

Staff Appraisal Policy

This policy (and the procedure outlined within) applies across all partner schools in the Stephen Sutton Multi-Academy Trust (SSMAT). It is available on the SSMAT website and is accessible from our schools' websites.

POLICY APPROVAL and REVIEW

Review date: **Nov. '20**

Approval needed by: **Trust Board**

Adopted: **Jul. '18**

Next review date: **Jul. '22**

1. Introduction / Overview

- 1.1 Revised appraisal arrangements came into force, for teaching staff, with effect from 1 September 2012. They are set out in the Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations), which replace the Education (School Teacher Performance Management) (England) Regulations 2006.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of staff, and for supporting their development within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision and performance to enhance student achievement, and the relevant national standards.
- 1.3 Across Stephen Sutton Multi-Academy Trust (SSMAT), appraisal is a supportive and developmental process, designed to ensure that all colleagues have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It helps to ensure that colleagues are able to continue to improve their practice, through high quality continuous professional development (CPD).
- 1.4 This policy applies to all staff employed by the school or local authority, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs)) and those who are subject to capability procedures. It also applies to the Executive Headteacher and SSMAT Core Team. The appraisal process is not used as a substitute for informal programmes of support or counselling, which should precede the initiation of a formal performance improvement procedure, as required. The policy does not apply to people who work at the school under a contract of services, rather than through direct employment by the Trust.
- 1.5 The general principles on which this policy is based are outlined in Appendix 1.

2. The appraisal period

- 2.1 The appraisal period runs for twelve months, normally from 1 October to 30 September.
- 2.2 Colleagues who are employed on a fixed-term contract of less than one year have their performance appraised in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of the period is determined by the duration of their contract.
- 2.3 There is flexibility to have a longer, or shorter, appraisal period when teachers begin or end employment with an academy, trust or local authority, or when unattached teachers change post within the same authority.

3. Appointing appraisers

- 3.1 The performance of the Head of School is appraised by the Governing Body, supported by the Executive Headteacher.
- 3.2 In SSMAT schools, the task of appraising the Head of School, including the setting of objectives, is delegated to a sub-group comprising (normally) three members of the Governing Body. Where the Head of School is of the opinion that any of the governors appointed by the Governing Body is unsuitable to act as his/her appraiser, s/he may submit a written request for that governor to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request.
- 3.3 The Head of School, after consultation, will decide who will appraise the other staff in the school. All appraisers of teachers (other than head of school) have appropriate, relevant and current teaching experience. All appraisers of teachers should also have Qualified Teacher Status and the appraiser have received sufficient and appropriate training before undertaking the role. In general, appraisers should have an equivalent or, where possible, greater level of responsibility than the appraisee, and normally have line management responsibility for them. The designated appraiser must conduct all aspects of the review, including pay recommendations of teachers who are eligible. Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser appointed by the Head of School will be absent for the majority of the appraisal cycle, the Head of School may perform those duties him/herself or delegate those duties to another teacher for the duration of the absence.
- 3.4 Where possible, alternative appraisers will be offered to colleagues where there is a genuine and valid reason to do so, or where the appointed appraiser is not available due to long term sickness. This will be confirmed with the appraisee at the beginning of the process. In most circumstances, and wherever practicable, an appraiser should have a maximum of four appraisees.

4. Setting objectives

- 4.1 Objectives set are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-related) and are appropriate to the appraisee's role and level of experience. Common objectives may be agreed to support the Strategic Plan.
- 4.2 The Head of School's objectives are set by the Governing Body, after consultation with the Executive Headteacher and the Head of School.
- 4.3 Objectives for each colleague are set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. This is quality assured by the Head of School.

- 4.4 The appraiser and appraisee seek to agree the objectives, but where a joint determination cannot be made the appraiser will make the determination. The appraisee may request moderation and, should this be unsuccessful, the appraisee is given the opportunity to append comments alongside their objectives. Each school designs its own moderation process, overseeing and providing assurance to the setting of objectives and requesting modifications, as necessary. Objectives may be revised, through agreement, if circumstances change.
- 4.5 The objectives set for each colleague will, if achieved, (directly or indirectly) contribute to the school's plans for improving outcomes for students and will also take into account the aspirations of staff. Other than in exceptional circumstances, no colleague will be given more than three objectives. Setting more than three objectives can cause increased workload and would be inconsistent with the school's strategy for achieving work/life balance for all colleagues.
- 4.6 For teachers only: Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, each teacher is informed of the standards against which that teacher's performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. The most recent version of Teachers' Standards provides the context in which, through professional discussions, objectives are set, CPD needs are identified, success criteria are defined and the nature and extent of any required observations is planned. Teachers' Standards should not be used as a checklist, but should inform the setting of targets. Teachers' Standards are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 4.7 The agreed objectives include a description of what success may look like. Where use of numerical targets is appropriate, these are reasonable, in the circumstances in which a colleague works, recognising that factors outside a colleague's control may affect success significantly.
- 4.8 The appraiser takes into account the effects of an individual's circumstances, including any disability, when agreeing objectives. For example, this might include a reasonable adjustment to allow an individual slightly longer to complete a task than might otherwise be the case. When a colleague returns from a period of extended absence, objectives may be adjusted to allow them to readjust to their working environment.

