The Dales School Appraisal Policy & Procedure

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1. Introduction

1.1 Appraisal plays an important role in the communication and performance management processes within The Dales School. It is key to supporting the school's commitment to developing its staff and to delivering excellent educational provision to pupils.

1.2 This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of all staff employed at The Dales School and for supporting their development needs. The policy provides a process through which staff performance targets and development objectives may be linked to the school's improvement plan and priorities.

1.3 For Teachers, it is a statutory requirement to make a pay decision following completion of the appraisal process. These decisions must be strictly in accord with the school's Pay Policy.

2. Purpose of Appraisal

2.1 The main purposes of the Appraisal Policy are to:

- Ensure that the appraisee's contribution to the school is recognised
- Help the appraisee to identify ways of enhancing their professional practice and work performance
- Assist staff to realise their potential and to plan for professional and personal development
- Provide information which will assist in reaching pay decisions in accordance with the pay policy adopted by the school

2.2 Other functions are to:

- Provide an opportunity for appraising in a positive and constructive way the work of the appraisee and how this has been carried out
- Provide opportunities for the discussion of development needs for the current role and for future career opportunities with a specific focus on the continuous professional development of the appraisee
- Allow for the appraisee to identify and discuss difficulties or obstacles which hamper their effectiveness
- Provide a means of balancing the ambitions and personal needs of the appraisee with the overall objectives of the school as a whole
- Help staff to meet the responsibilities of their current role and to enhance their confidence in carrying them out
- Agree performance and development targets for the next year
- Discuss the appraisee's contribution to meeting the school's strategic objectives
- Contribute to the school's succession planning processes

3. Application

3.1 This policy applies to all employees of the school with the following exceptions:

- Early Career Teachers undergoing their statutory induction period
- Newly appointed support staff within their probationary period
- Staff employed on a contract of less than one term
- Any member of staff who is the subject of Developing Performance or Capability processes
- Supply, casual and relief workers who work rarely within the school

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3.2 Modified appraisal arrangements will apply to staff who have only been at work for part of the appraisal cycle. This will include employees:

- on parental leave including maternity and adoption leave
- on long-term sickness absence
- who join or leave the school part way through the year
- who come out of other arrangements during the year including probation, statutory induction and developing performance/capability

3.3 These arrangements are detailed in paragraphs 6.6.

4. Guiding principles

4.1 In developing and applying this policy, the school is committed to ensuring fairness and consistency of treatment within the prevailing legal framework applicable to all employers and in line with the school's equality policy.

4.2 The appraisal process and the supporting documentation will be treated in the strictest confidence at all times. Only those who need access to such information to enable them to discharge their responsibilities will be granted access.

4.3 At the end of the appraisal period, and once a pay decision has been made in accordance with the pay policy adopted by the school, all appraisal documentation will usually be placed on the employee's personal file, though may be held elsewhere, for example on an electronic system, provided that this is secure and confidential. Appraisal information will be held for a minimum of 6 years from the end of the appraisal period to which it applies.

4.4 Appraisal is a two-way process and actions and outcomes should be agreed between the appraisee and the appraiser. Any rights of appeal and the process to follow are detailed within the relevant section.

4.5 Reducing unnecessary workload should be at the forefront of any considerations around implementing appraisal processes. The gathering of evidence for appraisal decisions should come from readily available sources gathered through day-to-day practice in school.

4.6 Governing bodies and school leaders have a duty of care to protect the health, safety and welfare of their staff under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and should ensure staff wellbeing is routinely considered in setting appraisal objectives.

4.7 The appraisal process should be intrinsically supportive and developmental, conducted within a school culture that values openness and fairness.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Role of the Appraiser

5.1 It is the responsibility of the appraiser to ensure that appraisal meetings take place and that the process is completed in accordance with the requirements of the policy. As a minimum there will be an annual planning/review meeting and ideally at least one interim review. An interim review must be held if it is necessary to amend targets, for example as a result of emerging new priorities or a change of role.

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5.2 Appraisers will be responsible for:

- Assessing appraisees against their performance targets and development objectives
- Assessing appraisees against the relevant competency framework or the Teachers Standards on the basis of their career stage
- Agreeing new performance targets linked to the team and school strategic objectives
- Agreeing development objectives relevant to the performance targets and suggesting how these will be met
- Making a recommendation to the Headteacher regarding salary progression

The Role of the Appraisee

5.3 The appraisee is expected to support and participate in the appraisal process and any agreed development activities arising from the process.

