

# Heartwood Church of England Academy Trust



## Teacher Appraisal Policy

Policy Owner: Heartwood Headteachers

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Sign off signatory

# TEACHER APPRAISAL POLICY

## 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.

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 continue to improve their professional practice and to develop as teachers.

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness in appraising teacher performance and will abide by all relevant equality legislation

This policy will be read in conjunction with the accompanying Guidance notes. This policy was consulted on and agreed for use with all teacher associations with the exception that the NASUWT and NUT were unable to agree in relation to removed content of the policy associated with classroom observation (see NASUWT/NUT position statement on the WES website and issued with this policy).

## 2. APPLICATION

This Policy applies to the headteacher and to all teachers employed by the school except:

- teachers on contracts of less than one term
- those undergoing statutory induction (*ie NQTs*) or
- those who are the subject of capability procedures.

It should be read in conjunction with the school's pay policy, which provides details of the arrangements relating to teacher's pay, the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document and the Education (School Teachers Appraisal (England)) Regulations 2012.

This policy does not apply to non-teaching staff in schools. Where appropriate, separate appraisal procedures are in place.

## 3. THE APPRAISAL PERIOD

The appraisal period will run for twelve months from October to October.

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.

Teachers will receive a written appraisal report by 31 October (31 December for the headteacher), unless the practicalities of the performance management process make this difficult to achieve, in which case it will be issued as soon as possible after this date and in any event all written appraisals will be issued by 31 December at the latest.

Where a teacher begins or ends employment with the school during the appraisal period, a longer or shorter appraisal period may be applied, e.g. a two-term appraisal period for teachers who start with the school on 1 January.

#### **4. APPOINTMENT OF APPRAISERS**

##### Headteacher:

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.

The task of appraising the headteacher, including identifying the standards against which performance will be assessed and the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of normally three members of the Governing Body.

Where a headteacher is of the opinion that any of the governors appointed by the governing body under this regulation is unsuitable, s/he may submit a written request to the governing body (normally the Chair of Governors) for that governor to be replaced, stating those reasons. Where possible a suitable alternative appraiser will be offered.

##### Teachers:

The headteacher will decide who will appraise other teachers. All appraisers will have qualified teacher status and relevant experience. If the headteacher appoints an appraiser who is not the teacher's line manager, the appraiser to whom s/he delegates 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 has more than one line manager the headteacher will determine which line manager will be best placed to manage and appraise the teacher's performance.

Where a teacher is of the opinion that the person to whom the headteacher has delegated the appraiser's duties is unsuitable, their concerns will be carefully considered and, where possible, a suitable alternative appraiser will be offered.

Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser will be absent for the majority of the cycle or is unsuitable, the headteacher may perform the duties himself/ herself or delegate the appraiser's role to another teacher. Where this teacher is not the appraisee's line manager, the teacher will have an equivalent or higher status in the staffing structure as the teacher's line manager.

An appraisal period will not begin again in the event of the appraiser being changed.

All appraisers will be appropriately trained in appraisal procedures.

## **5. QUALITY ASSURANCE**

### Headteacher appraisal

The Governing Body will choose not to quality assure the objectives.

### Teachers' appraisal

The school operates a system of moderation to ensure that all appraisers are working to the same standards. Objectives will be moderated across the school to ensure that they are consistent between teachers with similar experience and levels of responsibility and meet the requirements stated in 7 (Setting Objectives).

*The Governing Body will review the quality assurance processes when this policy is reviewed.*

## **6. PAY PROGRESSION FOR TEACHERS**

Where teachers are eligible for pay progression (see the School's Pay Policy for further detail on pay progression), the recommendation made by the appraiser will be based on the assessment of their overall performance against the agreed objectives and teachers' standards contained in the appraisal planning statement (see annex 1A for template). The recommendation made by the appraiser will be passed to the Governing Body via the Headteacher. It is for the "relevant body" (the Governing Body or its pay committee) to consider recommendations and make decisions about pay.

An unsuccessful pay progression (performance award) will not necessarily mean a teacher is in formal capability proceedings; a teacher may just not have satisfied their overall objectives to a sufficient standard. Where a teacher is in formal capability proceedings, the Appraisal process ceases and pay progression cannot be awarded.

The Governing Body will ensure that decisions on pay progression are made by 31 December for headteachers and 31 October for teachers, unless the practicalities of the performance management process make this difficult to achieve, in which case, decisions will be made by 31 December at the latest.

## 7. SETTING OBJECTIVES

The headteacher's objectives will be set by the Governing Body after consultation with the external adviser.

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 clearly defined and will be:

- Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound
- appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience.
- fair and equitable in relation to teachers with similar roles/responsibilities and experience
- consistent with the school's strategy for achieving a work/life balance for all staff.
- set against the teachers' standards and reflect the appraisee's professional aspirations
- aligned with the school's priorities and plans

Appraisers and appraisees will be clear what success will look like and how progress will be measured.

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 improvement plan as outlined above.