5. Reviewing performance: judgements that are fair, secure and useful

- 5.1 SSMAT believes that judgements that are made about colleagues' performance and effectiveness should take into account all of the information that is relevant to the judgement being made. This provides a fair basis for pay-related decisions and a more secure foundation for supporting the development of practice in the school.

- 5.2 For teachers only: When making decisions about a teacher's effectiveness, through the appraisal process, a broad range of information is considered. This includes:
- the outcomes of the teacher's teaching groups (or the teacher's contribution to their outcomes);
 - lesson observation evidence;
 - work sampling feedback; and
 - other self-evaluation evidence, e.g. discussions with students, learning walks etc.
- 5.3 The appraisee's progress in relation to the specific objectives set is also considered. However, SSMAT believes that the key role of the appraisal objectives is to support the development of practice. In a culture where appraisers and appraisees are encouraged to set performance indicators for priority areas at relatively ambitious (albeit realistic) levels, it would be counterproductive for appraisal decisions to be solely determined by whether, or not, appraisees squarely met the targets set.
- 5.4 Performance in relation to the success criteria for each objective will be considered and will inform decisions made but will not 'drive the judgement', as a colleague's overall performance is the fairest, most secure and most useful basis for these decisions.

6. Reviewing performance: observation

- 6.1 For teachers only: 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 for gaining useful information to inform school improvement strategies. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion and follow the procedure set out in Appendix 3.
- 6.2 For teachers only: The amount and type of classroom observation depends on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the school. For any teacher, the total period for classroom observation undertaken for appraisal purposes does not exceed three hours per cycle and has regard to the individual circumstances of the teacher (with no requirement that all of the three hours are used). The amount of observation for each teacher reflects, and is proportionate to, the needs of the individual. Classroom observation for appraisal purposes is carried out by those with Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

- 6.3 Colleagues (including the Head of School) who have responsibilities outside the classroom should expect to have their performance, in relation to those responsibilities, observed and assessed.

7. Development and support

- 7.1 Appraisal is a supportive process used to inform continuing professional development (CPD) and training. SSMAT promotes a culture in which all colleagues take responsibility for improving their practice through appropriate professional development and training. Training is an entitlement and is linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development and training needs and priorities of individual colleagues.
- 7.2 Sufficient time, within directed hours, is provided to enable the appraiser and appraisee to fulfill their statutory and contractual obligations.
- 7.3 Each SSMAT partner school has a training plan, informed by the training and development needs that are identified through the appraisal process.
- 7.4 The Head of School and Governing Body ensures that, as far as possible, appropriate resources are made available in the school budget for development and support activity linked to appraisal objectives.
- 7.5 An account of the support and development needs of colleagues, and the resources allocated, are included in the Head of School's annual report to the Governing Body about the operation of the appraisal process in the school.
- 7.6 Colleagues are not held accountable for failing to make good progress towards meeting their performance criteria, where the support recorded in the appraisal planning statement has not been provided.

8. Feedback

- 8.1 Colleagues receive constructive feedback on their progress towards the achievement of their appraisal objectives, e.g. following a lesson observation. Feedback is given in a supportive context, highlighting particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need additional support. A written record on progress made is kept and key issues of any feedback form part of the appraisal documentation. Should either the appraiser or appraisee identify issues of concern, an interim meeting may be called to discuss any support that is necessary to address the concerns.

9. Relationship to capability procedures

- 9.1 Schools must not rely solely on the appraisal process as a trigger to consider the initiation of a capability procedure. Once a decision has been made to proceed with capability procedures, the appraisal process is suspended.
- 9.2 Before embarking on a formal capability procedure, the Head of School (in case of colleagues other than the Head of School) or the Chair of Governors (in the case of the Head of School) must be able to evidence that informal support has been provided and has failed to achieve the required improvements. Where it proves to be necessary to begin a capability procedure with a member of staff, a formal meeting is held to bring the appraisal process to an end and give notice of the initiation of the capability procedure.

