



Brook Learning Trust

Appraising Support Staff Performance Policy

At Brook Learning Trust we bring together our unique academies in our belief in the power of education to change lives and communities. It is our steadfast purpose to challenge and defy the barriers that constrain the educational progress of any child. We set high aims for aspiration and secure collective responsibility for all our children's achievements. Our work is underpinned by the values of Integrity, Respect, Courage, Optimism, Excellence and Accountability.

This Policy applies to all Staff. Central Trust Staff should read the CEO in place of the Principal for Academies

1. Purpose

This procedure sets out how Brook Learning Trust will improve outcomes for students by motivating support staff to update their skills and to strive for continuous improvement. The Support Staff Appraisal cycle includes meeting to set meaningful targets for the year ahead and discussions around resources, training, additional support to meet these. It allows for a mid-year review meeting and for the annual performance appraisal meeting.

2. Application of the Appraisal Policy

This policy applies to all support staff employed at the academy except those on contracts of less than six months.

Appraisal across the Trust will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all support staff have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It will help to ensure that support staff are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop.

3. The Appraisal Period

The appraisal period will run for twelve months normally from April to March.

Support staff who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The application of this will be determined by the duration of the contract of employment.

Where a member of support staff starts their employment part-way through a cycle, the Appraisal process shall be brought into line within the principles outlined in the Pay Policy and within section 6 below.

Where a member of support staff transfers to a new post within the Academy part-way through a cycle, the Principal shall determine whether the cycle shall begin again and whether to change the appraiser.

The appraisal cycle should be planned to link with the probation period of new staff.

4. Line Manager / Appraisal responsibility

Line managers are responsible for appraising support staff. Where line management is unclear decisions about appraisers are for the Principal.

Where it becomes apparent that the appraiser appointed by the Principal will be absent for the majority of the appraisal cycle, the Principal may perform those duties herself/himself or delegate those duties to another suitable member of staff for the duration of that absence.

If the Principal appoints an appraiser who is not the support staff's line manager, the appraiser to whom she/he delegates those duties will have an appropriate position in the staffing structure, together with the necessary background knowledge, skills and training to undertake the role.

5. Setting Objectives

- Objectives will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period.
- The objectives should 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, the line manager will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in the context of roles, responsibilities and experience.
- The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives. Individual performance objectives should relate to the overall objectives of the Academy and the area the employee works in.
- The CEO of the Trust or Principals for Academies may request sight of objectives and may moderate should the objectives not meet the SMART descriptor
- Significant changes to objectives and action plans should be discussed with the individual employee and confirmed as and when they arise after discussion with the CEO of the Trust or Principal for Academies.
- The 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 member of staff works and it will be recognised that factors outside staffs' control may significantly affect success.
- The number of objectives set would usually range between three and five. Consideration will be given to workload and changes which may affect workload such as new projects, growth or new technology.
- Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, each member of support staff will be informed of the standards against which their performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. A mid-year review will take place in October.

6. Pay Progression

Pay progression will take place annually with effect from 1st April. Progression within a pay band will not be automatic and will be dependent on performance against agreed targets. Progression can take the form of a half point for partial progress, a full point for good progress and two points for exceptional progress. Where a member of support staff has been absent for some or all of the assessment period, pay decisions will be taken with reference to such information as is available.

In line with the Kent Scheme conditions, members of staff taking up a new appointment or securing a promotion to a new role between 1st April and 30 September will be eligible for a pay review with effect from the following April. Staff taking up a new appointment or securing promotion to a new role after 1st October, will be due for pay progression one year from the following April. The Trust may also make appropriate use of any merit award or other reward system, both cash and non-cash within the Kent Scheme to recognise the performance and contribution of support staff in a positive and flexible way. The Trust will ensure that any such decision is in accordance with the schemes' provisions.

Where support staff are eligible for pay progression, the recommendation made by the Principal to the Pay Committee will be based on the assessment of their performance against the agreed objectives.

The Trust Board has agreed the pay policy and has considered the implications of the appraisal policy with respect to the arrangements relating to support staffs' pay.

7. Reviewing Performance

7.1 Observation

The Trust recognises that for some support staff – particularly those working in the classroom – observation of work practice is important both as a way of assessing staff performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development they may have and of gaining useful information which can inform Academy improvement more generally. Any observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion by those with knowledge of the appraisee's work and appropriate and timely oral and/or written feedback will be given.

