



Bringing out the Best in Everyone"

## **Buckinghamshire Council / Pebble Brook School**

### **Appraisal Policy**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Governors

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The Governing Board of Pebble Brook School has adopted this policy following consultation with the recognised teaching unions.

## **1. Purpose**

This procedure sets out how Pebble Brook School will improve outcomes for pupils and raise the morale of teachers by motivating teachers to update their skills and improve their performance.

The Appraisal Procedure will also be used to address any concerns that are raised about a teacher's performance. If concerns are such that they cannot be resolved through the appraisal process, there will be consideration of whether to commence the Capability Procedure.

## **2. Application of the Appraisal Policy**

This policy applies to the Headteacher and to all qualified teachers employed at the school, except those on contracts of less than one term and those undergoing induction (NQTs) or teachers on capability procedures. The policy will apply to teaching support where appropriate.

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.

### **2.1 The Appraisal Period**

The appraisal period will run for 12 months, normally from September to July. Teachers who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than 1 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.

Where a teacher starts their employment at the school part-way through a cycle, the Headteacher, or, in the case where the employee is the Headteacher, the Governing Board, shall determine the length of the first cycle for that teacher, with a view to bringing their cycle into line with the cycle for other teachers as soon as possible.

Where a teacher transfers to a new post within the school part-way through a cycle the Headteacher, or, in the case where the employee is the Headteacher, the Governing Board, shall determine whether the cycle shall begin again and whether to change the appraiser.

### **3. Appointing Appraisers**

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

#### **3.1 Headteacher**

The Headteacher will be appraised by the Governing Board, supported by a suitably skilled and / or experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the Governing Board for that purpose. The task of appraising the Headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of normally 3 members of the Governing Board. Where a Headteacher is of the opinion that any of the Governors appointed by the Governing Board is unsuitable to act as their appraiser, they may submit a written request for that Governor to be replaced, stating the reasons for the request.

#### **3.2 Teachers**

The choice of appraiser is for the Headteacher. Where teachers have an objection to the Headteacher's choice their concerns will be carefully considered and, where possible, an alternative appraiser will be offered. All appraisers appointed by the Headteacher will be qualified teachers and will have current or recent teaching experience.

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

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

Where a teacher is experiencing difficulties and the Headteacher is not the appraiser, the Headteacher may undertake the role of appraiser. See also section on Teachers Experiencing Difficulties.

It is intended that the Headteacher at Pebble Brook School will undertake the role of appraiser for all teachers.

### **4. Setting Objectives**

The Headteacher's objectives will be set by the appraisal sub-group of the Governing Board after consultation with the external adviser and the Headteacher. Objectives will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set will be specific,

measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound and will be appropriate to the appraisee's role and level of experience.

In setting the objectives reviewers will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in the context of roles, responsibilities and experience, consistent with the school's strategy for achieving a work / life balance for all staff.

Appraisees may at any point append their comments alongside their objectives. The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.

The school operates a system of moderation to ensure that all appraisers are working to the same standards. Targets will be moderated across the school to ensure that they are consistent between teachers with similar experience and levels of responsibility. Should the objectives not be agreed, the final decision on allocation of objectives rests with the Headteacher.

The agreed objectives will contain a description of what success may look like. Where use of numerical targets is appropriate, these will be reasonable in the circumstances in which the teacher works and it will be recognised that factors outside teachers' control may significantly affect success.

Setting more than three objectives, or, for example, using sub-targets, can lead to teachers experiencing unreasonable workload and pressure making the objectives more difficult to achieve. Therefore, other than in exceptional circumstances, no teacher will be given more than three objectives.

The objectives set for each teacher are intended to contribute to the school's plans for improving the school's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at that school and will take into account the professional aspirations of the teacher.

The appraiser will take 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 staff return from a period of extended absence, objectives may be adjusted to allow them to readjust to their working environment.

