



**Tudhoe Learning Trust**

# **Appraisal Policy (Teachers)**

**Approved by:** Trust Chief Executive Officer **Date:** September 2025

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## Introduction

This policy aims to:

- Make sure teachers have the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil and excel in their roles and provide an excellent education to our pupils
- Set out our Trust's arrangements for appraising teachers, including the process and the responsibilities of individuals, while making sure these arrangements have a minimal impact on the workload of all parties concerned
- Make sure that teacher appraisals are carried out in a fair, just and transparent way while eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy
- Provide a supportive and safe environment for line managers and teachers to have meaningful, open and honest conversations about feedback and guidance, including successes and areas for improvement
- Support and encourage a culture of continuous professional learning that:
  - Nurtures teachers' professional growth
  - Meets individual and school priorities, including our school's latest Ofsted report and school improvement plan
  - Reflects the context of the Teachers' Standards

This policy applies to all teaching staff employed by the Trust, except those undergoing induction (i.e. early career teachers (ECTs) and those who are subject to capability procedures.

## Legislation and guidance

As a Trust, 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.

## Definitions

In this policy, the term 'teacher' refers to classroom teachers, middle and senior leaders, and the headteacher. Where relevant, we have added further detail regarding arrangements for headteachers.

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](#).

## Appraisal period

Our appraisal period will run for a period of 12 months beginning on the first day of autumn term. We will hold appraisals during the autumn term.

The appraisal cycle has been determined by the Trust as:

- For Teachers this will be by 31<sup>st</sup> October

- For Head Teachers this will be by 31<sup>st</sup> December

All appraisal activity will take place within a teacher's directed time and be impact assessed in order not to increase the teacher's workload.

The appraisal process and the statements generated under it will be always treated with strict confidentiality.

## **Appointment of Appraisers**

The Trust believes that wherever possible the role of appraiser should be delegated to the relevant line manager within each school, as they are best placed to undertake a review and assess the activities of the appraisee.

The Head Teacher will be appraised by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Head Teacher of each school within the Trust will be responsible for appraising their Teaching Staff and where the Head Teacher is not the Teacher's direct line manager, they may nominate an appropriate member of their leadership team to be appraiser.

Where an appraisee is of the opinion that their appraiser is unsuitable for professional reasons, they may submit a written request to their Head Teacher for that person to be replaced, stating those reasons. The Head Teacher may make a written request to the Chief Executive, the request will be given consideration and advice may be sought from Human Resources. The appraisee will be notified of the decision as soon as possible thereafter.

Where a nominated appraiser will be absent for the whole appraisal cycle, an alternative appraiser will be nominated, and the appraisal cycle will then resume.

All appraisers will be provided with appropriate training.

## **Objective Setting**

The objectives set will be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-bound, fair and equitable in relation to teachers with similar roles/responsibilities and experience, and will have regard to what can reasonably be expected of anyone in that position, given the desirability of the appraisee 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. They should be such that, if they are achieved, they will contribute to improving the education of pupils at the school or any plan of the Trust designed to improve educational provision and performance. They will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience.

Head Teacher's objectives will be set by the Chief Executive Officer.

Objectives for each employee will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period.

Trust Directors have determined that whilst not all teachers will have the same number of objectives, all teachers, including the Chief Executive Officer and Head Teachers within the Trust, will be subject to a maximum of 3 objectives in any one appraisal cycle.

## **Quality Assurance**

The Head Teacher of each school within the Trust will moderate all the planning statements

where required to check that the plans recorded in the statements of teachers at the school are consistent between those who have similar experience and similar levels of responsibility, as well as complying with relevant workforce standards, the Trust Appraisal Policy and the requirements of equality legislation.

The Chief Executive Officer will moderate a sample of planning statements to check that the plans recorded in the statements of teachers at the school are consistent between those who have similar experience and similar levels of responsibility across the Trust, as well as complying with relevant workforce standards, the Trust Appraisal Policy and the requirements of equality legislation.

The Appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives, the method of assessment, and any support necessary to achieve these objectives but where a joint determination cannot be made the Appraiser will make the determination. In such situations the appraisee may record their objections on the planning and review statement. (See Appendix 3 - Sample Appraisal Planning and Review Statement).

## **Reviewing Progress**

Inherent in the role of managers is the responsibility to monitor the performance of teachers and to regularly discuss with them their standard of work. It is particularly important that any difficulty, or potential difficulty, to achieve the required standard is discussed with them at the earliest opportunity (see Appendix 1).

