

Appraisal Policy – Teaching Staff

Frequency of Review	Annually
Author	(Judicium model) COO/CEO
Approved by	Board of Trustees
Reviewed	Sept 2024
Date of Next Review	Sept 2025 (unless there is a material change)

Introduction

The Propeller Academy Trust applies this policy to teachers at all levels with the exception of those who are employed on a fixed term basis for less than one year, and early career teachers during their induction period.

This policy does not form part of any teachers' contract of employment with the Trust and may be amended at any time (employees will be informed of any changes).

This policy provides a framework for a clear and consistent assessment of teacher performance, and for supporting staff development within the context of the Trust's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers. It should be read in conjunction with our Pay Policy for Teachers, and it also explains the process for invoking our Capability Policy and Procedure where there are serious concerns about a teacher's performance that the appraisal procedure has been unable to address.

General Principles

Appraisal in this Trust will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that you have the skills and support you need to carry out your role effectively. It will also help you to improve your professional practice and to achieve your career aspirations.

The appraisal process will be managed sensitively and with confidentiality and is designed to minimise the impact on workload for all of those involved. However, this does not override the need for the Trust to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

We are committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness. We will abide by all relevant equality legislation, including the duty to consider making reasonable adjustments for disabled employees.

The Appraisal Period

The appraisal period will run for twelve months from September to August for teachers. If you are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year, you will have your performance assessed in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy, but the length of the period will be determined by the duration of your contract.

Appointing Appraisers

In this Trust, the task of appraising the Headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be carried out by a committee consisting of the CEO and LGB chair. The Headteacher decides who will appraise other employees. The CEO will decide who will appraise employees in the Trust Central Team. The Chair of the Board will decide who will be involved in the CEO's appraisal.

Setting Objectives

Objectives for each teacher will be set before the start of each appraisal period and in setting the objectives, regard will be had to your work-life balance. The objectives will be Specific, Measurable,

Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART) and will be appropriate to your role and level of experience. The appraiser will seek to agree the objectives with you, but if you cannot agree, the appraiser will determine the objectives. Objectives may be revised during the appraisal period if circumstances change, such as maternity leave or long-term sickness absence, to take account of the anticipated absence and to allow you to meet reduced and attainable targets. It will usually be appropriate to include a professional development objective.

When objectives are set, it should be made clear what the success criteria will be and how performance will be assessed: that is to say, how the appraiser will judge whether the objectives have been met. The objectives set for each teacher will if achieved, contribute to the Trust's plans for raising standards and improving the education provided to pupils. Objectives should also have a strong focus on effective professional development to ensure that, for example, teachers stay up to date with the latest methodologies, technologies and educational research.

Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, you will be informed of any standards against which your performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. For teachers with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), this will be based on the Teachers Standards. If you hold Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS), different standards may apply, and you will be informed which apply to you.

Your performance will be assessed against your objectives, and any relevant standards. The appraiser will set out what they will take into account when making judgements as to whether you have met your objectives, and the relevant standards where applicable. Evidence used in the performance management process will relate directly to objectives and should be agreed in advance and be readily available from day-to-day practice.

This might but does not have to include:

- improvements in specific elements of practice, such as behaviour management, development of pedagogy or providing feedback,
- impact on effectiveness of teachers or other staff, and
- wider contribution to the work of the school or Trust

Sources of Evidence

We will set out what evidence we will take into account when making judgements about your performance and whether you have met your individual objectives, and any relevant standards. This evidence will be decided upon when the objectives are being set at the beginning of the appraisal process. We believe that a range of different methods should be utilised, in a supportive fashion, to assess your performance. It is important to us that methods of assessing your performance do not add to increased workload.

We believe that observation of classroom practice (where applicable) and other responsibilities is a useful way to assess your performance and to support school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in an open and supportive manner.

Teachers will be regularly observed, and all classroom observations will be carried out by those with QTS. In addition to formal observations, the Headteacher or other senior leaders with responsibility for teaching standards may carry out learning walks, “drop in” on lessons and carry out or organise book scrutiny in order to evaluate teaching and ensure that high professional standards are maintained. The duration and frequency of formal learning walks, “drop in” observations and book scrutiny will vary depending on factors including the individual circumstances of the teacher, the needs of a particular class or subject area, and the overall objectives and priorities of the school or Trust.