5.4 In addition, appraises should self-assess their performance and progress made towards performance and development targets and gather evidence and information to support their assessments. Appraisees should prepare for any appraisal meetings and be prepared to discuss and/or evidence their self-assessments.

The Role of the Governing Body

5.5 The Governing Body is responsible for reviewing, streamlining, considering, and adopting appraisal policies, ensuring a robust appraisal policy is in place that has been workload impact assessed to minimise the impact on teacher and school leader workload. They must agree on the extent to which specific functions related to the appraisal process will be delegated to others, such as the school leader, and monitor the outcome of appraisal decisions to ensure processes operate fairly. Additionally, they are responsible for ensuring eligible Governors receive relevant training on the appraisal process.

Appraisal of the Headteacher

5.6 The appraisal of the Headteacher will be carried out by a sub-group of governors plus an external educational advisor, (usually the school improvement advisor).

Appraisal of all other employees

5.7 The Headteacher is responsible for the appraisal of all other employees but has delegated this responsibility, for some staff, to line managers.

Where employees have part time contracts with two different line managers, they may undergo two appraisals.

Should a member of staff object to the appointment of their appraiser, they should put the grounds for their objection in writing to the Headteacher who will consider this and make a determination. The decision of the Headteacher is final and not subject to further appeal.

6. The Appraisal Process

6.1 The appraisal process is an integral part of good performance management and should be an enjoyable and empowering process for both appraiser and appraisee. The process provides an opportunity for the employee and their appraiser to have an

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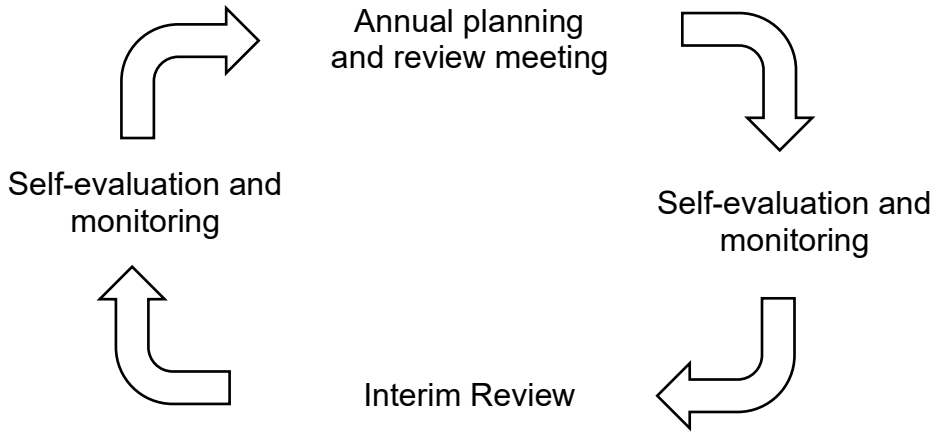
in-depth, two-way, confidential discussion regarding the employee's performance and job role.

6.2 It gives the appraiser an opportunity to give appropriate appreciation and recognition of good work. At the same time it gives the appraisee the opportunity to discuss how they are progressing in terms of the achievement of objectives, targets and key performance indicators as well as competency development.

6.3 Issues of concern regarding performance should be addressed as and when they arise as part of normal day-to-day management and, therefore, should not be first raised at appraisal meetings. Any concerns about performance that may pose a risk to pay progression (in accordance with the pay policy adopted by the school) should be signalled at an early stage.

Stages in the process

6.4 The appraisal process works on an annual cyclical basis which is shown below:



The Appraisal Period

6.5 The appraisal period for all staff will be 12 months. However, the school operates different appraisal periods for different groups of staff as follows:

- For teaching staff the appraisal period will run from autumn 1 to autumn 1]
- For support staff the appraisal period will run from autumn 2 to autumn 2.

6.6 In line with the school's Pay Policy, teachers' salaries will be reviewed annually with effect from 1 September and no later than 31 October (or 31 December in the case of the Headteacher).

