



## Appraisals Policy

Our vision is to provide pupils with the confidence, skills and ambition to achieve a successful and productive life. We aim to ensure they leave us with the opportunities and are able to become positive members of their communities. To do this, we have 3 principles that underpin our policies, practices and everything we do:

- Everyone can learn, achieve and has the potential to be successful
- Positive relationships are key to success and are underpinned by mutual trust, respect and caring for one another
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We have high expectations in everything we do

**W**onderful  
**E**xcellent  
**L**ovely  
**C**lever  
**O**utstanding  
**M**agnificent  
**E**nthusiastic

(Acronym created by White Trees pupils)

Created by White Trees Independent School, July 2024

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# AIMS

This policy aims to:

- Set out the arrangements for appraising teachers, including the process and the responsibilities of individuals
- Ensure consistency and fairness across the school
- Create a process where teachers' professional development is supported and encouraged, in the context of the school's latest Ofsted report, our school improvement plan and the Teachers' Standards
- Ensure teachers have the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil and excel in their role and provide an excellent education to our pupils

The policy applies to all teaching staff employed by the school or local authority, except those undergoing induction and those undergoing capability procedures.

## LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

As an independent school, we are free to determine our own appraisal arrangements. However, where a teacher's contract specifically incorporates conditions from [The Education \(School Teachers' Appraisal\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#), these will continue to apply due to [The Transfer of Undertakings \(Protection of Employment\) \(TUPE\) Regulations 2006](#), which protect employees' terms and conditions when a maintained school becomes an academy.

We have based this policy on the [model policy](#) produced by the Department for Education (DfE).

## DEFINITIONS

In this policy, the term 'teacher' refers to classroom teachers, tutors, middle and senior leaders, and the headteacher.

## EARLY CAREER TEACHERS (ECTs)

Early career teachers (ECTs) starting their induction on or after 1 September 2021 are not subject to annual appraisal and pay review cycles during their induction period, and are not covered by this policy.

Arrangements for ECT appraisal will follow our ECT induction policy, and the [statutory induction process for ECTs](#).

## THE APPRAISAL PERIOD

The appraisal period will run for 12 months beginning on the first day of the autumn term. Appraisals will be held during the academic year in line with staffs start dates with the organisation.

Teachers who start at or leave the school during the appraisal period can have a longer or shorter appraisal period in that appraisal round.

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## SETTING OBJECTIVES

Teachers' objectives will be set, in collaboration with the Deputy Heads in charge of their sites before, or as soon as possible after, the start of the appraisal period using the appraisals documents sent out and stored on Cezanne.

Objectives will:

- Contribute to improving the education of pupils at the school and the implementation of any school improvement plans.
- Be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART)
- Be appropriate to the teacher's role and career experience
- Be revised if circumstances change throughout the year

When objectives are set, teachers will also be informed of the standards their performance will be judged against.

The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives.

## STANDARDS

Teachers, middle leaders and senior leaders will be assessed against the [Teachers' Standards](#).

Tutors will be assessed by our in-house Tutor standards.

Teaching Assistants will be assessed against the teaching assistant standards.

## REVIEWING PERFORMANCE

We will use a range of evidence to judge a teacher's performance:

- Formal and informal lesson observations
- Observations and results from wider school activities, if applicable
- Performance of their pupils
- Reviews of planning and marking

## OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

We believe that observations are an important way of assessing teachers' performance. They can help identify a teacher's strengths and areas for improvement, and can help us identify areas of good practice that can be shared across the school.

There will be both formal and 'drop in' observations. Teachers with responsibilities outside the classroom will also have these responsibilities observed.

All observations will:

- Be carried out in an objective, fair, professional and supportive manner
- Be carried out by teachers with Qualified Teacher Status
- Provide constructive feedback
- Remain confidential to those who need to know details as part of their jobs.