Other employees who have responsibilities inside or outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed. Performance will also be assessed by reference to appropriate information sources (such as pupil achievement data) and other evidence relevant to your job role, such as financial metrics or survey feedback.

Performance Review and Feedback

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. We want to encourage a culture in which all staff take responsibility for improving their skills and teaching practice through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individuals.

Teachers’ performance will be assessed against the relevant teacher standards to a level that is consistent with what should reasonably be expected of a teacher in the relevant role and at the relevant stage of their career. School leaders and other appraisers should use their professional judgement when appraising teachers’ performance. Teachers should not be expected routinely to provide evidence that they meet all the standards.

You will receive constructive feedback on your performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback should acknowledge and praise areas of strength as well as highlighting any areas that need attention or where further development, or support may be appropriate.

Performance should be informally reviewed on a regular basis throughout the year, as part of normal management practice. Formal interim assessments will take place halfway through the cycle, to assess performance and development against objectives and consider whether any changes need to be made.

Performance Concerns and Transition to Capability

Except in the most serious cases of persistent failures to meet job expectations and standards, you should not ordinarily be placed in capability procedures without first undergoing a period of informal support as part of the appraisal process. Where there are concerns about any aspects of your performance, the appraiser or line manager will meet with you to:

- Inform you that you are going to be receiving informal support due to performance concerns;
- give clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;

- give you an opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns;
- set clear objectives and timescales for required improvement;
- decide what support can be provided to help you to address the concerns (such as coaching, mentoring, training or opportunities to observe best practice);
- make clear how and when progress will be reviewed (this may include revising objectives); and
- explain the implications and process if no (or insufficient) improvement is made.

Whilst this is not a formal meeting, the points above should be documented in writing after the meeting to provide clarity.

There should be a clear relationship between the issue, the objectives set, and the planned documented programme of support put in place. The line manager/appraiser will work with you in a collaborative manner to establish objectives and timelines, taking into account your circumstances. This may include any medical conditions, well-being support needs, or disabilities protected by equality legislation.

Informal support should be provided for a reasonable period to allow for performance improvement. This will usually be at least 6 weeks but the duration will be determined based on the specific circumstances, with appropriate support in place to facilitate improvement.

The appraiser/line manager will meet with you regularly to assess progress and ensure the agreed-upon support is being provided.

When progress is reviewed, after the agreed upon period, if the appraiser/line manager is satisfied that you have made, or are making, sufficient improvement, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues being addressed through this process. If progress is not satisfactory (or in the event there are serious performance concerns), you will be notified in writing that your performance will now be managed under the Capability Procedure, and you will be invited to attend capability hearing.

Disciplinary procedures will only be triggered by factors related to misconduct or breach of professional standards. It is important these procedures are not confused but in some circumstances where it is appropriate, they may run concurrently.

Annual Assessment

Each employee's performance will be formally assessed at or around the end of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of a Headteacher, the governing body must consult with the CEO. This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process.

The appraiser will invite you to an appraisal meeting, and both yourself and the appraiser will be able to provide evidence as input to the discussion. Following the appraisal meeting you will receive and have the opportunity to comment on a final written appraisal report which will include:

- details of your objectives for the appraisal period in question;

- an assessment of your performance of your role and responsibilities against your objectives and the relevant standards;
- an assessment of your continuing professional development needs and aspirations and any action that is recommended to progress them;
- details of a discussion on wellbeing, workload and career progression/aspirations; and
- a recommendation on pay (which may include 'no progression' whether or not you have been subject to formal or informal capability action)

As outlined in our Teachers Pay Policy, decisions regarding pay increases for teachers will be made with reference to the appraisal report and the pay recommendation it contains. Members of teaching staff will be informed of any changes to their pay by 31st October which will be backdated to 1st September in line with our Teachers Pay Policy.

You have a right to appeal against pay progression decisions, as set out in our Pay Policy for Teachers.

The assessment of performance and your professional development needs will inform the setting of objectives for the following appraisal period.