6.7 Where a member of staff starts their employment with the school or changes post part way through an appraisal cycle, the Headteacher shall determine appraisal arrangements for the remainder of the appraisal period, with a view to bringing their cycle into line with the cycle for other staff as soon as possible. This may also apply to staff starting or returning from maternity or long-term sickness absence part-way through the appraisal period or those successfully completing their statutory induction or probationary period or coming out of Developing Performance or Capability processes. In such situations either shorter-term or longer-term targets may be set, linked to the end of the current or next appraisal cycle respectively.

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6.8 Where an employee is moving between roles within the school then there will be a review of their performance and development targets and their appraisal arrangements.

6.9 Where an individual is employed on a fixed term contract for a period between 1 term and 12 months, the length of the appraisal period will be determined by the duration of the contract.

6.10 Where an appraiser is absent for an extended period, or leaves the employment of the school during the cycle, the Headteacher will ensure that alternative arrangements are put in place and communicated to the appraisee.

7. The Planning and Review Meeting

7.1 The performance of all staff will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process and will take place at the Planning and Review Meeting.

7.2 Appraisal discussions are most successful when both appraisee and appraiser are well informed and prepared. The areas for discussion should be agreed at the start of the meeting as should the arrangements for making notes and writing up appraisal records.

7.3 The appraisal record should include:

- Acknowledgement of achievements, strengths, good practice and successes of the appraisee as appropriate
- Review of achievement against the previous year's objectives and targets and relevant competency framework/the teaching standards
- Review of professional development activities undertaken in the previous period including how these activities have enhanced the appraisee's work effectiveness
- Discussion regarding pay recommendations following assessment of achievement in accordance with the pay policy adopted by the school.
- Review of the appraisee's job role and description
- Agreement of work related performance and development targets for the coming year linked to department and school improvement plans
- Agreement of how targets will be assessed and evidence of achievement gathered
- Agreement of how development will be supported and targets met

7.4 The appraisee will be provided with a copy of the appraisal record within 10 working days of the planning and review meeting.

8. Interim Review

8.1 There will usually be at least one interim review during each appraisal cycle. The date for the interim review may be set at the annual Planning and Review Meeting.

8.2 The main purposes of the interview review are:

- To review the appraisee's progress made to date against performance targets and development objectives
- To review targets and objectives to ensure they are still relevant
- To provide guidance and support in ensuring targets and objects are achieved

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8.3 Alternative objectives may be substituted at this point should they be relevant to the school improvement plan and agreed by the appraisee. Development needs may also be reviewed and revised.

8.4 Additional interim reviews may be held if there is a need to review targets due to changing circumstances or the appraisee moving to a different job role. If there are concerns regarding a lack of progress made towards performance targets, additional reviews may be arranged to support the appraisee and monitor their progress. The number of additional interim reviews should be reasonable in the circumstances.

8.5 The appraisee will be provided with a record of the interim review within 10 working days of the meeting.

9. Performance and Development Targets

9.1 The performance and development targets set will be relevant to the individual's job role and contribute to the school's strategic objectives. Staff with a management or additional responsibility may have a specific target set in relation to this. It is the policy of this school to give staff no more than 3 targets of which at least one is developmental.

9.2 On the grounds that emerging issues are unlikely to be known at the outset of an appraisal period, targets may need to be adjusted throughout the appraisal period so that they remain relevant to the performance of the individual and to the priorities of the school. This would usually be through agreement and an interim review would be arranged to discuss any necessary changes.

9.3 The targets set will be fair and equitable when judged across employees with similar roles and responsibilities taking into account part-time working arrangements and where employees hold multiple posts. However, targets are likely to be more challenging depending on the individual's level within the school structure or on the pay scale. When setting targets due regard will be paid to current guidance regarding the use of pupil assessment and attainment data[1].

9.4 Every effort will be made to reach agreement regarding an individual's targets and they should only be imposed on an appraisee as a last resort. In cases where there is a disagreement of this sort, the Headteacher may make a final determination regarding the suitability of targets. There is no further appeal regarding the suitability of targets.

Teachers' standards

9.5 The Teachers' Standards define the minimum level of practice expected of trainees and teachers from the point of being awarded QTS. However, the school has an expectation that a teacher develops their professional practice throughout their career as they gain more experience and expertise.

9.6 In order to meet fully the Teachers' Standards, a teacher will need to demonstrate that their practice is consistent with the definitions set out in Part 1 (Teaching) and Part 2 (Personal and Professional Conduct).