In this school, other than in exceptional circumstances, all teachers, including the Headteacher, will have no more than three objectives.

Appraisees may append their comments alongside their objectives.

The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. Objectives may be revised, following consultation, if circumstances change.

All teachers holding QTS status must be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called "Teachers' Standards" published in July 2011 (effective from 1 September 2012). For qualified teachers holding Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status, the headteacher or governing body (as appropriate) will need to consider whether they should be assessed against the Teachers' Standards or 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 detailed in the appraisal planning statement (see annex 1A for template).

## **8. REVIEWING PERFORMANCE**

### **8.1 Observation**

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

For the purpose of appraisal, teachers' performance will be observed on an appropriate and reasonable number of occasions and will be agreed by the appraiser with the appraisee according to the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the school (see guidance notes).. The number and duration of appraisal observations will be in accordance with the school's observation protocol, which includes provision for exceptional circumstances where concerns have been raised about a teacher's performance, or where the teacher requests additional observation visits. (See observation protocol attached).

It will not be over-burdensome for the teacher or appraiser. Feedback will be given as soon as possible after any observation.

Classroom observation will be carried out by those with QTS/QTLS.

In addition to formal observation, headteachers 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. (See observation protocol attached)

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

### **8.2 Other forms of monitoring**

In addition to observation, other forms of monitoring and gathering information about performance may also be used, such as: learning walks, work sampling, analysing pupil progress data.

### **8.3 Feedback**

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas requiring development.

## **8.4 Teachers experiencing difficulties**

Where, during the appraisal period, there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance, support and guidance will be provided with the aim that the teacher's performance improves and the need to move into formal capability procedures is avoided. Where it is apparent that there are concerns about a teacher's performance (through the appraisal process or via other sources of information), the appraiser will meet the teacher formally to:

- give clear feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
- agree an action plan with appropriate support (e.g. coaching, mentoring, in-class support, structured observations, visits to other classes or schools, discussions with advisory teachers) 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. The amount of time is up to the school but should reflect the seriousness of the concerns);
- explain the implications and process if no - or insufficient - improvement is made.

The above will be confirmed in writing to the teacher (with a copy to the headteacher) within five working days of the meeting.

The teacher's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and regular feedback on progress will be given. Arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.

If the appraiser is satisfied that the teacher has made, or is making, sufficient improvement, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through that process.

If, however, the appraiser is not satisfied with the progress, the teacher will be informed that a recommendation of transition to capability will be made to the headteacher (detailed 11 below).

## **9. ANNUAL ASSESSMENT**

Unless moving into the capability procedure before the end of the appraisal period, each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period.

Assessment against the Teachers' Standards will start from the premise that all teachers are meeting the Teachers' Standards and will be assessed as meeting the standards unless clear, compelling written evidence to the contrary is provided.

In assessing the performance of the headteacher, the Governing Body must consult the external adviser.

This assessment 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 in interim meetings which will take place each term.

The teacher 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. In this school, teachers will receive a written appraisal reports by 31 October (31 December for the headteacher), unless the practicalities of the performance management process make this difficult to achieve, in which case it will be issued as soon as possible after this date and in any event all written appraisals will be issued by 31 December at the latest.

**The appraisal report will include:**

- details of the teacher's objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- an assessment of the teacher's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards;
- an assessment of the teacher's professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- a recommendation on pay where that is relevant (NB - pay recommendations need to be made by 31 December for headteachers and by 31 October for other teachers);
- space for the teacher's own comments

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

## **10. APPEALS**

Appraisees have a right of appeal against any of the entries in the written appraisal report. Details of the appeals process are available from the headteacher or from the school governing body. Where the headteacher has not been recommended for pay progression, s/he will be informed by the appropriate governor. The headteacher will notify any teacher who has not been recommended for pay progression of the date when the governing body meets to consider pay recommendations, following which the teacher (and headteacher when the head has not been recommended for pay progression) may exercise the right of appeal, assisted by a companion who may be a colleague, trade union official or trade union representative.

## **11. TRANSITION TO CAPABILITY**

If, during the appraisal period and following review of progress, no or insufficient improvement has been made, the appraiser will inform the teacher of this. Written confirmation will be provided within 5 working days, covering the concerns, action taken, review outcomes and recommendations. Where the appraiser is not the headteacher, a copy of the written confirmation will be sent to the headteacher (or chair of governors if the



headteacher ) for him/her to determine whether the capability procedure will commence. The headteacher (or Chair of Governors) will inform the teacher of the decision, in writing, within five working days of receipt of the recommendation.

Where the decision is to move to the formal capability procedure, the written notification will confirm that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the capability procedure, and the teacher will be invited to a formal capability meeting. The capability meeting will take place as soon as possible and the teacher (headteacher) will be given a minimum of five working days written notice. The teacher (headteacher) will be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a trade union representative or colleague at the capability meeting.

The capability procedures will be conducted as outlined in the Capability Policy.

## **12. SUPPORT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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.