Before, or as soon as practicable after the start of each appraisal period, each teacher will be informed of the standards against which that teacher's performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. Teachers will be assessed against the appropriate set of standards contained in the document 'Teachers' Standards' published in July 2011. The Headteacher or Governing Board (as appropriate) will need to consider whether certain teachers should be assessed against other sets of standards published by the Secretary of State or other bodies that are relevant to them.

## **5. Pay Progression**

Where teachers are eligible for pay progression the recommendation made by the appraiser will be based on the assessment of their performance against the agreed objectives. The decision made by the relevant decision-making body will be based on the statutory criteria and guidance set out in the STPCD and the relevant teacher standards.

The Governing Board has agreed the pay policy of the school and has considered the implications of the Appraisal Policy with respect to the arrangements relating to teachers' pay in accordance with the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. The Governing Board will ensure that decisions on pay progression are made by 31st December for Headteachers and by 31st October for other teachers.

## **6. Reviewing Performance**

### **6.1 Observation**

The effective and efficient operation of the appraisal process requires lesson observation to be a confidential process of constructive engagement within an atmosphere of support and co-operation. Accordingly, observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion, with professionalism, integrity and courtesy, will be evaluated objectively and reported accurately and fairly and will take account of particular circumstances which may affect performance on the day.

Notice of the date and time of the formal appraisal observation will be given and verbal feedback provided at least by the end of the next school day and written feedback within 5 working days, unless circumstances make this impossible.

Classroom observation will be carried out by qualified teachers. For the purposes of appraisal and the improvement in the school's performance, teachers will be observed on an appropriate and reasonable number of occasions. This can mean unannounced observations, learning walks and informal observations. Provision for exceptional circumstances where concerns have been raised about a teacher's performance or where the teacher requests additional observation visits will be permitted.

For the purpose of professional development, feedback about lesson observations should be developmental, not simply a judgement using Ofsted grades. This school will use the findings of each observation, including appraisal observations, for other management requirements (for example subject area reviews), thereby seeking to minimise the total number of occasions on which teachers are observed.

Teachers, including the Headteacher, whose posts have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

## **6.2 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, through peer observation for example. 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 as part of the appraisal process. The Governing Board will ensure in the budget planning that, as far as possible, resources are made available in the school budget for appropriate training and support agreed for appraisees, maintaining access on an equitable basis.

An account of the training and development needs of teachers, 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 Board about the operation of the appraisal process in the school.

With regard to the provision of CPD in the case of competing demands on the school budget, a decision on relative priority will be taken with regard to the extent to which:

- The training and support will help the school to achieve its priorities.
- The CPD identified is essential for an appraisee to meet their objectives.

Account will be taken in a review meeting of where it has not been possible for teachers to fully meet their performance criteria because the support recorded in the planning statement has not been provided.

## **7. Annual Assessment**

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

The teacher will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period - and have the opportunity to comment on - a written appraisal report. The appraisal report will include:

- Details of the teacher's objectives for the appraisal period in question (2 objectives – teaching and learning and pupil achievement).

- An assessment of the teacher's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and against the relevant standards.
- An assessment of the teacher'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. **Pay recommendations need to be made by 31st December for Headteachers and by 31st October for other teachers);**
- A space for the teacher's own comments.

A review meeting will take place to discuss the content of the report and any further action required and to inform objective setting for the next cycle. In some circumstances an interim review meeting may be appropriate. The assessment of performance and of training and development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period.

## 8. Teachers Experiencing Difficulties

When dealing with a teacher experiencing difficulties the objective is to provide support and guidance through the appraisal process in such a way that the teacher's performance improves and the problem is, therefore, resolved.

Where it is apparent that a teacher's personal circumstances are leading to difficulties at school, support will be offered as soon as possible, without waiting for the formal annual assessment.