[1] Making Data Work – November 2018

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Support Staff Competencies

9.7 The school will use a range of competency frameworks against which the performance of support staff will be assessed. Where a competency framework is being used, it will be discussed with the appraisee and recorded on the planning and review statement.

Gathering the evidence

9.8 It is important that all members of staff are clear about the evidence that will be required by their appraiser to enable the appraiser to assess their performance and how this will be collected. The methods of measurement and collection will be agreed at the planning and review meeting at the beginning of the appraisal cycle when targets are agreed. The gathering of evidence for appraisal decisions should come from readily available sources gathered through day-to-day practice in school. A range of methods will be used to assess the performance of appraisees and over-reliance will not be placed on any one particular method.

9.9 Judgements relating to performance must be supported by evidence and will largely be determined by the nature and scope of the agreed objectives and/ or the competency framework/Teachers' Standards.

9.10 Self-evaluation is an important part of an effective appraisal process and staff can develop their skills when they explore their strengths and areas for development through reflection.

9.11 This school believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing teachers' performance and of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion and in line with the Guidelines detailed at appendix 1.

9.12 The amount and type of classroom observation relating to appraisal will depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the school, but normally the total amount of time will not exceed three hours/three occasions in any appraisal cycle. Classroom observation of teachers will be carried out by those with QTS.

9.13 In addition to observation relating to appraisal, the Headteacher and/or other leaders in school with responsibility for teaching standards may undertake monitoring observations, learning walks and "drop ins" in order to evaluate the standards of teaching and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained. The length and frequency of "drop in" observations will vary depending on specific circumstances, proportionate to need, and in line with the school's policy on drop ins and learning walks, in consultation with staff and professional associations. In agreement with the employee, observations may be used to meet multiple needs.

9.14 Observation may also be appropriate for the appraisal of roles supporting teaching and learning in the classroom, both for monitoring and development, and will be carried out in a supportive fashion by line managers/appraisers.

10. Interaction with the Pay Policy

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10.1 The assessment of performance reached through the appraisal process may contribute to pay and incremental progression decisions in accord with the school's pay policy. The pay policy details the other criteria which will be taken into account when considering pay/incremental progression.

10.2 For support staff to meet the appraisal criteria, they will need to have a successful appraisal including assessment against any relevant competency framework. [If Sept to August appraisal year used school to include - Incremental progression for support staff usually takes place in April, therefore, where an increment is awarded or withheld this will take effect the following April.]

10.3 Should an employee disagree with their individual pay recommendation, they should discuss this, in the first instance with their appraiser. Any appeals relating to pay recommendations will be dealt with under the appeals process in the school's Pay Policy.

10.4 To ensure that pay decisions are consistent and fair the following measures will be taken:

- All appraisers will receive appropriate development on the appraisal system and making justifiable pay decisions
- The Headteacher will moderate appraisal documents to ensure that outcome and pay decisions are consistent and performance targets are appropriate]

11. Interaction with the Developing Performance and Capability Policies

11.1 The school operates the above policies for when employees are not performing to the required standard. These policies aim to support and develop staff to help them improve their work performance and recognises the important role which appraisal has to play in this process.

11.2 Where an employee is subject to either of these policies the normal appraisal process will be suspended for the duration of actions under these policies. In all cases the employee will be informed of the impact on pay progression (in accordance with the pay policy) of developing performance and capability processes.

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Appendix 1 - Lesson Observation Guidelines

Introduction
This protocol covers classroom observations undertaken as part of the school's appraisal arrangements.

Purposes
Classroom observations will be used to monitor the quality of teaching and learning as a part of school self-evaluation, performance management and individual appraisal. They should support a culture of continuous improvement by helping individuals develop their professional practice.

Principles
Classroom observations relating to appraisal:

- Should provide evidence of a teacher's pedagogical skills
- Should be supportive and developmental
- Should be multi-purpose, wherever possible, to minimise the potential burden of observations
- Will be undertaken by appraisers but may also be done by other school leaders who have appropriate professional expertise, for example subject leaders
- In the case of teachers, will be undertaken only by those with QTS
- Should be made possible by sufficient timetable release time being provided
- Will not be done in PPA time (unless requested/agreed by both parties)

Frequency and Duration
The focus of classroom observations to be undertaken in relation to appraisal should be agreed in the review meeting statement at the start of the review cycle. Precise times and dates do not need to be finalised in the planning and review meeting. However, when agreeing the timing of observations for appraisal, teachers should have reasonable notice of when they will occur (recommended 5 working days' notice). The number of observations made will vary, but will not normally exceed 3 hours per appraisal cycle. If concerns arise during the review cycle it may be necessary to revise the number of observation agreed at the start of the cycle.

