

The Edge Schools' Federation

Teacher & Leader Appraisal Policy

This Policy has been consulted on with the following professional associations and Trade Unions representing Teachers and Headteachers:

- National Education Union
- National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers
- National Association of Headteachers
- Association of School and College Leaders

This policy has been adopted by the governing body of
The Edge Schools' Federation

on

27th February 2023

Review Date: February 2024

Teacher & Leader Appraisal Policy

The Governing Body of The Edge Schools' Federation adopted this policy on 27th February 2023 following consultation with the recognised teaching unions.

This policy will be reviewed annually.

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the headteacher, and for supporting their development within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers.

2. Application of the Policy

This policy covers the appraisal arrangements and applies to the headteacher and to all teachers employed by the school, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing statutory induction, i.e. ECTs, and those teachers who are subject to the school's adopted capability procedure.

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

3. The Appraisal Period

The appraisal period will run for twelve months from 1st September to 31st August.

Teachers who are 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.**

There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when teachers begin or end employment with the school e.g., a two-term appraisal period for teachers who start with the school on 1st January, with a view to bringing the appraisal period into line with the period for other teachers as soon as possible.

4. Appointing Appraisers

All appraisers of teachers, other than those appraising headteachers, will be qualified teachers and will be suitably trained.

The headteacher will be appraised by the Governing Body, supported by a suitably skilled and experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the Governing Body for that purpose.

In this school, the task of appraising the headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group (committee) consisting of three members of the Governing Body, none of whom are employed to work at the school to include a foundation governor.

The headteacher will decide who will appraise other teachers and can therefore delegate responsibility to other members of staff. Normally the appraiser will have line management responsibility for the appraisee and will have undertaken appropriate appraiser training. Where teachers have an objection to the headteacher's choice, their concerns will be carefully considered, and where possible, an alternative appraiser will be offered.

Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser appointed by the headteacher will be absent for majority of the appraisal cycle, the headteacher may perform those duties themselves or delegate those duties to another teacher for the duration of the absence.

If the headteacher appoints an appraiser who is not the teacher's line manager, the appraiser to whom they delegate those duties will have an appropriate position in the staffing structure, together with the necessary background knowledge, skills and training to undertake the role.

Where a teacher is experiencing performance difficulties and the headteacher is not the appraiser, the headteacher may undertake the role of appraiser (See also the section on Feedback).

5. Setting Objectives

The headteacher's objectives will be set by the Governing Body after consultation with the external adviser. This will be through the governors with delegated responsibility as indicated above.

Objectives for each teacher will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set for each teacher, will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) and will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience. They will be clearly defined and appraisers and appraisees will be clear about what success will look like and how progress will be measured.

A decision may be taken that teachers, including the headteacher, will have a whole school or whole team objective.

The appraiser will take into account the effects of an individual's circumstances, including any disability, when agreeing objectives. For example, adjusting objectives following an extended period of absence to allow them to readjust to their working environment.

The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives. In exceptional circumstances if agreement is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives

following discussion which must be accompanied by appropriate evidence from the School Improvement/Development Plan of the importance of the set objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.

The objectives set for each teacher will, if achieved, contribute to the school's plans for improving the school's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at that school. This will be ensured by quality assuring all objectives against the school development/improvement plan (see Quality Assurance and Consistency of Treatment and Fairness below).

Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, each teacher will be informed of the standards against which that teacher's performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. In addition to being assessed against the objectives set, all teachers will be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called "Teachers' Standards 2012". The headteacher or governing body (as appropriate) will consider whether certain teachers should also be assessed against other sets of standards published by the Secretary of State that are relevant to them.

The standards and objectives against which performance will be assessed will be reflected in a written appraisal report to include:

- **The Teachers' Standards 2012.**
- **Any other relevant teachers' standards against which the teacher's performance is to be assessed;**
- **details of the teacher's objectives for the appraisal period in question.**
- the success criteria for achievement of objectives and evidence to be considered.
- any specific CPD arranged for the teacher.

