- those employed for less than one term
 - those teachers undergoing induction or support staff in their probationary period (eg newly qualified teachers and new starters)
 - employees who are subject to the Capability Policy, who will not be subject to the Appraisal Policy.
- 2.2. For ease of reference throughout this document, the term 'Principal' is used to describe any member of staff responsible for the management and performance of employees in the trust (ie Principal, Chief Executive, Management Director or Service Director), and the term 'Academy' is used to describe any employment setting in the trust (ie Academy or central trust team): the same principles will apply to each situation.

3. Purpose of appraisal

- 3.1. Appraisal is 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 also help to ensure that teachers are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop as teachers.

4. Appointment of appraisers

- 4.1. Academy principals will be appraised by the Trust's Board of Trustees. The Board will appoint a Trust Officer to undertake performance management of principals on its behalf. The Chair of the Academy's Local Board may be invited to contribute to the process.

¹ For the purposes of this document, 'Principal' means Principal, Associate Principal, Executive Principal, Acting Principal, Head of School/Academy or, in the Principal's absence, the most senior teacher who is acting in the role of Principal.

- 4.2. If the principal believes that the Trust Officer appointed as an appraiser is unsuitable to act as an appraiser they may submit a written request for that Trust Officer to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request.
- 4.3. The principal will determine who will appraise staff within their academy; and the relevant line manager will determine who will appraise centrally employed staff.
- 4.4. If the appraiser is absent for the majority of the appraisal cycle the principal may appoint another appraiser or take on the role. Likewise where an individual is experiencing difficulties, the principal may take on the role of appraiser.
- 4.5. Where staff have an objection to the choice of appraiser the principal will consider their concerns and where required appoint an alternate appraiser.

5. Appraisal period

- 5.1. The appraisal period will run for twelve months from 1st September to 31st August.
- 5.2. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to set a shorter or longer appraisal period, for example when staff begin or end employment with an academy or change their role.
- 5.3. 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 period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

6. Setting objectives and specifying standards

- 6.1. Each principal's objectives will be agreed by the Board of Trustees after consultation with the Trust Officer responsible for appraisal as well as the principal themselves.
- 6.2. Objectives for each member of staff will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set will be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) and will be appropriate to the employee's role and level of experience.
- 6.3. The objectives set will, if achieved, contribute to the academy's plans for improving the educational provision and performance, and improving the education of pupils at that academy. This will be ensured by quality assuring all objectives against the academy's improvement plan.
- 6.4. Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, each employee will be informed of the standards against which performance in that appraisal period will be assessed.
- 6.5. All Teachers will be assessed against the Teachers Standards, to a level that is consistent with what should be reasonably expected in the relevant role and at the relevant stage of their career.
- 6.6. Support staff will be assessed based on their job descriptions, development needs, objectives and mutually agreed goals.
- 6.7. The appraiser and employee will meet to seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives which will be then be discussed and agreed with the employee. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.
- 6.8. In setting objectives (normally a maximum of three), reviewers will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in the context of roles, responsibilities and experience, consistent with the trust's strategy for achieving a work/life balance for all staff.
- 6.9. Objectives are not intended to cover the full range of the individual's responsibilities but should focus on the specific priorities for that appraisal period.

- 6.10. The agreed objectives will contain a description of what would be required for the objective to be successfully delivered (sometimes called success criteria).
- 6.11. The objectives set and the standards to be achieved will be documented and a copy provided to the employee.
- 6.12. Any learning and development needs that are to be carried forward from the previous appraisal cycle, or are identified as part of the objective setting process should be documented, along with a description of how that learning or development need will be met during the year.
- 6.13. A sample of objectives will be moderated across the academy to ensure that all appraisers are working to the same standards.