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## DROP-IN OBSERVATIONS

Drop-in observations will usually be conducted by the Assistant SENCO at each site, in order to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

Notice of 'drop in' observations will be given 2 weeks in advance.

They will usually last around 10 minutes, and may involve the observer talking to pupils and looking at their work.

The frequency will depend on the individual teacher and the school's needs at the time.

Generally, verbal feedback will be given the following day.

We will use all reasonable endeavors to provide written feedback within 5 working days.

Please note that we also carry out drop-in observations where fellow teachers observe a lesson for their own professional development. Notice may not be given and evidence will not be used as part of the appraisal process.

## FORMAL OBSERVATIONS

The purpose of formal observations is to assess the teacher's performance and progress against their objectives and the relevant standards.

We will take into account the teacher's workload and individual circumstances when determining the number of formal observations.

For example, less experienced teachers who have recently started at the school will receive a number of formal observations to establish their strengths and areas for development. A very experienced teacher will typically receive fewer observations.

Teachers will not receive more than 2 formal observations over the year. Note: most unions advise a maximum of 3 observations a year.

Generally, verbal feedback will be given the following day.

We will use all reasonable endeavors to provide written feedback within 5 working days.

## ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

Additional formal observations will take place if:

- › The teacher requests them
- › There are concerns that the teacher's performance is not up to standard (this may be triggered by poorly performing or poorly behaved pupils)
- › The teacher is subject to formal capability proceedings

The above protocols will still apply to these additional observations.

## ANNUAL ASSESSMENT

Performance will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year, with a 6 monthly meeting taking place before the end of the cycle meeting, with the teacher's line manager.

The appraisal meeting is the end point of the annual appraisal process and will take place in line with the staff members start date when joining the organisation. In this meeting, the appraiser will:

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- Review the relevant evidence in line with agreed targets – which is to be collated and brought to review meetings by the member of staff who is having their appraisal
- Assess performance in the appraisal period against the relevant standards
- Assess performance in the appraisal period against objectives
- Discuss the teacher’s professional development needs and identify action that should be taken
- Discuss the teacher’s wellbeing, career aspirations and any difficulties they may be facing
- If necessary, discuss underperformance and put a plan in place to address it, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). If a teacher continues to demonstrate serious underperformance and does not respond to support provided, they 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 they will be invited to a formal capability meeting to plan their PIP.

## CONDUCTING ANNUAL APPRAISAL MEETINGS

The Deputies at each site will appraise teachers. Assistant Operations managers will support appraising Tutors and Teaching Assistants. By way of example, a ‘good reason’ could be a poor or deteriorating working relationship between the teacher and line manager, including where a formal grievance has been lodged by the teacher citing their line manager.

All appraisers will be provided with appropriate support.

Appraisal meetings will take place within the teacher’s normal working hours and will typically last for at least an hour. Scheduling appraisal meetings for an hour and a half is therefore recommended.

## APPRAISAL REPORT

Teachers will be provided with a written report of their appraisal. The report will be completed by the person who conducted the appraisal. We will use all reasonable endeavors to complete this within 5 working days.

This will include:

- An assessment of the teacher’s performance against their objectives and the relevant standards
- An assessment of the teacher’s training and development needs, and the action that should be taken to address them
- Where relevant, a recommendation on pay progression

There will be space in the report for the teacher’s own comments.

After the report has been issued, we will hold review meetings where teachers can discuss the contents of their report if they wish.

Teachers will have access to their appraisal report on Cezanne so they can review it and also be alerted to when their review is up and coming. Teachers can appeal to the headteacher if they do not agree with their appraisal process or outcome, and the headteacher can appeal to the governing board, if they disagree with the contents of the report and the pay recommendation it makes.

## CONCERNS ABOUT A TEACHER’S PERFORMANCE

If it becomes clear a teacher is having difficulties at any point during the appraisal period, they will be provided with additional support.

This will begin with a meeting with their line manager, where the problem will be discussed and potential solutions identified. A performance improvement plan may be created.

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