Appraisers must ensure that set objectives are robust and measurable to ensure once a decision is made at the end of the appraisal cycle regarding achievement of objectives, the appropriate pay progression decision can be made under the Schools Pay Policy.

Appraisers should ensure they consider differentiation when setting objectives. If a teacher holds a post of greater responsibility (e.g., Leadership, TLR, UPR) then consideration should be given to more challenging objectives with greater impact on whole school initiatives.

6. Reviewing Performance

Review Meetings

An assessment of performance over the appraisal period is the end point to the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year. Any interim review meetings agreed and arranged between the appraiser and the teacher should be focused on specific issues related to performance and set objectives will be held on the following basis:

- At least one review meeting during the appraisal period followed by a final meeting to assess performance and set new objectives and issue a **written appraisal report**, to take place after completion of the appraisal period in the autumn term but no later than 31 October (or 31 December in the case of the headteacher).

Where however at any time the appraiser has concerns about aspects of the teacher's performance then a review meeting will be called in order that the concerns can be addressed in consultation with the headteacher (see section on Feedback below). If there are serious performance concerns with sufficient evidence, then the appraisal process will stop and capability procedure would start in accordance with the Schools Capability Procedure.

Observation

This school believes that observation of classroom practice and other teaching and learning and/or leadership responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing teachers' performance to identify any particular strengths and areas for development they may have and also as a way of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion.

In this school, teachers' performance will be regularly observed but the amount and type of classroom observation will not be onerous and will depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the school. Classroom observation will be carried out by those with QTS and who hold an appropriate position in the staffing structure of the school, together with the necessary background knowledge, skills and training to undertake the role.

In addition to planned classroom observations used for supporting the teacher's performance for appraisal purposes, headteachers or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards may also carry out planned observations or learning walks, 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 will vary depending on specific circumstances.

Teachers (including the headteacher) who have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

Development and Support

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. The school wishes to encourage a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

Feedback

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place (ideally no later than 24 hours after the observation). Feedback will acknowledge achievements and highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

The appraiser and appraisee should feel that they are able to have an open and honest discussion with each other. Where there are areas of the teacher's performance that require attention, the appraiser will discuss these with the appraisee. Such areas should be addressed by the appraisal process and if concerns or issues come to light during the course of the appraisal period then the appraiser will consider the need to amend or re-define the objectives set to ensure performance remains on track to achieve objectives.

Where objectives and support are amended or re-defined then the appraisal record should be updated.

Addressing Concerns and Possible Use of the Capability Procedure

It is hoped that supportive action under the appraisal process will enable a teacher to develop and improve their performance and achieve the relevant standards. If, however, the appraiser is of the view that areas that required attention have not been addressed by the process and that there are serious concerns about the teacher's performance, the teacher will be notified of this in writing. The appraiser may make such judgement within the appraisal period or at the time of the annual assessment. The headteacher, whether or not the headteacher is the appraiser, will consider the records and, following a meeting with the teacher, will determine whether the teacher's performance will be managed under the capability procedure (in which case assessment of performance through the appraisal policy will stop).

Where support to address concerns about performance has initially resulted in improvement, but an individual's performance then falls again below acceptable standards for the same, or similar issues, during the same appraisal period, then the appraisal procedure will normally cease, and the individual's performance will be managed through the capability policy.

Where concerns relate to the performance of the headteacher it will be for the governors responsible for the appraisal of the headteacher's performance to refer the matter for consideration by the Chair of Governors.

7. Annual Assessment

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the headteacher, the Governing Body must consult the appointed external adviser.

The assessment will be covered at a meeting arranged for the purpose in accordance with this policy (see Reviewing Performance above).

