

Viking Academy Trust



Appraisal Policy: Teachers

This policy has been written following the DfE model policy for appraisal.

Approved by the Trust: Annually Term 1

This is a statutory policy. It is reviewed annually.

Last review date: Term 1 2024

Signed



Chair of Trust

Appraisal Policy: Teachers

The Viking Academy Trust

Empowering Children Through Education: One Childhood One Chance

Schools in the Viking Academy Trust (VAT)

These are:

- Chilton Primary School
- Ramsgate Arts Primary School
- Upton Junior School

This Appraisal & Capability Policy is applied consistently across all schools for all staff working for the VAT.

Purpose

Our vision statement ‘One Childhood One Chance’ permeates everything that happens in schools within the VIKING ACADEMY TRUST (VAT). Our high expectations and accountability at all levels is driven by a rigorous and robust appraisal for all staff. This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, including school leaders, and for supporting their development within the context of the school’s plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers.

Application of the policy

“The policy covers appraisal, applies to all teachers and school leaders employed by the school, trust or local authority, except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. ECTs) and those who are subject to capability procedures.”

The policy should always be applied in a way that is robust whilst minimising the impact on workload for teachers, line managers, school leaders and governing bodies.

Appraisal

Appraisal in the Viking Academy Trust will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all teachers have or 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.

The appraisal period

“The appraisal period will run for twelve months” from September to August.

Teachers 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 length of the period



will be determined by the duration of their contract and an individual teacher’s objectives should take account of the length of contract.”

There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when teachers begin or end employment with a school or local authority or when unattached teachers change post within the same authority.

Appointing appraisers

The Executive Head teacher will be appraised by the Board of Trustees, supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the Trustees for that purpose.

A Personnel & Appraisal Committee is established annually consisting of the members of the Board of Trustees. (Personnel & Appraisal Committee: PA Committee)

In this Trust, the task of appraising the Heads of School, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of the EHT, DoE, the Chair of the Local Advisory Body (who is also a Trustee) and one other member of the Board.

All teachers on the Leadership Team will have the HoS and DoE involved in their appraisal process.

The Head of School, in consultation with the EHT/DoE, will decide who will appraise other teachers and other members of school staff. If, in exceptional circumstances and for professional reasons, the staff member wishes to request a change of appraiser (where this role has been delegated), they may ask the EHT to appoint an alternative appraiser of comparable or higher status in the staffing structure than the original nominated appraiser. Any such request must be made in writing stating the reasons. Should the appraisee request an alternative appraiser he or she should send a written request to the EHT /Chair of LAB for consideration. Where such a request is not accepted, the response from the EHT should be explained in writing and kept together with the appraisee’s request.

Kent Range staff, including those on the Trust central team’ will be appraised by their line manager and/or Executive Headteacher.

Where the appraisee works for the Viking Academy Trust under more than one contract of employment, appraisal will take place for the primary contract, with reference made to the additional roles where appropriate. This will allow potential developmental needs to be explored for all posts contracted for during the appraisal cycle.

Setting objectives

“The CEO of trust’s objectives will be set by the Board after consultation with the external adviser”. The governing body has a duty to have regard to the work-life balance of the school leader and objectives will reflect this.

“Objectives for each teacher will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period”. The school leader has a duty to have regard to the work-life balance of the teacher and objectives will reflect this. The objectives set for each teacher will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the teacher’s role and level of experience. Objectives and appraisal discussions will not be based on teacher generated data and predictions, or solely on the assessment data for a single group of pupils. The appraiser and teacher will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. The appraisee can record their disagreement on the appraisal statement and this will be taken into account at the appraisal review. Objectives should be revised if circumstances change, such as but not limited to a teacher going on maternity leave, or undergoing surgery/medical

treatment, to take account of the anticipated absence and to allow the teacher to meet reduced and attainable targets.

“The objectives set for each teacher will, if achieved, contribute to the school’s plans for improving the school’s educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at that school”. Objectives should also have a strong focus on effective professional development to ensure that teachers stay up to date with the latest methodologies, technologies, and educational research.

“Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, each teacher will be informed of the standards against which that teacher’s performance in that appraisal period will be assessed. With the exception of those who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding and maintaining Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status, all teachers must be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called “Teachers’ Standards” published in July 2011”.

“For teachers who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding QTLS status, it is for the governing body or school leader to decide which standards are most appropriate”.

Teachers’ performance is assessed against their objectives, and the relevant standards. The appraiser will need to set out what they will take into account when making judgements as to whether teachers have met their objectives and the relevant standards. Evidence used in the performance management process must relate directly to objectives and should be agreed in advance and be readily available from day-to-day practice. Numerical targets should not be set if it is beyond the teacher’s control to achieve them.

This might but does not have to include:

- improvements in specific elements of practice, such as behaviour management, development of pedagogy or providing feedback,
- impact on effectiveness of teachers or other staff,
- wider contribution to the work of the school.

Reviewing performance

The school will set out what evidence they will take into account when making judgements about a teachers’ performance and whether they have met the relevant standards and their individual objectives. This evidence will be decided upon when the objectives are being set at the beginning of the appraisal process.