7. Reviewing performance

- 7.1. The performance of all staff and progress they are making towards achieving their objectives will be reviewed regularly through interim meetings, observations and feedback.
- 7.2. Observations specifically relating to reviewing performance against objectives will normally be limited to 3 hours; however, there may be a range of other observations, drops ins, learning walks etc as part of overall improvement strategy.
- 7.3. **Interim Reviews:** Appropriate interim reviews should take place and be scheduled in advance. Their purpose should be to provide a formal opportunity to review and address performance and development priorities and revise the employee's objectives or development needs. Although there is no requirement for these to be held, it is recommended that a review take place three times per year to effectively support employees.
- 7.4. Actions/changes agreed at interim reviews will be documented.
- 7.5. If it is identified at an interim review meeting that the employee is not making sufficient progress towards the achievement of their objectives, or in achieving the required Teacher's Standards (in the case of teachers) or the expectations of their job role and grade (in the case of support staff), these should be addressed as described in the feedback section below. If relevant, the teacher should also be advised by their appraiser that based on their current performance and if insufficient progress is made they would not be able to recommend pay progression at the end of the year.
- 7.6. Account will be taken in a review meeting of where it has not been possible for employees to fully meet their objectives because the support recorded in the action plan has not been provided.
- 7.7. **Observation:** This academy believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important, both as a means of assessing performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development, and as a means of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally.
- 7.8. In the academies, performance will be regularly observed, but the amount and type of classroom observation will depend on the individual circumstances of the employee and the overall needs of the school.
- 7.9. There will not normally be more than 3 formal observations carried out and reasonable notice of those observations will be given. All observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion.
- 7.10. Classroom observation will be carried out by those with Qualified Teacher Status.
- 7.11. In addition to formal observation, principals 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.
- 7.12. The length and frequency of "drop in" observations will vary depending on specific circumstances.

- 7.13. Staff who have responsibilities outside of the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.
- 7.14. In circumstances where support staff are observed, they will be assessed against the expectations of their job role and grade (and not the Teachers Standards).
- 7.15. **Feedback:** All staff will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year, and verbal feedback should be given as soon as possible but as a maximum by the end of the next working day. If this is not possible then the member of staff will be informed as to why the feedback has not been provided. Feedback will then be confirmed in writing within 5 working days after observation has taken place (for teachers) or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.
- 7.16. **Supportive Interventions:** Where there are concerns about any aspects of performance these will be raised with the employee at the earliest opportunity.
- 7.17. The objective is to provide support and guidance in such a way that the employee's performance improves and the problem is, therefore, resolved. Support will be offered as soon as possible without waiting for the formal annual assessment. This is particularly important where there are indications that a teacher's overall assessment of performance is likely to be 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate' in their appraisal mid-year.
- 7.18. The principal, or a member of the leadership team, will meet with the employee to:
- give clear feedback to the employee about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
 - give the employee the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns;
 - agree an action plan, (in consultation with the employee), (for example coaching, training, in-class support, mentoring, structured observations, visits to other classes or schools or discussions with advisory teachers), that will help address those specific concerns;
 - make clear how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed;
 - explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made (including potential implications on pay progression).
- 7.19. The employee's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and a reasonable time given for the employee's performance to improve. This will depend upon the circumstances with appropriate support provided as agreed in the action plan.
- 7.20. During this monitoring period the employee will be given regular feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.
- 7.21. If sufficient progress is made such that the employee is performing at a level that indicates there is no longer a possibility of capability procedures being invoked, they should be informed of this at a formal meeting with the appraiser or Principal. Following this meeting the appraisal process will continue as normal. If insufficient progress has been made, please refer to the transition to capability section below.

8. Annual Assessment

- 8.1. Performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period.
- 8.2. This assessment is the end point of the annual 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.
- 8.3. Within the trust, we will endeavour for teachers and support staff to receive their written appraisal reports normally before 31st October. External factors such as the publishing of exam results may cause delays in the finalising of the process but staff would be informed of this. The appraisal report will include:
- overall assessment of their performance

- details of the 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 their training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- a recommendation on pay where that is relevant, based on the overall assessment of performance, in accordance with the trust's pay policy.

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

9. Professional Development

9.1. The trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all employees take responsibility for improving their performance through appropriate professional development, in conjunction with support from the academy and access to the opportunities available. Professional development will be linked to academy improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individuals.

10. Pay Progression

10.1. Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the assessment of performance against agreed objectives will inform the recommendation, which will be made with reference to the criteria contained within the agreed pay policy for the trust and the relevant teacher standards.

