



**St Oswald's Catholic Academy Trust**

**Appraisal Policy**

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## **Introduction**

**St Oswald's Catholic Academy Trust (thereafter referred to as the 'Academy Trust' is committed to appraisal in order to:-**

- Develop further the professional knowledge and to update the skills of teachers
- Continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom
- Improve outcomes for pupils/students

Appraisal in St Oswald's Catholic Academy Trust 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 develop.

The appraisal procedure will be used to celebrate successes and 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.

Appraisal applies to the Headteacher and to all qualified teachers employed at the Academy except those on contracts of less than one term and those undergoing induction (i.e. NQT's) or teachers on a formal Capability Procedure.

This appraisal policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, the Headteacher and support staff and for supporting their developmental needs within the context of the Academy's plan for improving educational provision and performance.

### **The Role of the Local Management Board as delegated by the Board of Directors:-**

In its overview of the appraisal process, the Local Management Board is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and to stay within the legal framework applicable to all employers.

The Academy Trust is the employer of all teaching staff in the school and has delegated the overview of appraisal to the Local Management Board which has a responsibility in determining the direction of the school and ensuring the Catholic ethos and identity of the school are both upheld

Within the appraisal process the Local Management Board will:

- Ensure an appraisal policy is in place and to ensure consistent implementation
- Ensure that the performance of staff in school is regularly reviewed
- Monitor and review the appraisal policy at appropriate intervals
- Carry out the appraisal of the Headteacher, supported by a suitably experienced external advisor, to provide help and advice. The external advisor is not responsible for determining a recommendation to the Pay Committee on whether an increment should be paid to the Headteacher; this is a matter for the Local Management Board sub-group alone. However, Local Management Board members can ask for advice and should take account of any advice offered.

### **The Role of the Headteacher:**

Within the appraisal process the Headteacher will:

- Ensure the implementation of the appraisal policy
- Ensure the review of the performance of every teacher and member of support staff
- Delegate the process of appraisal to other members of staff who will normally have line management responsibility for those they appraise. Teaching staff should be able to object to the appointment of an appraiser, on professional grounds, in writing to the Headteacher who will consider this and make a decision. Where the objections are rejected by the Headteacher, the teacher should be advised in writing.

### **The Appraisal Cycle**

- The appraisal cycle will be for 12 months normally from 1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> August.
- Where a teacher starts their employment or transfers to a new post within the school part way through an appraisal cycle, the Headteacher shall determine appraisal arrangements for the remainder of the appraisal period, with a view to bringing their cycle into line with the cycle for other teachers and staff as soon as possible.
- Where a teacher is employed on a fixed term contract for a period less than 12 months, the length of the appraisal period will be determined by the duration of the contract.
- The cycle will begin with a planning meeting, where objectives are set and end with a review meeting.
- Prior to the planning meeting with the appraiser, each teacher should complete a RAG rating relating to the Teachers' Standards
- Mid-year review meetings should also be calendared to discuss progress towards meeting objectives and provide an opportunity to alter objectives following a change in circumstances. This will also be an opportunity to provide constructive feedback on performance, highlighting areas of strength as well as areas that may need attention.
- Appraisal meetings should be held during normal working hours.
- The purpose of the planning meeting is to review the employee's current job, their performance and their future plans. The meeting will also be an opportunity to discuss how they can make a wider contribution to work of the school and to agree to set a number of objectives (generally 3).

### **The Role of the Appraiser:-**

The appraiser is the person considered by the Headteacher to have a realistic view of the member of staff's work and in many cases will be their line manager.

The Appraiser will carry out the whole of the appraisal process and will undertake the following:

- Meet with each member of staff for whom they are responsible at the start of the appraisal cycle to discuss the setting of objectives
- Monitor the performance of the member of staff at regular intervals throughout the appraisal process, including 2/3 observations where appropriate
- Conclude the appraisal cycle by meeting with the member of staff to review performance against the set objectives.
- Provide a written appraisal report at the conclusion of the appraisal cycle, by 31<sup>st</sup> December. The report must record the overall performance assessment and pay recommendation. The teacher will have the opportunity to comment in writing on a written appraisal report.