This trust believes that a range of different methods should be utilised, in a supportive fashion, to assess teachers’ performance.

It is important to our trust that methods of assessing teacher performance do not add to teacher workload.

Development and support

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. The school wishes to encourage a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

Feedback

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that require further development.

Assessment against Teachers' Standards

Teachers' performance will be assessed against the relevant teacher standards to a level that is consistent with what should reasonably be expected of a teacher in the relevant role and at the relevant stage of their career. School leaders and other appraisers should use their professional judgement when appraising teachers' performance. It is not necessary for schools to adopt rigid models that seek to set out exactly what the relevant standards mean for teachers at different stages in their careers and teachers should not be expected routinely to provide evidence that they meet all the standards.

Informal Support

Except in the most serious cases of persistent failures to meet job expectations and teaching standards, resulting in negative consequences on the pupils and organisation, teachers should not ordinarily be placed in capability procedures without first undergoing a period of informal support as part of the appraisal process. Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance the appraiser will meet the teacher to:

- inform the teacher that they are going to be receiving informal support due to performance concerns;
- 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 will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
- make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress (it may be appropriate to revise objectives, and it will be necessary to allow sufficient time for improvement. The

amount of time is up to the school but should reflect the seriousness of the concerns);

- explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made –
e.g. commencement of capability procedure.

There should be a clear relationship between the issue, the objectives set, and the planned documented programme of support put in place. The line manager/appraiser should partner with the teacher in a collaborative manner to establish objectives and timelines, taking into account the teacher's circumstances. This may include any medical conditions, well-being support needs, or disabilities protected by equality legislation.

Informal support should be provided for a reasonable period to allow for performance improvement. Schools could decide this is a minimum of 6 weeks. However, the duration will be determined based on the specific circumstances, with appropriate support in place to facilitate improvement. The appraiser should meet with the teacher regularly to assess progress and ensure the agreed-upon support is being provided.

When progress is reviewed, after the agreed upon period, 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 a teacher demonstrates serious underperformance or has not responded to support provided within the informal support process, 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 and will be invited to a formal capability meeting. Advice should be sought as appropriate from the trust's HR department.

Disciplinary procedures will only be triggered by factors related to misconduct or breach of professional standards. Schools should be careful not to conflate these procedures but, if appropriate to the circumstances, they can run concurrently.

Annual assessment

Each teacher's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the CEO (Executive Headteacher), the Board of Trustees will consult an 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 which will take place eg Inset Day, PDM sessions.

Written Appraisal Report

During the appraisal process, the appraiser and the teacher will complete an 'Appraisal Report' during timetabled formal meetings. It is the responsibility of the individual teacher to maintain their own 'Appraisal Report' and the evidence to run alongside this across the year and present the document at the formal Appraisal meetings with the appraiser.

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

Quality Assurance – Moderation of Appraisal Statements

The Executive Headteacher (EHT) and Heads of School have a duty to ensure that the procedures and processes are applied fairly and consistently across the academy trust and with regard to equal opportunities. The EHT will set up procedures for monitoring and moderating the appraisal reports.

The EHT will review all completed appraisal reports within 10 working days of their completion and where necessary instruct the appraiser to prepare a new report with their appraisee (within 10 working days of being so instructed) prior to it being finalised and retained. The appraisee can add further comments at this stage.

There may be occasions when it is necessary to review (mid-cycle) what has been agreed in the last appraisal meeting (for example relating to prolonged sickness absence, maternity leave or where reasonable adjustments are required under the Equality Act 2010).

Executive Headteacher Report on the Operation of the Appraisal Process

The EHT should report to the Board of Trustees on the operation of VAT's appraisal policy, including an indication of the overall effectiveness of the process with particular regard to the identification of teachers' and support staff's training and development needs.

The appraisal process will be reviewed twice a year and will be on the agenda of the Board of Trustees and the Local Advisory Body (LAB). As part of this annual monitoring and reporting process, the LAB and Trust Board should consider the equal opportunities implications at each and every stage of the process.

Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with our capability and pay policies.

The capability policy will be used where this appraisal policy has not been able to address concerns about a teacher's performance. It applies to all staff, not just teaching staff.

The pay policy sets out how pay increases will be awarded, based on the results of a teacher's appraisal.

The early career teacher (ECT) induction policy sets out the appraisal and pay arrangements for ECTs.

Appendix 1: Appraisal Timeline

Date	Action
Term 6	<p>Appraisal meeting held to review the appraisal period across the academic year to date (term1 1-6). Finalise appraisal report.</p> <p>Appraisal reports shared with Heads of School.</p> <p>Applications for threshold / move through UPR to be made by 31st August.</p>
First day of autumn term	Appraisal cycle begins
September / October	Discuss and set objectives, inform teachers of the standards their performance will be assessed against.
31 October	<p>Appraisal process is completed for teachers, deadline for appraisal reports to be sent</p> <p>Appraisal process is completed for the headteacher, deadline for appraisal report to be sent</p>
Term 3	Mid-year meetings held to review progress
Throughout the year	Formal and drop-in observations and monitoring take place, constructive feedback is provided