Evidence used in the performance management process will:

- Directly relate to the objectives and be agreed upon in advance
- Be readily available from day-to-day practice

This might but does not have to include:

- Improvements in specific element of practice such as behaviour management, development of pedagogy or providing feedback
- Impact on effectiveness of teachers or other staff
- Wider contributions to the work of our school
- Active participation in professional learning and the positive impact on the teacher's practice

Types of evidence we will consider, in conjunction with pupil outcomes, include:

- Formal and informal lesson observations
- Observations and results from wider school activities, if applicable
- Reviews of planning and marking
- Parent and pupil voice, if applicable
- Quality of CPD courses completed
- Peer observations
- Contributions to staff training or mentoring

## **Observation Protocol**

This Trust believes that observation important way to monitor the impact of CPD. They can also help to identify how we can best support teachers and 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
- Be reported accurately and fairly
- Be reasonable and proportionate
- Be focused on development
- Be followed by constructive feedback
- Remain confidential to those who need to know details as part of their jobs

All classroom observation will be undertaken in line with the classroom observation protocol appended to this policy in Appendix 2.

The amount of classroom observation for any teacher within school will be limited to a maximum of 3 hours for the purposes of the appraisal cycle.

### **Learning Walks**

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

**Drops in will be informal and part of leaders on-going interactions with children and staff.** A programme of learning walks should be agreed with teachers so that they know the date, time, and focus of the learning walk and who will be conducting it, so that they can organise their classes accordingly.

The Trust's protocol for learning walks is as follows:

- The purpose or focus of a learning walk should be explained to all relevant staff prior to its commencement. That purpose or focus will not relate to the performance of an individual.
- Learning walks will be conducted with minimum disruption to teachers and pupils.
- Learning walks will be undertaken in a supportive and professional manner.
- A maximum of two colleagues will be involved in learning walks at any time.
- Pupils will not be asked for their views of an individual teacher during learning walks.
- Those teachers whose classes are visited will be given the opportunity to see any written records made during the learning walk.
- There shall be no evaluation of an individual teacher during a learning walk.
- Regular reviews of the operation of learning walks will be held with all staff.

- Any teacher whose classroom is visited during a learning walk will have the visit counted towards the overall maximum of three **hours** observations per year
- Any concerns about the implementation of this protocol should be raised initially with management, either by the individual teacher concerned or with the support of any **union school-based** representative.

## **Formal Observations**

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

We will take into account a teacher's workload and individual circumstances when determining the number of formal observations, we carry out over the year. For example, teachers who have less experience or who have recently started at one of our schools will receive more frequent formal observations than more experienced teachers to establish strengths and areas for growth and development.

Teachers will not receive more than 3 formal observations over the year.

We will carry out additional formal observations only if:

- A teacher requests them
- There are concerns that a teacher's performance is not up to standard (this may be triggered by poorly behaved pupils, or any significant concerns arising from the evidence at the beginning of 'Reviewing Performance' Section of this policy)
- The teacher is subject to formal capability proceedings

Generally, teachers will receive verbal feedback as soon as possible after the observation and no later than the end of the following working day.

Written feedback will be 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 these should also be covered in the written feedback and the appropriate action taken in accordance with this policy.

## **Annual Assessment and appraisal meeting**

The appraisal meeting is the end point of the annual appraisal process and will take place in the autumn term. In this meeting, the appraiser will:

- Review the relevant evidence
- Assess performance in the appraisal period against the relevant standards and objectives
- If necessary, midpoint reviews will be used to discuss any difficulties the teacher may be facing in achieving objectives and put a plan in place to address this.

The appraiser and teacher will also:

- Have a reflective discussion about the teacher's CPD journey, progress, needs and career development/aspirations, and identify action that should be taken
- Discuss the teacher's workload, wellbeing, working hours and flexible working opportunities in a supportive manner

Appraisal meetings will take place within the teacher's normal working hours and will last for no more than an hour and half.

## Appraisal Report

Teachers will receive a written report of their appraisal, completed by the person who conducted the appraisal. We will use all reasonable endeavours to complete reports within 5 working days of appraisal meetings.

The report will include:

- Details of the teacher's objectives for the appraisal period in question
- An assessment of the teacher's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards, including details of the teacher's strengths
- An assessment of the teacher's training and development needs, and identify any action that should be taken to address them
- Details of a discussion on wellbeing and workload and career progression/aspirations
- A recommendation on the pay progression sheet

There will be space in the report 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 appraisal cycle. In some circumstances, an interim review meeting may be appropriate.

Teachers will sign the appraisal report to say they have seen it and agree with its content. Teachers can appeal to the headteacher, and the headteacher can appeal to the governing board, if they disagree with the contents of the report and the pay recommendation it makes. See Appendix 2.

## Concerns about performance

If during the appraisal period it becomes clear that a teacher is having difficulties, the school will provide informal support. This process will be supportive and will give the teacher and their appraiser the opportunity to talk openly and honestly about the teacher's difficulties and the support they need to improve and refine their skills.

Teachers will not be placed in capability procedures without first undergoing this period of informal support, except in the most serious cases of persistent failures to meet job expectations and teaching standards, resulting in negative consequences on our pupils and school.

### Informal support

Informal support will begin with a meeting between the teacher and their appraiser to:

- Inform the teacher that they will be receiving informal support due to concerns about their performance
- Give clear and specific feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns
- Give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns
- Set clear objectives and timescales for required improvement
- Agree any support (e.g. coaching, mentoring, structured observations), that the school will provide to help address those specific concerns and drive improvement
- Make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress. Note that:
  - It may be appropriate to revise the teacher's objectives
  - It will be necessary to allow sufficient time for the teacher to improve their performance

During the meeting, the appraiser will also explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made - e.g. the commencement of capability procedures.

### **Duration of support**

The school will provide informal support for a minimum of 4 school weeks to allow for an improvement in the teacher's performance.

The school will decide on the duration support, taking into consideration the seriousness of the concerns, the teacher's specific circumstances, and the type of informal support provided.

The appraiser will meet the teacher regularly to assess progress and ensure the agreed support is being provided.

### **Review of progress**

When informal support has been completed, the appraiser will meet the teacher to review progress. If the appraiser is satisfied that the teacher has made, or is making, sufficient improvement in their performance, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through the normal appraisal process.

### **Transition to capability procedures**

If a teacher demonstrates serious underperformance or has not responded to the informal support process, we will notify the teacher in writing that:

- The appraisal system will no longer apply to them
- Their performance will be managed under the capability procedure
- They will be invited to a formal capability meeting

We will also seek specialist advice from the HR Manager at this stage, as appropriate.

We may also trigger disciplinary procedures in cases of misconduct or breach of professional standards. These are 2 separate procedures but, if appropriate to the circumstances, they can run concurrently. See our disciplinary policy for more information.

## **Appeals**

An appraisee can appeal against any entry on their planning and review statement, including any changes made to the statement during the cycle.

Any appeal should be deferred until after the moderation process is complete. Simple disagreements should be resolved by discussion between the reviewer and the reviewee without recourse to formal appeal procedures.

An individual wishing to appeal should write to the Trust Human Resources Manager within 5 school working days of being notified of the decision. Details of the appeals process is covered in the Trust's Pay Progression Policy.

## **Further Information**

If you would like any further information or advice in relation this Policy, please contact the Trust HR Manager on 01388 811 765 or [office@tudhoelearningtrust.co.uk](mailto:office@tudhoelearningtrust.co.uk)

## MANAGING PERFORMANCE THROUGH APPRAISAL

The first steps at supporting teachers where concerns have been identified in their performance should, other than in exceptional circumstances, be through the process of the Trust appraisal policy. This will allow in most cases early identification of the cause of any minor concerns relating to performance and ensure supportive measures can be put in place.

Discussions between the appraiser and appraisee should take place in an open and constructive manner and should be regarded as part of the normal working routine with the specific aim of identifying ways in which the teacher can be encouraged and helped to improve performance. Where necessary any objectives agreed as part of the existing appraisal cycle should be reviewed to take account of identified concerns, outlining expectations, outcomes and timescales.

It is likely that the vast majority of cases will be resolved through this process and contained within the appraisal system. However, where it has not been possible to eliminate concerns about an employee's performance or improvement has not been sustained then in such circumstances the appraiser will inform the teacher of their intention to refer the matter to the Head teacher (where the Head Teacher is not already the line manager).

The Head Teacher in conjunction with the Trust Human Resources Manager will review the supportive measures that have already been put in place to determine the most appropriate route to achieve the required levels of performance. In doing so they will come to the following conclusions:

- a. advise the appraiser of additional supportive actions that can be taken within the appraisal cycle, OR
- b. determine there is a cause for concern requiring the appraisal policy to be suspended and the capability procedure to be invoked.

Where (a) is the conclusion, the appraiser will continue with the appraisal policy and amend the planning and review statement to reflect changes to objectives and additional supportive actions to meet them. Where acceptable performance is achieved then the appraisal cycle, as contained within this policy will continue. Where performance remains, a concern following completion of the additional supportive actions the matter will be referred to the Head Teacher for further review.

Where (b) is the conclusion the appraisee will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will be suspended and that their performance will now be managed under the Trust Capability Policy and Procedure.

## FORMAL CLASSROOM OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

The Trust is committed to ensuring that classroom observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
- evaluate objectively;
- report accurately and fairly; and
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained.

The total period for classroom observation arranged for any applicable teacher will have regard to the individual circumstances of the employee. The amount of observation for each teacher should reflect and be proportionate to the needs of the individual and under this appraisal policy will be no more than 3 hours in an appraisal cycle.

The arrangements for classroom observation will be confirmed at the beginning of each cycle and will include the amount of observation, specify its primary purpose, any aspects of performance which will be assessed, the duration of the observation, when during the appraisal cycle the observation will take place and who will conduct the observation.

Information gathered during the observation will be used, as appropriate, for a variety of purposes including informing on school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies in accordance with the school's commitment to streamlining data collection and minimising bureaucracy and workload burdens on teachers. Every step should be taken to ensure anonymity of staff concerned in the use of such data.

In keeping with the commitment to supportive and developmental classroom observation those being observed will be notified in advance.

Classroom observations will normally be undertaken by a member of the School Leadership Team or immediate line manager who will have QTS. In addition, in this school classroom observation will only be undertaken by those who have had adequate preparation and the appropriate professional skills to undertake observation and to provide constructive oral and written feedback and support, in the context of professional dialogue between colleagues.

Oral feedback will be given as soon as possible after the observation and no later than the end of the following working day.

Written feedback will be 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 these should also be covered in the written feedback and the appropriate action taken in accordance with this policy.

The written record of feedback also includes the date on which the observation took place, the activities and actions observed and the length of the observation. The member of staff will have the right to append written comments on the feedback document. No written notes in addition to the written feedback will be kept. (See Appendix 4 - Sample Observation Feedback Proforma).



## Tudhoe Learning Trust

## Appraisal Planning and Review Statement

APPRAISAL - PLANNING							
Teacher		Year Group		Appraiser		Date	
Performance Objective	Success Criteria	Actions/Milestones				Sources of Evidence to assess impact	
1							
2							
3							
Signed Employee:					Date:		

Signed Head Teacher:		Date:	
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<b>APPRAISAL - INTERIM REVIEW</b>			
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Teacher		Year Group		Appraiser		Date	
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Objective:	Summary of progress towards objective	Success Criteria	Action Required (Include Support to be Provided and Timescales)
1		NOT MET PARTIALLY MET MET	
2		NOT MET PARTIALLY MET MET	
3		NOT MET PARTIALLY MET MET	

Signed Employee:		Date:	
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Signed Head Teacher:		Date:	
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APPRAISAL - FINAL REVIEW							
Teacher		Year Group		Appraiser		Date	

Teacher Standard	Not met	Partially	Met	Notes / Comments
1. Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils				
2. Promote good progress and outcomes				
3. Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge				
4. Plan and teach well structured lessons				
5. Adapt teaching to respond to pupils' strengths and needs				
6. Make accurate and productive use of assessment				
7. Manage behaviour effectively				
8. Fulfil wider professional responsibilities				

During the final assessment meeting, the appraiser must assess the teacher's performance, roles and responsibilities against the 'Teachers' Standards' and the objectives set for the appraisal period.

Summary of progress towards objective:	Action Required (Include any support to be provided and timescales)

Pay Progression					
Current Pay Grade		Next Pay Grade		Recommendation: (Submit to Chief Executive Officer for moderating)	SUCCESSFUL/UNSUCCESSFUL

Signed Employee:		Date:	
Signed Head Teacher:		Date:	



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## Model Lesson Observation Feedback Proforma

LESSON DETAILS					
Teacher:		Observer:			
Class:		Year:		Date:	
Focus:		Context:			
Summary of main points:					
Key strengths:					
Areas for development:					
Is any follow-up required? YES/NO					
If 'YES', outline required action:					
Action completion date:					

Signed Employee:		Date:	
Signed Head Teacher:		Date:	