Observations may be for whole lessons or parts of lessons, depending on the agreed focus.

Teachers may be involved in observing and/or being observed as part of the support being provided to assist with achieving agreed targets. Beyond this, teachers should have the opportunity to engage in further classroom observations by agreement. For example, many schools encourage the use of coaching pairs or triads and peer observations.

Any observations made by Ofsted fall outside normal observation arrangements.

Effective classroom observations should:

- Provide a performance reviewer with evidence of the quality of a reviewee's classroom practice (quality of teaching and learning)
- Help the headteacher develop an overview of the quality of teaching and learning in school
- Provide teachers with feedback on practice which aids reflection and self-evaluation and helps continuous development
- Identify and celebrate good practice

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- Help to improve classroom performance by identifying areas for development which will extend expertise

Planning

The focus of observations to be undertaken for appraisal purposes should be agreed in the planning and review statement at the beginning of the performance management cycle. Nearer to the time of observation, and at least five working days before it, the following should be agreed:

- The exact focus for the observation and criteria to be used (if different to general lesson observation criteria)
- A time for the observation
- How and when the feedback will take place

Protocols and Methodology

The teacher being observed should assist the process by:

- Having relevant planning to hand, for example lesson plan or scheme of work
- Providing any relevant information on pupils, such as attainment data, pupil targets, grouping arrangements within class and location of pupils with SEN

The criteria used for lesson observation should:

- Be agreed and understood by the teacher being observed and the appraiser. For most lesson observations the school's lesson observation schedule will be used but sometimes more detailed criteria will be appropriate. For example, if a teacher is working on improving questioning techniques, a schedule of what effective questioning involves may be used to support the observation. The important thing is always that the person being observed has a copy of and understands the criteria being used
- Be used to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning
- Be used to provide constructive feedback and identify areas for possible improvement and development

All observers should demonstrate:

- Courtesy and objectivity in the conduct of observation and related meetings
- A respect for the confidentiality of any information gained in the course of carrying out the observation and giving feedback

During the lesson being observed they should:

- Sit somewhere which provides a good view of the activities of the students and teacher and should be as unobtrusive as possible
- Talk to pupils, where appropriate, about their understanding and experiences so long as it does not disrupt the progress of the lesson
- Look at work being done in the lesson and, where appropriate, look at earlier work done by pupils

Recording the observation

- It is important to record observations as the lesson progresses rather than relying on memory to recall what took place. A timeline could be used to help with this
- Teacher activity and impact on pupil activity should be noted
- Progress observed during the lesson should be noted

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Giving feedback

- Before giving feedback the observer needs to take time to reflect on the lesson and to identify the key messages from his/her notes. The teacher also needs time to collect his/her thoughts on the lesson
- Feedback following a lesson observation should include a clear judgement on lesson quality, carefully explained. It should enable teachers to build on what they are doing well and feel confident about introducing modifications where necessary
- Verbal feedback should be given as soon as possible after the observation and no later than the end of the next day. It should always be out of the hearing of others and where disruptions can be kept to a minimum. There should be enough time allocated for a professional discussion around the feedback to take place. Written feedback will normally be provided within ten working days of the observation.
- PPA time should not be used for giving feedback unless this has been requested by the employee.
- The observer should focus on how effective the lesson was in enabling learning to take place and the ways in which the teaching and activities contributed to it. When making an assessment, observers should always refer to the evidence they are drawing on and link it to the agreed observation criteria
- Recommendations, targets or action points set as a result of the observation should be practical and achievable and leave the teacher feeling that they can make progress. Clearly agreed deadlines and review timescales should be provided. If specific support and/or training is needed this should be noted, with a clear statement of who will organise this. It is likely that most CPD needs arising from observation will be met 'in house'.
- A short written record should be produced in line with school policy and presented to the teacher being observed, normally within 5 and no more than 10 working days of the observation. The teacher should be given the opportunity to add any comments they feel are appropriate to the record sheet

These guidelines refer to lesson observations undertaken as part of the appraisal arrangements in school. Any observations outside of the appraisal process will be consistent with these principles.

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