The assessment should be reflected in the completed written appraisal report. **The written appraisal report, which the teacher receives following the appraisal period will include:**

- **an assessment of the teacher's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives, and the Teacher's standards 2012.**
- an assessment of the teacher's performance of their role and responsibilities against any other relevant teachers' standards against which the teacher's performance is to be assessed; (Trade Unions do not agree with this inclusion).
- **an assessment of the teacher's CPD needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them.**
- **a recommendation on pay progression, where relevant (see section 8).**

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

8. Pay Progression

Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the recommendation made by the appraiser will be based on the assessment of their performance against the agreed objectives.

Pay progression decisions will be made in accordance with the schools pay policy. Appraisers must evidence during the appraisal cycle any significant concerns about standards of performance and progress towards objectives and communicate these to the appraisee as part of the appraisal process. If the appraiser's concerns are likely to affect pay progression these should be recorded in writing in appraisal documentation. Appropriate support should be identified and actioned by the school during the appraisal process to give the teacher every opportunity to address the concerns.

Recommendations regarding pay progression will be made by the Headteacher with reference to the teachers' appraisal reports and the pay recommendations they contain. Teachers can if this wish submit additional evidence to support their appraisal if they choose to do so but are not required by the School to provide anything additional to the final agreed appraisal report.

The Governing body has agreed the pay policy of the school and has considered the implications of the appraisal policy with respect to the arrangements relating to the teacher's pay. The Governing body will ensure that decisions on pay progression are made by December 31st for head teachers and October 31st for other teachers.

9. Quality Assurance and Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The governing body is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness in the operation of the appraisal process. In order to ensure this and to ensure that the

policy contributes to the school's plans for improvement the following quality assurance arrangements are made:

The executive headteacher will delegate the appraiser role to other staff with line management responsibility. Where this is the case the headteacher, or another appropriate senior member of staff to whom has been delegated a quality assurance responsibility, will look to ensure consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers and will check appraisal reports as appropriate to ensure that they comply with this policy, the Appraisal Regulations and the requirements of equality legislation. He/she will also ensure that that this policy is being applied consistently between teachers who have similar experience and similar levels of responsibility.

Where it is considered that the appraiser has not carried out their responsibilities in compliance with this policy and the Regulations then, they may take such action as deemed necessary to ensure that they are complied with.

For the appraisal of the headteacher, where the Chair of Governors has not been appointed to the Committee responsible, he/she will have an entitlement to check the appraisal report in order to ensure that the appraisal has been carried out in accordance with this policy and the Appraisal Regulations.

Where the Chair of Governors has been appointed to the Committee responsible for the headteacher's appraisal then there will be no quality assurance of the headteacher's written appraisal report.

10. Appeals

It is hoped that the appraiser and teacher, or governor appraisers and headteacher, will reach agreement on the content of the written appraisal report. Whilst the appraiser(s) can take a decision on content where agreement cannot be reached the teacher, or headteacher, will be afforded a right of appeal against entries with which they are not in agreement. They may be assisted in the Appeal by a companion who may be a **workplace colleague, a trade union representative or professional association representative.**

In exercising the right of appeal, the headteacher or teacher may be assisted by a **workplace colleague, a trade union representative or professional association representative.**

For a teacher the appeal will be to the headteacher where the appraiser is not the headteacher or, where the appraiser is the headteacher, to a committee of governors with delegated responsibility for hearing such appeals.

For the headteacher any appeal would be to a committee of governors with delegated responsibility.

11. General Principles underlying the Appraisal Policy

Confidentiality

The appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the executive headteacher and governing body to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. The appraisal record should be regarded as a confidential document between the appraiser and the teacher other than for the purpose of quality assurance as described under the paragraph 'Quality Assurance and Consistency of Treatment and Fairness'. Where a teacher's line manager is not the appraiser, the line manager should be allowed access to the teacher's appraisal records for the purpose of discharging line management responsibilities. Where this is felt to be necessary the teacher will be told who has requested access and be made aware that access is being granted (add in this sentence in italics to allow continued practice established by the previous performance management policy).