7.2 Development and Support

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. The Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all staff take responsibility for improving their skills through appropriate professional development, through peer observation for example. Training and professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the on-going development needs and priorities of individual staff.

Each Academy's CPD programme will be informed by the training and development needs identified as part of the appraisal process. The Academy Council will ensure in the budget planning that, as far as possible, resources are made available in the Academy budget. In some cases development requests may be met in house or via mentoring, coaching or on the job training.

An account of the training and development needs of staff including the instances where it did not prove possible to provide any agreed CPD, will form a part of the Principal's report to the Academy Council.

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

- a) The training and support will help the academy to achieve its priorities; and
- b) 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 staff to fully meet their performance criteria because the support recorded in the planning statement has not been provided.

8. Annual Appraisal

Each member of support staff performance will be formally assessed against the objectives set at the annual appraisal meeting.

The CEO and Principals of each academy are responsible for ensuring that each member of staff benefits from an appraisal meeting.

Written records of appraisals will be maintained and both the line manager and employee will contribute to the annual assessment documentation. The appraisal report will include:

- Details of the staff's objectives for the appraisal period in question
- An assessment of the staff's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives, and against the relevant standards
- An assessment of the staff'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 NB – pay recommendations need to be made by 22 April
- A space for the staff's own comments
- Information relating to any additional contribution made by the member of staff to the Academy community.

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

9. Staff Capability Policy

Formal disciplinary and grievance issues do not form part of the performance appraisal process for support staff and will be dealt with separately. If the employee is undergoing informal or formal capability proceedings it is important that issues concerning poor performance at work are recorded in appraisal documentation in order that any formal monitoring of performance (through the Capability Policy) is not undermined by contradictory messages being given to the employee.

Mitigating circumstances

There may be occasions where an employee has been unable to achieve an objective due to issues outside of their control not related to their capability or performance. Managers will take this into consideration regarding pay award recommendations.

9.1 Appeals

Employees who would be eligible to receive a pay increase but do not do so as a result of their performance appraisal will have the right of appeal.

Appeals should be made through the appeals process detailed in the Trust Pay policy.

10. General Principles Underlying this Policy

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

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

10.1 Long term absences including maternity / adoption / parental leave

Where a member of staff has been absent for some or all of the assessment period decisions around pay progression will be taken with reference to such information as is available.

10.2 Confidentiality & Professional Relationships

The appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality. Only the appraiser's line manager or, where s/he had more than one, each of her/his line managers and colleagues involved in the appraisal review chain 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.

The process of gathering evidence for performance review will not compromise normal professional relationships between staff. The Trust Board recognises that the appraiser will consult with, and seek to secure the agreement of, the appraisee before seeking information from other colleagues about the work of the appraisee. However, the desire for

confidentiality does not override the need for the Principal and the Pay Committee or Trust Board to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. The Principal or appropriate colleague might, for example, review all support staff objectives and written appraisal records personally – to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers.

10.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Trust, Academy Council and Principal will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the Academy's appraisal arrangements.

As part of the usual reporting process The Principal will provide the Academy Council with a written report on the operation of the Academy's appraisal 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 Principal will report on whether there have been any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination.

Retention

The Academy Council and Principal will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.

POLICY REVIEW AND RATIFICATION

Policy reviewed annually and ratified by BLT Board in February

This review HR Manager and BLT Executive in February 2018

Ratified by BLT Board in February 2018

Next review February 2019

Summary of main changes

The Appraising Support Staff Performance Policy recognises the need for managers to apply meaningful appraisal processes for Support Staff which are separate from the Teachers Appraisal Policy

The clarification of six months in post prior to appraisals being undertaken is aligned to the Trust's probation period and the Pay Policy

Reference to staff experiencing difficulties and the link between appraisal and capability has been removed. This is specific to Teachers appraisals where guidance is in place to clarify how capability and grievance issues which arise as part of the appraisal process should be addressed. If capability procedures are in place which are affecting a support staff's ability to achieve objectives these should be dealt with via the capability channels and appraisals and recommendations for pay progression should reflect this.

The right of appeal for staff who are eligible for and have not been recommended for pay progression is to the Pay Committee.