10. Annual assessment

- 10.1 Each colleague's performance is formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the Head of School, the Governing Body must consult the Executive Headteacher.
- 10.2 This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities may need to be reviewed at an interim meeting. In particular, priorities may need to be reviewed if an appraisee's circumstances or responsibilities change. In such cases, a written addition to the planning statement should be made. The appraisee, as previously, should be given the opportunity to add any written comments.
- 10.3 The whole process will have regard to what can be reasonably expected of any colleague in that position, given the desirability of the appraisee and appraiser being able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge their professional duties and the time required to pursue their personal interests outside work.
- 10.4 The appraisee receives a written appraisal report, as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period, and has the opportunity to add their own written comments. Colleagues (other than Head of Schools) receive their written appraisal reports by 31 October. Head of Schools receive their report by 31 December. The appraisal report includes:
 - details of the colleague's objectives for the appraisal period in question;
 - an assessment of the colleague's performance, in their role(s), and in relation to their objectives and the relevant standards;

- an assessment of the colleague's training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- a recommendation on pay, where that is relevant. [The Governing body and Head of School consider how pay recommendations are related to the Pay Policy (including the appropriate progression and ranges on the pay spines), mindful that recommendations are made by a range of appraisers and that the process must be fair and equitable. The Head of School (supported, as appropriate by senior leadership colleagues) reviews all pay recommendations to ensure a consistent and appropriate application of standards.];
- [For teachers only: an indication by teachers eligible for progression onto the Upper Pay Spine, regarding whether, or not, they want to be assessed in line with the Post Threshold Standards]; and
- a colleague's own comments.

10.5 The identification of training and development needs informs the planning process for the following appraisal period.

Stuart Jones; Nov. '20

Appendix 1 - General Principles underlying this Policy

Confidentiality

The appraisal process is treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Head of School and Governing Body to quality assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. Quality assurance is undertaken as part of the processes of monitoring and evaluation.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Governing Body monitors the operation and outcomes of performance management arrangements.

The Head of School provides the Governing Body with an annual report on the operation of the Staff Appraisal Policy. The report does not contain any information that would enable any individual to be identified. It includes:

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

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The Governing Body ensures that the appraisal process is fair and non-discriminatory and the Head of School's report confirms that the appraisal process complies with the Equalities Act 2010.

The Head of School also reports on whether, or not, there have been any appeals or representations, either on an individual or collective basis, on the grounds of alleged discrimination under any of the protected categories covered by the Equalities Act 2010.

Appeals

At any point in the appraisal process, colleagues (including the Head of School) have a right of appeal in respect of the application of the policy, or in relation to any entry in their planning and review statements. The grounds for the appeal determines which of the relevant appeal processes is used.

Long Term Absence

The appraisal process may need to be adjusted if long term sickness absence or maternity leave affects the achievement or progress towards the appraisal objectives, and in such cases a review will take place.

Retention

The Governing Body and Head of School ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed. The appraisee should retain his or her own copy for the same period.

Access to Documentation

All colleagues have access to documentation relating to school improvement and any other documents and procedures to which this policy relates.

Appendix 2: Teachers' Standards (2013)

Preamble

Teachers make the education of their students their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers: act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keeping their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date; are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their students.

Part One: Teaching

1 Teachers set high expectations that inspire, motivate and challenge students

- Establish a safe and stimulating environment for students, rooted in mutual respect
- Set goals that stretch and challenge students of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
- Demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour that are expected of students

2 Teachers promote good progress and outcomes by students

- Be accountable for students' attainment, progress and outcomes
- Be aware of students' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these
- Guide students to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how students learn and how this impacts on teaching
- Encourage students to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study

3 Teachers demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship

- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies

4 Teachers plan and teach well-structured lessons

- Impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time
- Promote a love of learning and facilitate the development of children's intellectual curiosity
- Set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding that students have acquired
- Reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching
- Contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s)

5 Teachers adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- Know when, and how, to differentiate appropriately, using approaches that enable students to be taught effectively
- Have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit students' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these
- Demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support students' education at different stages of development
- Have a clear understanding of the needs of all students, including: those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; and those with disabilities. Be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them