The executive headteacher will also be made aware of any pay recommendations that have been made in order that they are taken into consideration as part of annual pay progression decisions.

Delegation

Normal rules apply in respect of the delegation of functions by governing bodies, headteachers and local authorities and this is reflected by the policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The governing body and headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements. For this purpose, the headteacher will provide for the governing body Business Management Committee a written annual report for consideration at its autumn term meeting.

The report will not contain any information which would enable any individual to be identified.

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that the appraisal process is fair and non-discriminatory and the following monitoring data should be included in the head teacher's report because they represent the possible grounds for unlawful discrimination:

- Race
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Disability
- Religion and belief
- Age
- Part-time contracts
- Trade union membership.

The headteacher will also report on whether there have been any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination under any of the categories above.

The operation of this policy has been workload impact assessed to ensure that it does not add to the workload of anyone involved. All appraisal activities will take place within teachers directed time and will not impact upon teachers PPA time allocation.

Retention

The governing body and headteacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Introduction

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that classroom observation is truthful, developmental and supportive in accordance with school's appraisal policy. Those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with honesty, professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
- evaluate objectively;
- report accurately and fairly; and
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained.
- Be suitably qualified and experienced in the subject/key stage to observe objectively and be able to give appropriate feedback and support if necessary.

All teachers in this school will be observed as part of assessing teachers' performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development.

The amount and type of planned classroom observation should reflect and be proportionate to the needs of the teacher and the overall needs of the school.

Purpose of Classroom Observation

Classroom observations help inform the teachers appraisal system to ensure that all teachers have the skills, resources and support they need to carry out their role effectively. Appraisal Information gathered during the observation will be also used, as appropriate, for a variety of purposes including to inform school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies in accordance with the school's commitment to streamlining data collection and minimising bureaucracy and workload burdens on staff.

In keeping with the commitment to supportive and developmental classroom observation teachers being observed will be notified and, whenever possible, at least 5 working days in advance.

Planned Classroom Observation

The arrangements for an individual teacher's classroom observation and feedback will be included in the annual written appraisal report, at the commencement of the appraisal period, and reviewed as necessary in the subsequent review meetings held during the period. The planned number, timescale and duration will be included in the detail and should include the exact dates and times of the observations whenever possible.

Review of Planned Classroom Observation

Where evidence emerges about the teacher's performance which gives rise to serious concern during the appraisal period, further classroom observations may be arranged in addition to those planned at the commencement of the appraisal period. The focus of any additional planned observations will be developmental and supportive with the intention of fostering professional dialogue. Observations will relate to the areas for action identified and how improvement might be achieved. Any revised arrangements for classroom observations should be recorded.

Persons Qualified to carry out Classroom Observation

Classroom observations will only be undertaken by persons with QTS as identified by the appraisal reviewer. Careful consideration will be given to the choice of person undertaking classroom observation so as to ensure that it is a teacher with the appropriate skills to undertake observation and provide constructive oral and written feedback and support in the context of professional dialogue between colleagues (see Feedback below).

Feedback

Oral feedback will be given by the person undertaking the observation 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.

Written feedback will be provided within five working days of the observation taking place. If issues emerged from an observation these should also be covered in the written feedback and the appropriate action taken in accordance with the appraisal

policy.

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 may wish to append written comments on the feedback document. No written notes in addition to the written feedback will be kept.

“Learning Walks” or Other Classroom Observations for Appraisal Purpose

In addition to planned classroom observations used for supporting the teacher’s performance for appraisal purposes, headteachers or other leaders with responsibility for teaching standards may also carry out planned learning walks. These will be undertaken in order to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and will be separate to performance management under the appraisal policy. They will also ensure that the expected standards of professional performance are established and maintained. The length and frequency of “learning walks” or other observations will vary depending on circumstances but will normally be within the overall observation limit identified above. Evidence from “learning walks” or other observations will not ordinarily be included within the appraisal records.