



# Performance Appraisal Policy

Audience:	All employees Local Governing Bodies
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## REAch2 Performance Appraisal Policy



At REAch2, our actions and our intentions as school leaders are guided by our Touchstones:

- Integrity** We recognise that we lead by example and if we want children to grow up to behave appropriately and with integrity then we must model this behaviour
- Responsibility** We act judiciously with sensitivity and care. We don't make excuses, but mindfully answer for actions and continually seek to make improvements
- Inclusion** We acknowledge and celebrate that all people are different and can play a role in the REAch2 family whatever their background or learning style
- Enjoyment** Providing learning that is relevant, motivating and engaging releases a child's curiosity and fun, so that a task can be tackled and their goals achieved
- Inspiration** Inspiration breathes life into our schools. Introducing children to influential experiences of people and place, motivates them to live their lives to the full
- Learning** Children and adults will flourish in their learning and through learning discover a future that is worth pursuing
- Leadership** REAch2 aspires for high quality leadership by seeking out talent, developing potential and spotting the possible in people as well as the actual

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## **1. POLICY OVERVIEW**

### **1.1 Overarching Principles**

The Trust recognises the importance of every employee's contribution in the provision of excellent high quality education for pupils at a REAch2 academy. The Trust is committed to making available a fair performance appraisal which will provide the opportunity for each employee to review, reflect, celebrate and learn from the year and, at the same time, enable high performance, high standards and ongoing professional development.

The appraisal policy will be applied fairly and in accordance with employment law and REAch2 equalities policies. The application of this policy will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any members of staff on any grounds.

### **1.2 Scope**

This policy applies to all employees of REAch2, except employees with less than one term's service, (school based staff), newly qualified teachers (NQTs) undergoing induction, anyone still in their probation period and anyone subject of the formal capability procedure.

### **1.3 Intended impact**

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of employees 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. This policy should be read in conjunction with the REAch2 Pay Policies.

### **1.4 Roles and responsibilities**

#### **Line manager's responsibilities**

- a) To ensure that performance management discussions take place within working time for all staff and within directed time (not within PPA time) specifically for teachers.
- b) To prepare for review meetings
- c) To listen and understand
- d) To maintain appropriate confidentiality with regards to the outcomes of the appraisal process
- e) To support all staff and formulate a personal development plan

#### **Employee's responsibilities**

- a) To take responsibility for their objectives during the year
- b) To prepare for review meetings
- c) To participate in a review of their performance
- d) To listen and understand
- e) To identify areas for personal development.

Training will be provided to managers in this policy so they are confident in applying the procedure and so they understand how to set objectives and how to assess performance to ensure a fair review.

## **2. POLICY PRINCIPLES IN DETAIL**

### **2.1 The appraisal period**

The REAch2 appraisal period runs for twelve months:

from 1 September to 31 August for teachers and teaching staff

from 1 January to 31 December for support staff and Central Team employees.

Employees on a fixed term contract will have an annual review if they are employed for more than twelve months, in line with the principles laid out in this policy.

Employees who are temporarily not at work, eg off sick or on maternity leave, when the appraisal discussion is due, will have a review meeting on their return to work.

Where an employee transfers from one school to another within the Trust, or from one manager to another, the new line manager will conduct the appraisal discussion, with support from the former line manager. Any determination regarding pay will be made against the new role.

### **2.2 Appointing appraisers**

All employees will be appraised by their line manager. If the appraiser is absent for the majority of the appraisal cycle, another, suitable appraiser at the same level as the line manager, may be appointed. Where an employee has an objection to the choice of appraiser in these circumstances, they should raise it with the line manager's manager, or with HR who will consider their concerns and, where it's appropriate, an alternative appraiser with the necessary knowledge and experience, will be appointed.

Head Teachers will be appraised by the Regional Director with input from the Chair of Governors. All appraisers for teachers will be qualified teachers with current or recent teaching experience.

All staff carrying out appraisals will have undertaken appropriate training.

## **3. IMPLEMENTATION**

### **3.1 Setting objectives**

Objectives will be agreed in partnership with the employee, as soon as practicable before, or at, the beginning of each appraisal period. They will contain a description of what would be required for the objective to be achieved successfully, referred to as 'SMART' criteria, as well as a description of the outcome and intended impact:

**Specific** – the objective will be clear

**Measurable** – evidence based

**Achievable** – with resources and time available, it can be done

**Realistic** – within the setting and opportunities available

**Time-bound** – by when it will be achieved.

If agreement is not possible, the manager will set the objectives and the employee may register objections on the appraisal record. Objectives can be revised, or reasonable adjustments made, if circumstances change.

Objectives are not intended to cover the full range of an individual's responsibilities. All employees will have a maximum of three objectives focused on priorities aligned to their role, to school

improvement plans and to REAch2's overarching goals. In setting objectives, managers will have due regard for what is reasonable in the context of roles, responsibilities, experience and work-life balance.

The objectives set and the standards to be achieved will be documented and a copy provided to the employee (Appendix 1). Objectives may be revised and reasonable adjustments made if there is a significant change in circumstance, e.g. a change of job role, long term sickness, maternity leave, disability, or if the employee requires more support to meet the objectives.