## Setting Objectives

- The Headteacher's objectives will be set by the appraisal sub-group of the Local Management Board after consultation with the external adviser.
- The Headteacher and all other teachers will be informed of the standards against which their performance will be assessed
- Objectives for each teacher will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set for each teacher will be challenging, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (CSMART targets) and will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience.
- Appraisal objectives, although fair and equitable when judged across colleagues with similar roles and responsibilities, will become more challenging as a teacher progresses up the scales.
- The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives.
- On the grounds that circumstances may change during an appraisal cycle, objectives may be revised in agreement with the teacher, in order that they remain relevant to the performance of the individual and to the priorities of St Oswald's Catholic Academy
- The objectives set for each teacher will, if achieved, contribute to the Academy's plans for improving its educational provision and performance and improving the education of students who attend schools within the Academy Trust.
- The setting and agreement of objectives is extremely important to the effective operation of an appraisal process that aims to link individual performance to pay progression. Therefore, as well as referring to the Teachers' Standards when setting and agreeing objectives for a teacher, other documents could be used to inform the process, namely each Academy's Improvement Plan, the Ofsted School Inspection Report and a teacher's individual job description.
- 3 objectives will be set for each teacher and should be recorded on the objectives pro-forma. (Appendix 2)
- 2 copies of this pro-forma should be completed, one for the teacher and one for the Headteacher.
- **Objective 1** will be a 'whole-school target' determined by SLT and clearly linked to the Teachers' Standards.
- **Objective 2** will be based on the progress of all students they teach in a particular cycle. A Head of Department will also be judged on the progress of a cohort of pupils/students.
- **Objective 3** will be personal to each teacher and linked to an aspect of the Teachers' Standards. The RAG rating of the Teachers' Standards document, completed by the teacher prior to the planning meeting, should be used to inform the third objective.
- The objectives pro-forma should also detail any training or support which has been agreed between the appraiser and the teacher.
- The objectives pro-forma should also specify very clearly the necessary evidence to be collected in order to support the review of performance at the conclusion of the appraisal cycle.

Where evidence emerges about the appraisee's performance, which gives rise to concern during the cycle, additional observations may be arranged during the cycle.

## Teachers' Standards

- The new appraisal arrangements take effect from 1 September 2013 whereby the performance of all teachers, regardless of their career stage, will be assessed against the Teachers' Standards.
- The standards define the minimum level of practice expected of trainees and teachers from the point of being awarded QTS.
- In order to meet the Teachers' Standards, a teacher will need to demonstrate that their practice is consistent with the definitions set out in Part 1 (Teaching) and Part 2 (Personal & Professional Conduct). See Appendix 1
- The Teachers' Standards effectively set out a 'code' of good teaching practice and professional conduct and therefore the Academy Trust will expect all teaching staff to meet the expectations set out in the Standards document.
- A teacher's performance in the Academy Trust will therefore be evaluated against all the elements set out in the Teachers' Standards working within a fair and equitable process of evaluation.

### **Evidence to support successful completion of objectives**

As part of the overall appraisal process, it is critically important for all members of staff to be clear about the evidence that will be required by their appraiser to enable the appraiser to assess their performance and make a substantiated and evidence-based pay recommendation to the Headteacher

Judgements relating to performance should be supported by evidence, agreed at the beginning of the appraisal cycle. Evidence should show and demonstrate a contribution towards:

- an increasing positive impact in pupil/student progress;
- an increasing impact on wider outcomes for pupils/students;
- improvement in specific elements of practice, e.g. medium-term planning;
- an increasing contribution to the work at the Academy;
- an increasing impact on the effectiveness of staff.

The evidence gathered by a member of staff will largely be determined by the nature and scope of the agreed objectives and/or the Teachers' Standards. Examples of evidence may include:

- Classroom observations
- Task observations
- Reviews of assessment results
- Reviews of medium-term plans
- Rigorous internal tracking of pupils/students
- Pupil/Student Voice
- Headteacher and line manager 'walkthroughs'
- Evidence supporting progress against Teachers' Standards
- Book scrutiny

### **Observations**

The Academy Trust believes that observation of classroom practice should be carried out in a supportive fashion and is important in a number of ways:

- As a way of assessing a teacher's performance linking directly to performance and ultimately pay progression
- As a way of assessing a teacher's performance in order to identify strengths and weaknesses and areas for development

For appraisal purposes, the Academy Trust / Local Management Boards are committed to ensuring that classroom observations and 'walkthroughs' are 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

Furthermore

- Classroom observation will be carried out by qualified teachers.
- Following observations, verbal feedback will be provided by the end of the next school day in a suitable private environment.
- Written feedback will be provided within 10 working days.
- The teacher has the right to append written comments to the feedback document.
- Where evidence emerges about the teacher's performance, which gives rise to concern during the cycle, additional observations may be arranged during the cycle.