If an appraiser identifies through the appraisal process, or via other sources of information, e.g. parental complaints, that the difficulties experienced by a teacher are such that, if not rectified, could lead to capability procedures, the appraiser, the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team, will, as part of the appraisal process meet the teacher to:

- Give clear written feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns.
- Give the teacher the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns.
- Give the teacher at least 5 working days' notice that a meeting will be held to discuss targets for improvement alongside a programme of support and inform the teacher that he / she has the right to be assisted by a representative of an independent Trade Union or workplace colleague and at any future meetings where capability will be discussed.
- In consultation with the teacher at the above meeting an action plan with support will be established (e.g. coaching, training, in-class support,

mentoring, structured observations, visits to other classes or schools or discussions with advisory teachers) that will help address those specific concerns.

- Make clear how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed.
- Explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made.

The teacher's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and a reasonable time given for the teacher's performance to improve. This will depend upon the circumstances but will be for a period of 8 weeks, with appropriate support as agreed in the Action Plan, in order that the aim of recovering and improving performance can be achieved. During this monitoring period the teacher will be given regular feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.

If sufficient progress is made such that the teacher is performing at a level that indicates there is no longer a possibility of capability procedures being invoked, the teacher should be informed of this at a formal meeting with the appraiser or Headteacher. Following this meeting the appraisal process will continue as normal. If no, or insufficient, improvement has been made over this period, the teacher will be invited to a transition meeting to determine whether formal capability proceedings need to be commenced or the appraisal process remains in place. The teacher may be assisted by a Trade Union representative or work colleague and will have at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting.

## **9. 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 Board. Where the Headteacher has not been recommended for pay progression he / she 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 Board meets to consider pay recommendations, following which the teacher (and Headteacher when the Headteacher has not been recommended for pay progression) may exercise the right of appeal, assisted by a companion who may be a colleague, a Trade Union official or a Trade Union representative.

## **10. General Principles Underlying this Policy**

### **10.1 ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures**

The conduct of the formal capability stage will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the ACAS Code of Practice.

## **10.2 Consistency of Treatment and Fairness**

The Governing Board is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation.

## **10.3 Sickness**

If long term sickness absence appears to have been triggered by the commencement of monitoring or a formal capability procedure the case will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Health and Attendance Policy and Procedure and will normally be referred to the Occupational Health Service to assess the member of staff's health and fitness for continued employment and the appropriateness or otherwise of continuing with monitoring or formal procedures. In some cases it may be appropriate for formal procedures to continue during a period of sickness absence. However, the views of the Occupational Health physician will always be taken into account before a decision is reached.

## **10.4 Grievances**

Where a member of staff raises a grievance during the appraisal or capability process, the appraisal or capability process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and appraisal or capability cases are related it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

## **10.5 Confidentiality and Professional Relationships**

The appraisal and capability processes will be treated with confidentiality. Only the appraiser's Line Manager or, where she / he had more than one, each of her / his Line Managers will be provided with access to the appraisee's plan recorded in her / his statements. This will be done upon request and only where this is necessary to enable the Line Manager to discharge her / his line management responsibilities. Appraisees will be consulted on requests for access to statements in the context of this policy.

The process of gathering evidence for performance review will not compromise normal professional relationships between teachers. The Governing Board recognises that the reviewer will consult with, and seek to secure the agreement of, the reviewee before seeking information from other colleagues about the work of the reviewee.

However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Headteacher and Governing Board to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. The Headteacher or appropriate colleague might, for example, review all teachers' objectives and written appraisal records personally to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers. The Headteacher might also wish to be aware of any pay recommendations that have been made.

## **10.6 Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Governing Board and Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements. The Headteacher will provide the Governing Board with a written report on the operation of the school's appraisal and capability policies annually. The report will not identify any individual by name. The report will include an assessment of the impact of these policies on:

- Race
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- Religion and Beliefs
- Age
- Part-Time Status
- Maternity and Pregnancy

The Headteacher will report on whether there have been any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination.