



Teacher Appraisal and Capability Policy

Approved by:
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Signed by:

Headteacher

Date: September 2025

Chair of governors

Date: September 2025

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Statement of intent

This policy sets out the framework for clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the headteacher. It is designed to support teachers' development, within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers.

It also sets out the framework for clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including the headteacher. It sets out the arrangements that will apply when teachers fall below the expected levels of competence

Unless indicated otherwise, all references to "teacher" include the headteacher.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 (as amended)
- DfE (2024) 'Maintained schools governance guide'
- DfE (2024) 'Academy trust governance guide'
- DfE (2024) 'Teacher capability'
- ACAS (2015) 'Code of practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures'
- The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012
- DfE (2020) 'Governance handbook'
- DfE (2019) 'Teacher appraisal and capability: A model policy for schools'
- DfE (2021) 'Teachers' Standards'
- DfE (2021) 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'
- DfE (2023) 'Implementing your school's approach to pay'
- DfE (2014) 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools'
- DfE (2023) School teachers' pay and conditions document 2023 and guidance on school teachers' pay and conditions'
- DfE (2024) 'Teacher appraisal: Guidance for schools'
- DfE (2024) 'Managing Teacher's and Leader's Pay: Advice for maintained schools, MATs, academies and local authorities'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Model School Pay Policy - DCC
- Grievance Resolution Policy - DCC
- Confidentiality Policy
- Disciplinary Policy - DCC
- Records Management Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy - DCC
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Attendance Management Policy - DCC
- School Development Plan (SDP)

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the effectiveness of this policy by monitoring and reviewing it **annually**.
- Ensuring that the capability process is managed in a way that avoids increased workload for all parties concerned.
- Ensuring that all members of staff have read and understood the provisions in this policy.
- Setting objectives for the headteacher, with advice from an appropriate external adviser.
- Ensuring all objectives contribute towards the SDP and improve the education of pupils at the school.
- Taking advice from an external adviser on the assessment of the headteacher's performance.
- Ensuring all members of the board are informed that the performance review process has taken place.
- Conducting formal capability meetings where there are concerns about the headteacher's performance.
- Once a decision to dismiss has been taken, dismissing the teacher or headteacher in question with notice. This will be done with the support of the LA.
- Ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and abiding by all relevant equality legislation.
- Ensuring all delegated responsibilities are carried out.
- Reviewing and streamlining appraisal policies.
- Agreeing the extent to which specific functions relating to the appraisal process will be assigned to others.
- Ensuring that they are suitably trained on the appraisal process.

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation of this policy.
- Reviewing, developing, and streamlining the school's appraisal policy.
- Submitting the policy to the governing board for approval.
- Ensuring that teachers are fully aware of the policy.
- Moderating appraisal outcomes.
- Ensuring that teachers are notified in writing of any appraisal outcomes.
- Keeping and maintaining records of all decisions made relating to appraisal decisions.
- Ensuring appraisers receive relevant training

- Ensuring that the capability process is managed in a way that avoids increased workload for all parties concerned.
- Informing teachers of the standards against which their performance will be assessed.
- Conducting drop-in observations, where necessary, to evaluate standards of teaching and ensure high standards of professional performance are maintained.
- Conducting formal capability meetings where there are concerns about a teacher's performance.

Teaching staff are responsible for:

- Improving their teaching through proactive engagement in appropriate CPD opportunities.
- Attending performance review meetings.
- Adhering to this policy at all times.
- Keeping records of their objectives and identifying evidence for those objectives being met or not met

3. Capability Process

General principles underlying this policy

Confidentiality

The capability process will be treated with confidentiality; however, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the headteacher and the governing board to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the capability procedure.

This will be achieved by the headteacher and governing board personally reviewing a sample of teachers' objectives for consistency.

Consistency of treatment and fairness

The governing board is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness. It will abide by all relevant equality legislation, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for teachers with disabilities. The governing board is aware of the [guidance](#) on the Equality Act 2010 issued by the DfE.

Definitions

Unless indicated otherwise, all references to "teacher" include the headteacher.

Capability is defined as the ability of an employee to perform their duties to the standards required. Capability procedures apply only to teachers and school leaders where there are concerns, which the appraisal process has been unable to address, of not meeting the required standards of work performance.

Delegation

Normal rules (as set out in The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009) apply in respect of the delegation of functions by the governing board and headteacher.

Grievances

Where a teacher raises a grievance during the capability procedure, the procedure may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and capability cases are related, including as part of the capability process, it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently. Grievances should be handled in accordance with the school's Grievance Policy.

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 Staff Attendance and Absence Policy. The case will be referred immediately to the occupational health service, to assess the teacher's health and fitness for continued employment. Additionally, the suitability of continued monitoring or formal procedures will be evaluated in relation to the teacher's health. In some cases, it may be appropriate for monitoring and/or formal procedures to continue during a period of absence.

Capability procedure

A formal capability meeting will only be arranged once the staff member has been given every other opportunity to improve, and where there is still persistent failure to meet job expectations. At least **five working days'** notice will be given of the formal capability meeting. The notification will contain sufficient information about performance-related concerns and their possible consequences to enable the teacher to prepare a defence for the formal capability meeting. Teachers will be entitled to reasonably request an alternative date when they are unable to attend on the original proposed date.

The notice will also contain copies of any written evidence, the details of the time and place of the meeting, and will advise the teacher of their right to be accompanied by a companion, who may be a colleague, a trade union official, or a trade union representative who has been certified by their union as being competent.

While a teacher or school leader is in capability procedures, pay progression will be withheld.

Formal capability meeting

This meeting is intended to establish the facts. For the headteacher, a formal capability meeting will be conducted by the chair of governors. For other teachers, the formal

capability meeting will be conducted by the headteacher or other suitable senior member of staff.

The meeting will set out the required standards which are believed to have been failed by the teacher.

The meeting will allow the teacher to respond to concerns about their performance and to make any relevant representations. This may provide new information or a different context to the information or evidence already collected. During the meeting, evidence will be presented, and witnesses will be called where appropriate. The teacher will be allowed to ask questions and present their own evidence and witnesses where appropriate. The teacher will be permitted to respond to the evidence and ask questions.

The person conducting the meeting may conclude that there are insufficient grounds for pursuing the capability issue and that it would be more appropriate to continue to address the remaining concerns through the appraisal process, in line with the school's Teacher Appraisal Policy. In such cases, the capability procedure will come to an end.

The person conducting the meeting may also adjourn the meeting if they decide that further investigation is needed, or more time is needed to consider additional information. In other cases, the meeting will continue.

During the meeting, or any other meeting which could lead to a formal warning being issued, the person conducting the meeting will:

- Identify the professional shortcomings of the teacher.
- Give clear guidance on the improved standard of performance needed to ensure that that the teacher can be removed from formal capability procedures.
- Explain any support that will be available to help the teacher to improve their performance.
- Outline the timetable for improvement while taking into account the teacher's personal circumstances.
- Explain how performance will be monitored and reviewed.
- Formally warn the teacher that failure to improve within the set period could lead to dismissal.

Notes will be taken of formal meetings and a copy sent to the teacher. Where a warning is issued, they will be informed in writing of the matters covered in the bullet points above and given information about the timing and handling of the review stage, and the procedure and time limits for appeals.

Monitoring and review period following a formal capability meeting

A performance monitoring and review period will follow the formal capability meeting. Formal monitoring, evaluation, guidance and support will continue during this period.

The teacher will be invited to a formal review meeting, unless they were issued with a final written warning, in which case they will be invited to a decision meeting.

Formal review meeting

As with formal capability meetings, at least **five working days'** notice will be given. The notification will give details of the time and place of the meeting and will advise the teacher of their right to be accompanied by a companion, who may be a colleague, a trade union official, or a trade union representative who has been certified by their union as being competent. Teachers will be entitled to reasonably request an alternative date if they cannot attend the original date proposed.

If the person conducting the meeting is satisfied that the teacher has made sufficient improvement, the capability procedure will cease and the appraisal process will restart, in line with the school's Teacher Appraisal Policy. In other cases:

- If some progress has been made and there is confidence that more is likely, it may be appropriate to extend the monitoring and review period.
- If no or insufficient improvement has been made during the monitoring and review period, the staff member will receive a final written warning which will set out the areas where performance standards have not been met, targets for improvement, any measures which will be taken to improve performance, a period for the review and the consequences of not meeting expected performance standards.