The school's CPD programme will be informed by the training and development needs identified in the appraisees' reports. The governing body will ensure in the budget planning that, as far as possible, appropriate resources are made available in the school budget for any professional development and support agreed for appraisees.

In the case of competing CPD demands on the school budget, a decision on relative priority will be taken with regard to the extent to which: (a) the CPD identified is essential for an appraisee to meet their objectives; and (b) the training and support will help the school to achieve its priorities. The school's priorities will have precedence. Teachers should not be held accountable for failing to make good progress towards meeting their performance criteria where appropriate support has not been provided.

An account of the training and development needs of teachers in general, including the instances where it did not prove possible to provide any agreed CPD, will form a part of the headteacher's annual report to the governing body about the operation of the appraisal arrangements in the school.

## **13. RETENTION OF APPRAISAL RECORDS**

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

## **14. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

The governing body will monitor the operation and outcomes of appraisal arrangements. The headteacher will provide the governing body with an annual written report on the operation of the arrangements to include:

- the operation of the appraisal policy;
- the effectiveness of the school's appraisal procedures;
- teachers' training and development needs.

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 headteacher's report because they represent the possible grounds for unlawful discrimination:

- Race
- Sex
- Maternity and pregnancy
- 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.

## **15. REVIEW OF POLICY**

The Governing Body will review the appraisal policy annually at its Spring term meeting and will take account of the headteacher's report in the review. The policy will be revised as required to introduce any changes in regulation and statutory guidance to ensure that it is always up to date.

The Governing Body will seek to agree any revisions to the policy with the recognised trade unions having regard to the results of the consultation with all teachers.

To ensure teachers are fully conversant with the appraisal arrangements, all new teachers who join the school will be briefed on them as part of their introduction to the school.

## **16. ACCESS TO DOCUMENTATION**

All teachers will be provided with access to the school improvement plan and the school's self-evaluation form.

## **17. CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality underpins the appraisal process. However, there may be a need to share some details with governors and other key members of staff for a variety of reasons, including:

- Planning continuing professional development
- Quality assurance
- Pay recommendations
- Making efficient use of aggregated lesson observation information for a variety of school leadership purposes.

In addition, Ofsted may investigate the effectiveness of the appraisal policy and process. In so doing, however, the confidentiality of the process for individuals will not be compromised.

In so far as possible, information will be anonymised.

## **18. ABSENCE**

If a member of staff is on long-term absence (e.g. long term sickness, maternity, parental, unpaid leave, secondment etc), it may be appropriate for the appraiser to review and re-focus objectives with the appraisee. Any sickness absence will be managed in accordance with the sickness absence management procedure.

## **CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL**

### **Introduction:**

The Governing Body is committed to ensuring that classroom observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
- evaluate objectively;
- report accurately and fairly;
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained

The headteacher has a duty to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to ensure that proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained.

Observation enables the appraiser to assess a teacher's classroom and teaching practice against the teaching standards and to assess the teacher's progress in relation to agreed objectives.

The amount and type of classroom observation will depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the school but should reflect and be proportionate to the needs of the individual.

Information gathered during the observation can be used, as appropriate, for other purposes, such as subject area reviews, informing school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies, thereby seeking to minimise the total number of observations of a teacher.

### **Arrangements for observations:**

Observations should be proportionate to the needs of the individual in order to support the achievement of their objectives and other performance criteria, such as standards of teaching, and should reflect their individual circumstances.

There may be circumstances justifying or requiring additional observation, for example, where the appraisee requests additional observations or where concerns have been raised about a teacher's performance.

Observations will take place throughout the appraisal cycle. The focus of and arrangements for observations will normally be established at the planning meeting between the teacher and appraiser and will be included in the planning statement. They will be reviewed as necessary at any feedback or subsequent review meeting.

In keeping with the commitment to be supportive and developmental, classroom observations will be notified in advance.

Classroom observations will only be undertaken by persons with QTS. Headteachers should ensure that those who undertake observations have had adequate preparation and have the appropriate professional skills to undertake observation and to provide constructive oral and written feedback and support, in the context of professional dialogue between colleagues.

### **Feedback:**

Feedback about lesson observations should be developmental and not restricted only to a judgement against Ofsted grades.

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.

Written feedback will be provided within five working days of the observation taking place, unless circumstances make this impossible. This should include the date on which the observation took place, the lesson and length of lesson observed, feedback and any subsequent follow-up work/actions. The teacher has the right to append written comments on the feedback document.

If issues emerged from an observation that were not part of the original focus of the observation these should also be covered in the written feedback and the appropriate action taken in accordance with the regulations and guidance.

No written notes in addition to the written feedback will be kept.

**Drop-ins:**

The headteacher (or other leaders with responsibilities for teaching standards) has the right to "drop in" and to undertake other forms of monitoring , such as learning walks, to inform his/her monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and to collect evidence of progress and areas for school development/improvement. They do not, of themselves, form part of the formal appraisal process of individuals.