Following Government guidelines, the Headteacher reserves the right to decide how much observation is necessary to form an accurate assessment of a teacher's performance.

The Head Teacher may also decide that it is necessary to collect additional evidence to help inform the evaluation of teaching standards and school improvement strategies.

This additional evidence may include walkabouts, task observation, reviews of assessment results and medium-term planning records. It may not be practicable to provide advance notice of these additional monitoring activities.

### **Reviewing Performance and the Annual Assessment**

- At the end of the appraisal cycle, assessment of performance at the Academy Trust will be on the basis agreed at the beginning of the cycle in the planning meeting.
- In determining an appraisal, the Headteacher or appraiser will assess the performance in the appraisal period, apply the relevant 'Standards', assess performance against the agreed objectives and assess the professional development needs, identifying any action that should be taken and, finally, include a recommendation relating to pay.
- A written review will be provided at the conclusion of the appraisal process – 31st December, a review meeting will record the overall performance assessment and pay recommendation.
- Good progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective, even if the performance criteria have not been met in full, may be assessed favourably.
- If agreement cannot be reached, especially on the outcomes of an appraisal meeting, the teacher may appeal to the Headteacher or the Headteacher may appeal to the Chair of the Local Management Board, whose decisions will be final.
- The overall assessment of performance and its subsequent performance rating for individual members of staff will be subject to a process of moderation, arrangements for

which will be put in place by the Headteacher with the approval of the relevant Local Management Board.

- The final version of the appraisal documentation will be placed on the employee's file and a copy of their CPD made available to the school's CPD Coordinator. The sharing of such information is governed by the data protection principles under the Data Protection Act 1998.
- The Local Management Board and Headteacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for 6 years and then destroyed.

### **Continuing Professional Development**

- Any CPD considered at the Academy Trust will be informed by the training and development needs identified through the appraisal procedure.
- The Headteacher will ensure in the budget planning, that, as far as possible, appropriate resources will be made available for any agreed training, support and continuing professional development.
- Support to meet individual or collective development needs should be provided within the context of the Academy's Improvement Plan.

### **Pay progression linked to performance**

- The Local Management Board will consider annually whether or not to increase the salary of teachers who have completed a year of employment since the previous annual pay determination and, if so, to what salary within the relevant pay ranges.
- All pay recommendations will be clearly attributable to the performance of an employee.

Any pay progression will be determined, subject to the following:

- The decision whether or not to award pay progression, will be related to a teacher's performance.
- A pay recommendation will be made in writing as part of a teacher's annual appraisal report.
- Where a teacher is not subject to either the 2012 or the 2011 regulations, the Headteacher will determine through what process the teacher's performance will be assessed and a pay recommendation made for the purposes of making its decision on pay.
- Continued good performance, as defined by the Academy's Pay Policy, will give a classroom or an unqualified teacher an expectation of progression to the top of their respective pay ranges.
- A decision may be made not to award pay progression, whether or not the teacher is subject to capability proceedings.

Furthermore

- The Headteacher will make it clear in the Pay Policy how pay progression will be determined.
- The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put in place to support the links between performance and pay, and that rates of pay progression are affordable and comply with prevailing legislation (e.g. Equal Pay).
- Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the recommendation made by the appraiser will be based on an assessment of performance against agreed performance objectives.

- The decision made by the Headteacher or appraiser will be based on the statutory criteria and guidance set out in the STPCD and the relevant teacher standards and the Academy's Pay Policy.
- Teachers will work with their appraisers to ensure that there is sufficient evidence to support pay recommendations.

### **Applications to be paid on the Upper Pay Range**

- From 1 September 2013, any qualified teacher can apply to be paid on the Upper Pay Range.
- All applications should include the results of appraisals; where such information is not available, a written statement and summary of evidence that sets out how the applicant has met the assessment criteria will be sufficient.
- Teachers who have been absent through sickness, disability or maternity may include written evidence over a 3-year period before the date of the application.