As before, notes will be taken of formal meetings and a copy sent to the teacher. The final written warning wording will mirror any previous warnings that have been issued. Where a final warning is issued, the teacher will be informed in writing that failure to achieve an acceptable standard of performance within the set timescale may result in dismissal. They will also be given information about the handling of the further monitoring and review period, and the procedure and time limits for appealing against the final warning. The teacher will be invited to a decision meeting.

Decision meeting

As with formal capability meetings and formal review meetings, at least **five working days'** notice will be provided, and the notification will give details of the time and location of the meeting. The notice will also advise the teacher of their right to be accompanied by a companion, who may be a colleague, a trade union official or a trade union representative who has been certified by their union as being competent.

If an acceptable standard of performance has been achieved during the further monitoring and review period, the capability procedure will end and the appraisal process will restart, in line with the school's Teacher Appraisal Policy. If performance remains unsatisfactory, a decision or recommendation to the governing board will be made that the teacher should be dismissed or required to cease working at the school.

Redeployment into an alternative role may be considered where appropriate and possible.

Before the decision to dismiss is made, the school will discuss the decision with the [LA](#).

The LA will have the right to attend and offer advice at all proceedings relating to the dismissal of any teacher, and the governing body will consider any such advice.

The teacher will be informed as soon as possible of the reasons for their dismissal, the date on which the employment contract will end, the appropriate period of notice and their right of appeal.

Decision to dismiss

The power to dismiss staff in the school rests with the [governing board](#).

Dismissal

Once it has been decided by the [governing board](#) that the teacher should no longer work at the school, it will notify the LA in writing of its decision and the reasons for it.

Appeals

If a teacher feels that a decision to dismiss them, or another action taken against them, is wrong or unjust, they may appeal in writing against the decision within [five working days](#), setting out the grounds for appeal at the same time. Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay and, where possible, at an agreed time and place.

The same arrangements for notification and the right to be accompanied by a companion will apply as with formal capability and review meetings and, as with other formal meetings, notes will be taken and a copy sent to the teacher.

The appeal will be dealt with impartially and, wherever possible, by managers or governors who have not previously been involved in the case.

The teacher will be informed in writing of the results of the appeal hearing as soon as possible.

5 Appraisal Process

General principles underlying this policy

Confidentiality

The appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality; however, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the headteacher and the governing board to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

This will be achieved by the headteacher and governing board:

- Personally reviewing a sample of teachers' appraisal records for consistency.
- Being informed of any pay recommendations that have been made and the rationale behind these.

Consistency of treatment and fairness

The governing board is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness throughout the appraisal process.

It will also ensure that all teachers, regardless of their protected characteristics, are treated fairly, and recognises that identical treatment and evaluation processes may not be fair for all teachers. The governing board will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to the appraisal process where appropriate and necessary, e.g. for teachers with disabilities.

The governing board will also ensure that the appraisal process is free from bureaucracy and recognises, encourages, and validates teachers' commitment to their own performance and development.

The appraisal process will be done so in a safe and supportive environment in which teachers and leaders can have open, honest, and fair discussions about successes and areas for improvement.

Delegation

Normal rules (as set out in The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009) will apply in respect of the delegation of functions by the governing board and headteacher.

Performance Appraisal

This section of the policy applies to the headteacher and to all teachers employed by the school, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction and those who are subject to capability procedures.

Appraisal at this school will be supportive, and the developmental process is designed to ensure that all teachers have, or will fully develop, the skills and access to 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. Appraisal outcomes will be used to inform pay progression decisions.

Teachers will receive informal support in response to any concerns raised about their work performance at any point during the appraisal process. This support may consist of mentoring, training, or having resources in place to address specific needs.

The school will ensure that appraisals are managed in ways that avoids increasing workloads for all parties concerned.

The appraisal period

The appraisal period will run for 12 months from date to date.

Teachers who are employed on a fixed-term contract of less than one year will have their performance managed in accordance with this policy. The length of this period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

The school will amend the appraisal period's length in certain circumstances. Where a teacher starts their employment at the school during the course of an appraisal period, the headteacher, or governing board in the case of a new headteacher, will determine how long their appraisal process will be. The aim will be to ensure that all teachers are brought onto the same appraisal cycle as soon as is practicable.

The school will ensure that teachers and their line managers engage in regular and ongoing dialogue throughout the appraisal period to support their development, performance, and wellbeing.

