



DOWNSVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

TEACHER APPRAISAL POLICY

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Contents

1. Purpose	2
2. Introduction.....	2
3. The appraisal period.....	3
4. Appointing appraisers.....	3
5. Setting objectives	4
6. Teachers' standards.....	4
7. Reviewing performance	5
8. Development and support.....	5
9. Feedback	5
10. Assessment against Teachers' Standards.....	6
11. Informal Support	6
12. Transition to capability	7
13. Annual assessment.....	7
14. General principles underlying the policy	8
Appendix 1 - Model classroom observation protocol	9

The Governing Board of Downsview Primary School adopted this policy in February 2025. It will review it annually.

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including school leaders, 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. Introduction

Appraisal arrangements [for schools] are set out in the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations). The Appraisal Regulations set out the principles that apply to teachers in all maintained schools and centrally employed (or unattached) teachers employed by a local authority, in each case where they are employed for one term or more. These regulations do not apply to any teacher undergoing an induction period or are subject to capability procedures. It is also good practice for academies to follow the appraisal regulations, although they are not legally required to do so. Maintained schools and local authorities must stay within the legal framework set out in the Appraisal Regulations, and all schools (including academies) must adhere to any other relevant legislation that affects all employers (for example legislation on equality, employment protection and data protection).

The appraisals process should be intrinsically supportive and developmental, conducted within a school culture that values openness and fairness. Appraisal should be a non bureaucratic process that recognises, encourages and validates a teacher's commitment to professional development, pedagogical excellence and effective performance. It should offer a supportive and safe environment where individual teachers and their line managers can have open and honest conversations about successes and areas for improvement. It should also address the support that will be provided to enable all teachers to achieve their objectives and continue to meet the teacher's standards. Reducing unnecessary workload should be at the forefront of any considerations around implementing appraisal processes.

Where there are concerns about aspects of the teacher's work performance, at any point throughout the appraisal process, teachers should receive informal focused support. In most cases this should be separate and come before any capability procedures are considered. This might include mentoring, training, or resources to address specific needs.

Teachers and school leaders should normally only enter capability procedures when there is unsatisfactory progress made with their work performance that the appraisal process, including the informal support mechanisms have been

unable to address. See Chapter 8A for Teacher's Capability Procedure.

The policy applies to all teachers and school leaders employed by the school, trust or local authority, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. ECTs) and those subject to capability procedures.

The policy should be used as a reference point by schools and others as they review their policies to reflect the Appraisal Regulations. It is important that the appraisal is managed in a way that avoids increased workloads for all parties concerned, for example, reviewing the number and frequency of meetings and observations, and ensuring the process for collecting evidence is always proportionate.

Revised appraisal arrangements came into force with effect from 1 September 2024. They are set out in the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations).

The Appraisal Regulations set out the principles that apply to teachers in all maintained schools and unattached teachers employed by a local authority, in each case where they are employed for one term or more.

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the head teacher, 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.

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 and an individual teacher's objectives should take account of the length of contract.

There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when teachers begin or end employment with a school or local authority or when unattached teachers change post within the same authority.

4. Appointing appraisers

The head teacher will be appraised by the governing board, supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced adviser possibly by the CEO or an external adviser who has been appointed by the governing board for that purpose. In this school the task of appraising the head teacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of three members of the governing board.

The CEO will be overseen by the Academy Trust and if they are assessed under Teacher Standards will be appraised by the Academy Trust supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced adviser.

The head teacher / school leader will decide who will appraise other teachers.

5. Setting objectives

The head teacher's objectives will be set by the appraiser which has been selected as per paragraph 4. The governing board has a duty to have regard to the work life balance of a school leader and objectives will reflect this.

The CEO of the Trust's objectives will be set by the appraiser which has been selected as per paragraph 4. The Academy Trust has a duty to have regard to the work life balance of a school leader and objectives will reflect this.

Objectives for each teacher will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The school leader has a duty to have regard to the work life balance of the teacher and objectives will reflect this. The objectives set for each teacher, will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience.