To be assessed successfully, a teacher will be required to meet the criteria set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD):

- The teacher is 'highly competent' in all the elements of the Teachers' Standards;
- The teacher's achievements and contribution to the Academy is 'substantial' and 'sustained'.

#### **Definition of 'Highly Competent'**

The teacher's performance is assessed as having excellent depth and breadth of knowledge, skills and understanding of the Teachers' Standards in the particular role they are fulfilling and the context in which they are working.

#### **Definition of 'Substantial'**

The teacher's achievements and contributions have been significant, not just in raising standards of teaching and learning in their own classroom but also in making a significant wider contribution to school improvement which impacts on pupil progress and the effectiveness of staff and colleagues.

#### **Definition of 'Sustained'**

The teacher must have had two consecutive successful appraisal reports and have made good progress towards their objectives; they will have been expected to have shown that their teaching expertise has grown over the relevant period and is consistently good to outstanding.

### **Leading Practitioner Role**

Typically, the additional duties of a leading practitioner role will include:

- A leadership role in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and practices in the Academy Trust that has contributed to school improvement;
- The improvement of teaching within St Oswald's which has impacted significantly on pupil/student progress;
- Improving the effectiveness of staff and colleagues in the Academy Trust particularly in relation to specific areas e.g. teaching and learning, more able etc.

The Headteacher will agree appraisal objectives for the leading practitioner, who, in turn, must demonstrate that they:

- have made good progress towards their objectives;
- have exemplary teaching skills which should impact significantly on pupil/student progress within school and within the wider school community;
- have made a substantial impact on staff and colleagues, including any specific elements of practice that have been highlighted as in need of improvement;
- are highly competent in all aspects of the Teachers' Standards;
- have shown strong leadership in developing, implementing and evaluating policies and practices in their workplace that contribute to school improvement.

### **Staff Experiencing Difficulties**

- When a teacher is experiencing difficulties, support and guidance will be provided through the appraisal process.
- Where it is clear that a member of staff's personal circumstances are leading to difficulties at work, appropriate support will be offered at the earliest opportunity, without waiting for the formal annual assessment.
- 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 Academy's attendance management policy and will be referred to the occupational health service, who will assess the member of staff's health and fitness for continued employment and whether continuing with monitoring or formal procedures is deemed to be appropriate.
- If the appraiser identifies through the appraisal process that the difficulties experienced by a teacher are such that, if not rectified could lead to the capability procedure, the appraiser will, as part of the appraisal process, meet the member of staff to:
  1. Give clear written feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns
  2. Give the teacher the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns
  3. 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 remind the teacher that they have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at any future meetings where capability will be discussed
  4. Agree and establish, in consultation with the teacher, an action plan with support that will help to remedy specific concerns
  5. Make clear how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed
  6. Explain the implications and process if none, 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.
- 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, the teacher will be informed of this at a formal meeting and the appraisal process will continue as normal.
- If none, or insufficient improvement has been made, the teacher will be invited to a transition meeting to determine whether formal capability proceedings will be invoked.

### **Transition to Capability**

- Performance concerns will be dealt with through the staff appraisal policy but if progress towards addressing performance concerns is insufficient, or the concerns are sufficiently serious, a 'transition meeting' will be held.
- The expectation is that this meeting will reduce the likelihood of invoking the capability procedure or triggering a prolonged period of sickness absence.
- 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.
- If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress, the teacher will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the capability procedure. As a result, the teacher will be invited to a formal capability meeting.

## **Annual Assessment**

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

This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year in interim meetings.

The teacher will receive the written appraisal review update as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period and the teacher will have the opportunity to comment on the review in writing. Teachers will receive their final written appraisal review by 31 December.

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 responsibilities against their objectives and 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

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

## **Appeals**

- All employees 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 Local Management Board.
- Where the Headteacher has not been recommended for pay progression, he/she will be informed by the appropriate Local Management Board member
- The Headteacher will notify any teacher who has not been recommended for pay progression of the date when the Local Management Board meets to consider pay recommendations, following which the teacher (and Headteacher when the Head 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.