### **3.2 Reviewing performance**

The performance of all employees, and the progress they are making towards achieving their objectives, will be reviewed regularly through interim meetings, discussion and feedback. It should be a supportive process to inform personal achievement and continuing professional development.

### **3.3 Interim reviews**

Interim reviews provide a formal opportunity to review progress against objectives. As a minimum, a 121 meeting with the line manager will take place termly for employees who are allocated to a school and three times during the year for all other employees. This meeting will be documented and a summary shared with the employee.

If it is identified at an interim meeting that an employee is not making sufficient progress towards the achievement of their objectives, or if performance is not meeting requirements, this should be addressed in the meeting and a Support Plan will be put in place to get back on track – see 3.6. Account will be taken where it has not been possible for an employee to meet their objectives because the support recorded in the action plan has not been provided, or due to a change in circumstances.

### **3.4 Assessment of teachers and classroom observation (teachers)**

Teachers will be assessed to a level that is consistent with what should be reasonably expected in their role and at the relevant stage of their career. Teachers' Standards define expectations for teaching staff: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>.

REAch2 believes that observation of classroom practice is important for assessing a teacher's performance and identifying strengths and areas for development. This will be carried out only by a qualified teacher and in a supportive fashion. Teachers will be given at least five days' notice and will have no more than three formal observations totalling up to three hours except in circumstances where the teacher has agreed to additional observations, or is on a formal Support Plan and a higher number of observations have been agreed.

Verbal feedback should be given as soon as possible after formal observations, ideally within 1 working day, and confirmed in writing within 5 working days after an observation has taken place. All written accounts of the observation will be made available on request. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

### **3.5 Feedback and records**

All staff will receive constructive feedback on their performance at regular 121s throughout the year.

A line manager will consult with the employee before seeking information from other colleagues about their work.

Employees will have access to any documentation relating to school improvement and personal performance for the purposes of preparing for their review. They have the right to append written comments on the feedback document.

### **3.6 Support Plans**

Where there are concerns about any aspects of performance these will be raised with the employee at the earliest opportunity. The objective is to provide support and guidance in such a way that the employee's performance improves. Support will be offered as soon as possible without waiting for the formal annual assessment. This is particularly important where there are indications that the overall assessment of performance is likely to be that improvement is required or where performance is inadequate in their appraisal mid-year.

The line manager will meet with the employee to:

- provide clear feedback 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 to address those specific concerns;
- make clear how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed;
- identify a timeframe for performance to improve
- explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made, including potential implications on pay progression (the amount of time will depend upon the seriousness of the concerns but will not be less than eight weeks except in exceptional circumstances).

Staff may be accompanied by a trade union representative as this is the best opportunity to avoid the matter becoming formalised.

These will be summarised in a Support Plan and progress will continue to be monitored as part of 121s and the appraisal process over an agreed time for the employee's performance to improve. During this monitoring period the employee will be given regular feedback on progress in writing which may be in the form of an updated Support Plan, and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.

If insufficient progress has been made, the Capability Policy may apply. 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 line manager. Following this meeting the appraisal process will continue as normal.

### **3.7 Annual Assessment**

Performance will be formally assessed at the end of the appraisal period.

This assessment is the end point of the annual appraisal process. The employee will receive a summary in writing as soon as practicable following the annual assessment and will have the opportunity to comment in writing before any recommendation of pay is made.

The appraisal report will include:

- overall assessment of the employee's 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, based on the overall assessment of performance, and in accordance with REAch2's Pay policy.

Teachers will receive their written appraisal reports by 31 October, Headteachers by 31 December and all other employees by 28 February.

Good progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective will be assessed favourably.

Assessment against the Teachers' Standards will start with the premise that all teachers are meeting the Teachers' Standards and they will be assessed as meeting the Standards unless clear evidence to the contrary is provided.

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

#### **4. APPEALS**

Employees have the right to challenge any aspect in a written appraisal or any procedural issues, including the pay recommendation.

Every effort should be made by the line manager and employee to discuss the concerns and to identify where they disagree in order to arrive at an agreed assessment of performance. If this is not achievable, the employee can raise their concerns to their manager's line manager using the Grievance Procedure.

If the appeal is against the pay recommendation, it should be carried out under the Pay Policy appeals procedure.

#### **5. PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

REAch2 wishes to encourage a culture in which all employees take responsibility for improving their performance through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to school / REAch2 improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individuals.

Any learning and development needs that are carried forward from the previous appraisal period, 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. TRANSITION TO CAPABILITY POLICY**

It is expected that any concerns about performance will have been discussed with the employee, and an appropriate framework of support will have been put in place to help the employee achieve the required standard before moving to the Capability Policy (see feedback and supportive intervention sections above).

If performance does not improve despite the measures put in place, and concerns about performance continue the employee will 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 with at least 5 working days' notice. The capability procedures will be conducted in accordance with REAch2's Capability Policy.

The Capability Policy may be initiated at any time during the appraisal cycle.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality. In particular, the Appraisal Review statements are confidential to the appraiser, the appraisee and the appropriate line management.

The expectation of confidentiality does not override the need for quality assurance of the process and the effectiveness of the appraisal system. In reporting, anonymised data may be collated on performance ratings and pay recommendations to ensure consistency across a school, region or the Trust.

### **7. RETENTION**

All written appraisal documentation will be kept in a secure place and destroyed after six years.