6 Teachers make accurate and productive use of assessment

- Know and understand how to assess relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
- Make use of formative and summative assessment to secure students' progress

- Use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
- Give students regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage students to respond to the feedback

7 Teachers manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- Have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour, both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy
- Have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly
- Manage classes effectively, using approaches that are appropriate to students' needs, in order to involve and motivate them
- Maintain good relationships with students, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively, when necessary

8 Teachers fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- Make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- Develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- Deploy support staff effectively
- Take responsibility for improving teaching, through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- Communicate effectively with parents with regard to students' achievements and well-being

Part Two: Personal and Professional Conduct

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes that set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

1 Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- treating students with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and, at all times, observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard students' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of, and respect for, the rights of others
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways that exploit students' vulnerability, or in ways that might lead them to break the law

2 Teachers have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality

3 Teachers have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks that set out their professional duties and responsibilities

Professional Standards for Post-Threshold Teachers

Professional Attributes: Frameworks

- P1** Contribute **significantly**, where appropriate, to implementing workplace policies and practice and to promoting collective responsibility for their implementation

Professional Knowledge and Understanding: Teaching and Learning

- P2** Have an **extensive knowledge and understanding** of how to use and adapt a range of teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies, including how to personalise learning to provide opportunities for all learners to achieve their potential

Professional Knowledge and Understanding: Assessment and Monitoring

- P3** Have an **extensive knowledge and well-informed understanding** of the assessment requirements and arrangements for the subjects/curriculum areas they teach, including those related to public examinations and qualifications
- P4** Have **up-to-date knowledge and understanding** of the different types of qualifications and specifications and their suitability for meeting learners' needs

Professional Knowledge and Understanding: Subjects and Curriculum

- P5** Have a more developed knowledge and understanding of their subjects/curriculum areas and related pedagogy, including how learning progresses within them

Professional Knowledge and Understanding: Health and Well-being

- P6** Have sufficient depth of knowledge and experience to be able to give advice on the development and well-being of children and young people

Professional Skills: Planning

- P7** Be flexible, creative and adept at designing learning sequences within lessons, and across lessons, that are effective and consistently well-matched to learning objectives and the needs of learners and which integrate recent developments, including those relating to subject/curriculum knowledge

Professional Skills: Teaching

- P8** Have teaching skills that lead to learners achieving well, relative to their prior attainment, making progress as good as, or better than, similar learners nationally

Professional Skills: Team Working and Collaboration

- P9** Promote collaboration and work effectively as a team member
- P10** Contribute to the professional development of colleagues, through coaching and mentoring, demonstrating effective practice, and providing advice and feedback

Appendix 3 - Classroom Observation Protocol

SSMAT and its partner schools are committed to ensuring that classroom observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process:

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

The total period for classroom observation arranged for any teacher, for appraisal purposes, does not exceed three hours per cycle, having regard to the individual circumstances of the teacher. There is no requirement to use all of the three hours. The amount of observation for each teacher should reflect, and be proportionate to, the needs of the individual.

Arrangements for classroom observation are included in the planning and review statement, which details the amount of observation, its primary purpose, any particular aspects of the teacher's performance that will be assessed, the duration of the observation, when during the appraisal cycle the observation will take place and who will conduct the observation. The context of the observation is confirmed between the appraiser and appraisee before the observation takes place.

Where evidence emerges about the appraisee's teaching performance that gives rise to concern during the cycle, classroom observations may be arranged in addition to those recorded at the beginning of the cycle, subject to a revision meeting being held.

Consistent with the Trust's commitment to streamlining data collection and minimising bureaucracy and workload burdens on staff, information gathered during an appraisal observation is used, as appropriate, for a variety of purposes including informing school self-evaluation.

In keeping with the commitment to supportive and developmental classroom observation, those being observed will be notified in advance. Teachers are given at least five working days' notice of the appraisal observation.

Classroom observations are only undertaken by persons with QTS and by those who have had adequate preparation and the appropriate professional skills to undertake observation and provide constructive oral and written feedback and support.

Oral feedback is given as soon as possible after the observation and no later than the end of the following working day. It is given during directed time in a suitable, private environment.

Written feedback is provided within five working days of the observation taking place. If issues emerged from an observation that were not part of the focus of the observation (as recorded in the planning and review statement), then these should also be covered in the written feedback and the appropriate action taken, in accordance with the regulations and guidance.

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 has the right to add written comments on the feedback document.