As suggested in the DfE's 'Teacher's appraisal' guidance, the school will adhere to the following timescale when implementing their appraisal cycle:

- Autumn term: Objectives, success criteria, and supporting evidence will be determined between appraiser and appraisee.
- Spring and summer term: Performance reviewed against objectives and standards.
- Summer and autumn term: Teacher receives their appraisal report that includes an assessment against their objectives and success criteria as established earlier in the academic year.

Appointing appraisers

The headteacher will be appraised by a panel of the governing board, ideally an odd number but a minimum of three, supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the governing board for that purpose.

The headteacher will decide who will appraise other teachers on a case-by-case basis and will ensure that all appraisers of teachers will be suitably trained and have QTS.

Setting objectives

The headteacher's objectives will be set by the governing board after consultation with the external adviser, taking into account the headteacher's work-life balance. These objectives will be agreed by the headteacher.

Teacher objectives will be aspirational yet achievable and based on success criteria which are in their control.

Teachers will be informed by the headteacher or their line manager of the standards against which their performance in the set appraisal period will be assessed. The standards used in relation to appraisal are the '[Teachers' Standards](#)'.

Objectives and performance management discussions will not be based on teacher-generated data and predictions, or entirely on assessment data for a single group of pupils. Objectives may be set in relation to robust assessment data, but these will not be used in isolation and additional factors will always be considered when making pay progression decisions.

The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree on the objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.

The school will take a considered approach to circumstances where a teacher's objectives are challenging, measuring progress towards objectives as well as completion.

The school will generally set no more than **three** appraisal targets, and will not set sub-targets, save for in exceptional circumstances.

Observation

The school believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important, both in assessing teachers' performance to identify any particular strengths and areas for development they may have, and for gaining useful information which could inform improvement. Observation can also enable teachers to learn from each other and collaborate.

The following guidelines will be adhered to:

- The number of official observations will not exceed three sessions per year
- Observations will not exceed one hour per session
- The focus and timing of annual observation sessions will be agreed in consultation with the teacher
- Observations will be conducted with professionalism, integrity, courtesy and objectivity
- Observation reports will be accurate and fair
- The confidentiality of the information in the report will be respected
- Observations will not add to teachers' overall workload
- At least **five** working days' notice will be given of the date and time of the observation
- Verbal feedback will be provided **by the end of the next school day**
- Written feedback will be provided within **five working days**

The governing board will determine whether teaching staff can refuse to share their lesson plans during observations – this decision will be communicated to all teaching

staff and their appraisers. Classroom observation will be carried out by those with QTS.

Evidence

The range and level of evidence collected for the purposes of appraisal and pay determination will always be proportionate and the impact on workload will be minimal.

Evidence used will relate directly to the pre-agreed objectives. The form of the evidence will be agreed with the teacher in advance, and will be material, or contain material, which is readily available from day-to-day practice.

Development and support

The school will continually assess how it establishes strong, supportive cultures of professional development and performance for its teachers and leaders. Professional development will be an integral part of the teacher's objectives and success criteria when appraisal processes are being devised.

As established in the DfE's 'Managing Teacher's and Leader's Pay' guidance, performance related pay is now no longer a requirement for schools to adhere to, meaning that the school has greater opportunity to focus on professional development in objectives and appraisals.

The school will identify appropriate and relevant resources and support to help teachers' professional development and performance. In doing so, the teachers have a responsibility to proactively identify what needs they require support with for their teaching practice.

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform CPD. The school encourages a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development.

Professional development will be linked to improvement priorities in the SIP where possible, and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

Informal support

The school will not place persistently failing teachers in capability procedures without first initiating and undergoing a period of informal support because of performance concerns. The school will ensure that this is a supportive process where teachers and their line managers can talk openly and honestly about what improvements can be made and any issues resolved. Informal support may only be required in one area that is aligned with their professional development.

Teachers and line managers will establish clear and achievable objectives and timelines for the informal support. The informal support will be provided for a set period that allows for performance improvement.

Regular communication will take place between the appraiser and appraisee to determine the progress of the informal support, as well as take any specific circumstances into consideration.

Teachers and line managers will review the progress after the defined period of support has concluded. If the appraiser is satisfied that the goals have been met by the teacher, or that the teacher is making significant progress towards those goals, the appraisal process resumes as normal.

If the appraiser isn't satisfied that the teacher has made significant improvements, the teacher will be moved into capability procedures.