Objectives and appraisal discussions will not be based on teacher generated data and predictions, or solely on assessment data of a single group of pupils. The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. The appraisee can record their disagreement on the appraisal statement and this will be taken into account at the appraisal review. Objectives should be revised if circumstances change such as not limiting to a teacher going on maternity leave or undergoing surgery/medical treatment, to take account of anticipated absence and to allow the teacher to meet reduced and attainable targets.

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 the school. "Objectives should also have a strong focus on effective professional development to ensure that teachers stay up to date with the latest methodologies, technologies, and educational research.

6. Teachers' standards

"Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, each teacher will be informed of the specific teachers' standards against which that teacher's performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. With the exception of those who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding and maintaining Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status, all teachers must be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called "Teachers' Standards" published in July 2011".

“For teachers who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding QTLS status, it is for the governing board or school leader to decide which standards are most appropriate”.

Teachers’ performance is assessed against their objectives, and the relevant standards. The appraiser will need to set out what they will take into account when making judgements as to whether teachers have met their objectives and the relevant standards. Evidence used in the performance management process must relate directly to objectives and should be agreed in advance and be readily available from day-to-day practice. Numerical targets **should not be set** if it is beyond the teacher’s control to achieve them.

This might but does not have to include:

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

7. Reviewing performance

The school will set out what evidence they will take into account when making judgements about a teachers’ performance and whether they have met the relevant standards and their individual objectives. This evidence will be decided upon when the objectives are being set at the beginning of the appraisal process.

This school believes that a range of different methods should be utilised, in a supportive fashion, to assess teachers’ performance.

It is important to our school that methods of assessing teacher performance do not add to teacher workload.

8. 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.

9. Feedback

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year, not more than once a term and as soon as practicable after an agreed observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light (e.g. book looks, pupil progress meetings, learning walks). Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention. Appraisees are encouraged to respond to that feedback and seek further advice as required. See Appendix 1.

10. Assessment against Teachers' Standards

Teachers' performance will be assessed against the relevant teacher standards to a level that is consistent with what should reasonably be expected of a teacher in the relevant role and at the relevant stage of their career. School leaders and other appraisers should use their professional judgement when appraising teachers' performance. It is not necessary for schools to adopt rigid models that seek to set out exactly what the relevant standards mean for teachers at different stages in their careers and teachers should not be expected routinely to provide evidence that they meet all the standards.

11. Informal Support

Except in the most serious cases of persistent failures to meet job expectations and teaching standards, resulting in negative consequences on the pupils and organisation, teachers should not ordinarily be placed in capability procedures without first undergoing a period of informal support as part of the appraisal process. Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance the appraiser will meet the teacher to:

- inform the teacher that they are going to be receiving informal support due to performance concerns;
- give clear and specific feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
- set clear objectives and timescales for required improvement;
- agree any support (e.g. coaching, mentoring, structured observations), 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 e.g. commencement of capability procedure.

There should be a clear relationship between the issue, the objectives set, and the planned documented programme of support put in place. The line manager/appraiser should partner with the teacher in a collaborative manner to establish objectives and timelines, taking into account the teacher's circumstances.

This may include any medical conditions, well-being support needs, or disabilities protected by equality legislation.

Informal support should be provided for a reasonable period to allow for performance improvement. Schools could decide this is a **minimum** of 6 working weeks. However, the duration will be determined based on the specific circumstances, with appropriate support in place to facilitate improvement. The appraiser should meet with the teacher regularly to assess progress and ensure the agreed-upon support is being provided.

When progress is reviewed, after the agreed upon period, if the appraiser 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.

12. Transition to capability

If a teacher demonstrates serious underperformance or has not responded to support provided within the informal support process, the teacher will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the capability procedure and will be invited to a formal capability meeting (see paragraph 3 of the capability procedure for teachers). The capability procedures will be conducted in accordance with the school's capability policy. Advice should be sought as appropriate from a HR provider.