10.2. Annual progression for support staff is subject to satisfactory performance. The principal may also recommend additional increments in accordance with the agreed pay policy.

11. Transition to Capability Policy

11.1. Following discussion of concerns with the employee and implementation of an appropriate framework of support to help the employee achieve the required standard, if performance concerns are still evident, it may be necessary to progress to the Capability Policy (see feedback and supportive intervention sections above).

11.2. If performance does not improve despite the measures put in place or if there are serious concerns about performance, the employee will, after meeting with their appraiser to discuss this, be notified in writing that the Appraisal Policy will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the Capability Policy. They will be invited to a formal capability meeting. The capability procedures will be conducted in accordance with the Trust's Capability Policy.

11.3. The Capability Policy may be initiated at any time during the appraisal cycle providing the informal stage has been followed.

11.4. The expectation is that where a teacher's overall performance at the end of the year has been assessed as 'requires improvement', and an informal support plan has been implemented without significant progress being made (and there are insufficient mitigating circumstances), then the academy should consider managing the teacher's performance under the formal capability procedure.

11.5. If the teacher's overall performance at the end of the year has been assessed as 'inadequate', it is expected that supportive interventions will have failed and that the teacher's performance should be managed under the formal capability procedure.

11.6. For support staff, failure to achieve the targets set or make significant improvement within the periods specified following a supportive intervention may result in the capability procedure being invoked.

12. Consistency of treatment and fairness

- 12.1. The trust is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation and will ensure that reasonable adjustments are put in place where necessary.

13. Confidentiality and professional relationships

- 13.1. The outcomes of the appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality, and restricted to those in the line management chain, who need to know the content of the appraisal document.
- 13.2. The process of gathering evidence for performance review will not compromise normal professional relationships between teachers. The trust recognises that the appraiser will consult with, and seek to secure the agreement of an employee, before seeking information from other colleagues about their work.
- 13.3. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the academy principal and the trust to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. The principal or appropriate colleague might, for example, review all teachers' objectives and written appraisal records personally, to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers.

14. Monitoring and evaluation

- 14.1. The trust and principal will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the academy's appraisal arrangements. The principal will provide the Local Governing Body with a written report on the operation of the academy's appraisal and capability policies annually.
- 14.2. The principal will report on whether there have been any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination.

15. Retention

- 15.1. The trust and principal will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.

16. Policy status and review

Written by:	Christina Dawson, HR Manager
Owner:	HR Department
Status:	V1 = Approved
Approval date:	V1 = 14/11/16 Resources Committee Merger editorial changes 1 September 2017
Review Date:	2021/22

Appendix 1 - Classroom Observation Protocol

1. For appraisal purposes

- 1.1. The University of Brighton Academies Trust 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 on 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, although the actual time will depend on the individual circumstances. The amount of time is up to the academy but should reflect the seriousness of the 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 trust 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 principal to consult with staff/union representatives over the pattern and planned approach for observation. The statement will:
 - include the number of observations, which will not normally exceed 3 observations over the course of the annual appraisal cycle;
 - specify its primary purpose;
 - specify any particular aspects of the teacher's performance which will be assessed;
 - specify the duration of the observation, which will not normally exceed three hours (not including feedback) in total over the course of the annual cycle; and
 - specify when during the appraisal cycle the observations will take place and who is likely to conduct the observations.
- 1.4. Where concerns emerge about a teacher's performance during the cycle, additional classroom observations may be arranged.
- 1.5. In keeping with the trust's commitment that classroom observation should be both supportive and developmental, every effort will be made for an observation to be made at the agreed time and for reasonable notice to be given.
- 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.

2. For on-going monitoring purposes

- 2.1. Principals have 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 academy. Principals and other senior leaders have a right to drop in to classrooms to inform their monitoring of the quality of learning throughout the academy.
- 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 academy staff development. Drop ins will be undertaken by the Principal supported by the Senior Leadership Team and/or senior trust colleagues.
- 2.3. While information gathered during the appraisal process may be used, as appropriate for a variety of purposes including informing academy self-evaluation and academy improvement strategies, a principal 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 principal to determine as appropriate.