Feedback

Teachers will receive constructive, supportive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place, or when other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that require attention. Teachers will also receive an assessment of their professional development requirements and any action that should be taken to address them.

Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance, 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 an opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns.
- Agree any support that will be provided to help address those specific concerns.
- Make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress.
- Explain the implications and process if no or insufficient improvement is made, for example, the impact on pay progression and the potential for movement into formal capability proceedings.
- Set clear objectives to be met to achieve the required improvement.

When progress is reviewed, 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.

Transition to capability

If the appraiser is not satisfied with the teacher's progress, the teacher will receive formal written notification that their performance will be managed under the capability procedure instead of the appraisal system and will be invited to a formal capability

meeting. The capability procedures will be conducted in accordance with the school's Teacher Capability Policy.

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 will consult the external adviser. This assessment is the final stage of the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year in interim meetings and a mid-term review.

The teacher will, as soon as practicable, receive and have the opportunity to comment on an appraisal report – this may be written in hard copy format or made available online. Teachers will receive their appraisal reports by date and the headteacher by date. 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 their 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 progression where that is relevant.

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

Reviewing pay progression

The decision whether to award pay progression will be related to each teacher's individual performance and will be assessed via the school's appraisal arrangements in accordance with The Education (School Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the 2012 Regulations).

A recommendation on pay will be made in writing as part of the teacher's appraisal report, and in making its decision the relevant body will have regard to this recommendation.

Pay decisions will be clearly attributable to the performance of a teacher. Sustained high quality of performance will give teachers an expectation of progression up the pay range.

Reducing workload during the appraisal process

The school will minimise the impact of workload on teachers, school leaders, governing boards and other relevant parties when developing and implementing its appraisal processes.

The school will implement policies and procedures which are proportionate, and which use evidence in appraisal decisions that is readily available from day-to-day school practice.

The school will encourage staff to avoid collating large documents of evidence for appraisal purposes. Instead, the school will consider using alternative means of evidence collation and documentation, such as digital platforms.

When determining objectives, teachers will ensure that these are ambitious yet achievable within their own workloads and based on success criteria that are realistically within their control.

The school will treat all teachers fairly throughout the appraisal process, including teachers with different working patterns and those who have protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Appraisal and pay determination cycle

The school will adhere to the following appraisal and pay determination cycle in accordance with the DfE's 'Implementing Your School's Approach to Pay' guidance:

- Performance will be continually monitored in accordance with this policy.
- In the autumn term all objectives and success criteria will be finalised. If an agreement cannot be reached, they will be set by the appraiser.
- Appraisal cycles will be completed before the end of the summer term.
- At the end of the appraisal year, teachers will receive an appraisal report which includes an assessment against their objectives and success criteria, the relevant standards and a recommendation on pay progression.
- Every teacher will be provided with an annual pay statement and a copy of the school's pay policy by 31 October each year, including appeals procedure, ensuring that any revisions to the pay policy are included.
- The headteacher will ensure moderation of initial recommendations with a view to putting individual pay progression recommendations to the governing board for agreement and to account them overall for the effective operation of links between pay and performance.
- The pay and appraisal policies will be reviewed as necessary in light of experience and any changes to the STPCD.
- The governing board will determine what provision should be made in the school's budget for pay awards and progression.
- Appraisal objectives and success criteria, linked to pay progression, will be set up for the next appraisal period.

The governing board and headteacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for **six years** in line with the school's Records Management Policy and in accordance with DfE guidance.

The school recognises that, as outlined in the DfE's 'Managing Teacher's and Leader's Pay' guidance, for the 2024/2025 academic year, it will no longer be required to factor in objectives and appraisal processes to lead to performance-related pay outcomes for teachers and leaders. The school will still make a pay decision following the completion of the appraisal process.

Pay decisions for the 2023/2024 academic year will continue to be based on performance and development-related progression of teachers and leaders, as set out in the September 2023 STPCD.

The school may choose to retain or disregard some or all elements of performance-related pay, whilst ensuring that the impact of excessive workload on teachers, line managers, school leaders and governing boards is minimised.

4. Monitoring and review

The governing board and headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's capability and appraisal procedures, including monitoring the impact on workload.

The governing board and headteacher will ensure that all written records of capability procedures are retained in a secure place for **six years** in line with the school's Records Management Policy and in accordance with DfE guidance.

This policy will be reviewed on an **annual** basis. The next scheduled review date for this policy is **September 2025**.