Disciplinary procedures will only be triggered by factors related to misconduct or breach of professional standards. Schools should be careful not to conflate these procedures but, if appropriate to the circumstances, they can run concurrently.

13. Annual assessment

Each teacher's performance will be assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the headteacher/CEO, the governing board 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 (school to add detail e.g. once a term). The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period – and have the opportunity to comment on - a appraisal report (in practice the report could be produced using online performance management systems, which can help to reduce workload). In this school, teachers will receive their appraisal reports by (Date X) (Date X + 2 months for the head teacher). 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”;
- details of a discussion on wellbeing and workload and career progression/aspirations;
- a recommendation on pay where that is relevant);
- (schools to say here what else, if anything, their appraisal reports will include).

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

14. General principles underlying the policy

Confidentiality

The appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the head teacher and the governing board to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. *Schools to say here how they might achieve this, for example, the head teacher or appropriate colleague might review all teachers’ objectives and written appraisal records personally, in order to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers. The head teacher might also wish to be aware of any pay recommendations that have been made.*

Definitions

Unless indicated otherwise, all references to “teacher” include the head teacher.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The governing board and head teacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school’s appraisal arrangements.

Retention

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

Appendix 1 - Model classroom observation protocol

1. Introduction

[Name of school/college/trust] is committed to ensuring that classroom observation and learning walks are developmental and supportive, and that those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
- seek to reach agreement in advance on how classroom observations are to be carried out;
- evaluate objectively;
- report accurately and fairly;
- respect the confidentiality of the information obtained.

2. Scope

This protocol applies to all teaching staff except for Early Career Teachers (ECTs), for whom separate induction procedures should apply.

This is designed to support individual teachers to develop their professional skills.

Classroom observation should be viewed as a 'right' and an opportunity for all teachers. If not, it will be seen as a burden that will defeat its prime objective - namely to develop professional potential.

These guidelines suggest that teachers should have an entitlement to not more than 3 hours of formal observation a year. (Ofsted, HMI and monitoring by LA officers in schools causing concern, capability procedures and voluntary informal peer observation are not included in the maximum figure).

A headteacher has a duty to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning. They have a right to drop in to inform their monitoring of the quality of learning and ensure that high standards of professional practice are established and maintained. In large schools they may delegate drop in to appropriate members of the leadership group. Where the headteacher operates a 'drop in' of a few minutes which does not involve formal observation of teaching but focuses on pupils learning that would not be covered by this guidance.

However, if the headteacher (or senior leader) focuses on the quality of teaching or makes notes on the teacher's practice then these visits would be classed as observation. If the headteacher (or senior leader) observes anything that gives them cause for concern during the drop in or on a learning walk e.g. quality of teaching, health and safety matter, safeguarding issue then they will take appropriate action.

It is recognised that these guidelines cover a range of different types of observation and will need to be interpreted accordingly. In addition, they will need to be read

alongside schools' and others' own policies on monitoring and observation and the Teacher appraisal regulations.

Classroom observations for appraisal, school improvement or any other 'professional' purpose should be undertaken by a trained observer with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

3. Headteacher / Line Manager / Other School Observations / LA observations:

- There should be a reasonable amount of time between classroom observations irrespective of the purpose of those observations.
- Headteachers should consult with staff on the pattern of classroom observations annually.
- Teachers should be made aware of the purpose of proposed observations before they take place.
- This does not mean that teachers will always have notice of the specific timing of a lesson observation. Current Ofsted procedures seek to ensure that monitoring takes place in as 'normal' circumstances as possible, without encouraging teachers to undertake additional preparation.
- In normal circumstances at least 5 clear working days' notice should be given before a series of observations takes place.

Before the observation:

- An agreement about the recording of any evaluation outcomes and their reporting should be sought. This does not mean that it is necessary to discuss this with every individual teacher, but rather the procedures to be followed, be they for internal or external observation, should be confirmed.
- A discussion about the aims and objectives of the lesson is necessary, either before or after the lesson.
- It should be made clear that it is not always possible or practical to observe full lessons, and that observers will use their professional judgement in deciding how long to observe. Where an observer does not see a whole lesson, the teacher will have the opportunity to explain the rest of the lesson.
- Formal observations will usually be at least 20 minutes long.
- It should be agreed when and how feedback will be given.
- It must be made clear the use to which any information regarding the observation will be made.

During the observation:

- The observation should not be intrusive.
- The observer should act in a sensitive and professional manner.
- Paired observations can be useful in developing the professional skills of Heads of Department, subject leaders and senior managers when paired

with a LA adviser. However, more than two observers in a classroom / lesson at any one time should be discouraged.

After the observation:

- Oral feedback should be given by the end of the next working day.
- Observations should result in written feedback for the teacher's own records and to reflect upon within 5 working days.
- Feedback should be appropriately balanced to recognise strengths and areas of development. It should be constructive.
- Feedback should occur in the agreed format before the observation takes place. If feedback needs to be more detailed than a brief discussion, it should take place within the school day and in a venue that ensures confidentiality.
- If feedback occurs at lunch or break time then the teacher must be given the opportunity to take a reasonable break as compensation before the next session starts.
- Teachers should be allowed to read any classroom observation record taken. They should also have the opportunity to record their own comments if they wish.
- Feedback should identify strengths from the lesson and constructive advice on any areas for development.
- Reports from lesson observations should be kept in a secure place and remain confidential to the teacher, the observer and, where appropriate, the teacher's line manager and the headteacher.
- Similarly, any reports presented to governors aside from the Pay Committee individual teachers should be referred to anonymously.
- Teachers should be invited to retain copies of classroom observations as they may be useful, for example, for threshold applications.

4. Governor visits

Governor visits should be agreed in advance and should follow agreed procedures between the headteacher and the governing body following consultation with the teaching staff. It is not the role of governors to make professional judgements and their reports should not feed into teacher capability or appraisal procedures. The Croydon Governor Services have developed a "Governor Visit template policy" to support schools with this process. The Service can also be contacted for further advice. The National Governance Association (NGA) also have resources on governor visit policies.

5. Learning walks and drop-ins

[Name of school/college/trust] agrees that 'learning walks' (including other short visits to classes such as drop-ins) will only be carried out in accordance with this classroom observation protocol.

Learning walks may take place to collect evidence about teaching and learning, evidence of progress and areas for school development. They are intended to be developmental and constructive rather than judgemental and are a whole-school improvement activity. There should be no attempt to use this approach as part of capability procedures or for appraisal.

A programme of learning walks should be agreed with teachers so that they know the date, time, and focus of the learning walk and who will be conducting it, so that they can organise their classes accordingly.

[Name of school/college/trust]'s protocol for learning walks is as follows:

- The purpose or focus of a learning walk should be explained to all relevant staff prior to its commencement. That purpose or focus will not relate to the performance of an individual.
- Learning walks will be conducted with minimum disruption to teachers and pupils.
- Learning walks will be undertaken in a supportive and professional manner.
- A maximum of two colleagues will visit a classroom as part of a learning walk at any one time.
- Pupils will not be asked for their views of an individual teacher during learning walks.
- Those teachers whose classes are visited will be given the opportunity to see any written records made during the learning walk.
- There shall be no evaluation of an individual teacher during a learning walk.
- Regular reviews of the operation of learning walks will be held with all staff.
- Any concerns about the implementation of this protocol should be raised initially with management, either by the individual teacher concerned or with the support of their trade union school representative.

6. Review and monitoring

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually, in consultation with the recognised unions, to ensure consistency, fairness, and effectiveness, and to reflect any changes in employment legislation.

[Name of school/college/trust] will monitor, review and report on the outcomes and impact of this policy on an annual basis and in line with the Equality Act 2010.

7. Record keeping

[Name of school/college/trust] will ensure that individual records and feedback is managed appropriately in accordance with data-privacy requirements under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).