



SUPPORT STAFF APPRAISAL POLICY & PROCEDURE
Guidance for the School and its Support Staff

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

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Chair of Governors:	
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UFFCULME SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF APPRAISAL POLICY & PROCEDURE

Introduction

The arrangements for performance management of support staff differ according to the terms and conditions of support staff in the school concerned. Employees in community, community special, voluntary controlled and maintained nursery schools are employed on the Birmingham Contract and must therefore be subject to the City Council's performance management scheme, known, from the 2015-16 performance management cycle onwards, as 'My Appraisal'.

Voluntary aided and foundation schools which have adopted the Birmingham Contract should consult their staff about whether to follow the City Council in replacing their existing performance management arrangements with the new 'My Appraisal' scheme. Under the terms of the Birmingham Contract they can alter existing performance management arrangements after appropriate consultation, just as the City Council has done. During the consultation schools should note that the new 'My Appraisal' scheme affects pay; it removes time-served increments, challenging objectives and the detailed scoring of various aspects of performance.

Other voluntary aided and foundation schools must comply with the existing terms and conditions of their support staff. Those voluntary aided and foundation schools which adopted the City Council's Single Status scheme and the performance management arrangements introduced in 2011/2012 as part of the City Council's Single Status scheme are bound by the contractual provision for time-served increments. If they wished to change to the 'My Appraisal' scheme they would have to negotiate the change, pointing out that the provision in 'My Appraisal' for a simple decision that an employee has achieved or not achieved might be more advantageous to employees. If the negotiations failed, the scheme could only be changed by a process of dismissal and re-engagement. Any school contemplating such a course of action should seek advice from their Employee Relations consultant.

Employees who transferred to academies under the Transfer of Undertakings Regulations transferred with their existing terms and conditions. These can be changed, but only within the constraints of that legislation. Academies should therefore take advice from their Employee Relations consultants. Employees who transfer on or after 1st September 2015 from community and other schools where the new 'My Appraisal' scheme has been introduced take that scheme with them.

As a Local Authority School, Uffculme has adopted the 'My Appraisal' scheme for its support staff.

'My Appraisal' scheme

This is a relatively simple scheme which in 2015 replaced the former performance management scheme in schools where the City Council is the employer. The guidance for schools has slight differences from the City Council's guidance; for example, objectives in schools should be aligned to the priorities in the school's development plan. However, in essence the 'My appraisal' scheme for schools is the same as the scheme which applies to other City Council employees. Employees' performance is assessed on the basis of the way in which they exemplify 'Values and Behaviours' – see attached booklet below – and meet their objectives. There are no longer any challenging objectives or a system of scoring to arrive at an assessment. In order to progress an employee must be assessed as achieving. Time-served increments are no longer awarded.

Managers are required to arrange appraisal conversations with their staff. The number of such conversations is agreed between manager and employee and may be supplemented by informal conversations. A model form for recording these arrangements is attached; schools may prefer to devise their own form.

Full guidance on the scheme is given below, based on the City Council's documentation but with some adaptations for schools. Supporting documents are attached at the bottom of the page.

Assessment for pay progression still takes place at the end of the school year, with pay progression for eligible employees being backdated to 1st April within that school year.

From 2016 there will be a new pay progression screen for support staff who are under the 'My Appraisal' scheme and all schools will have to do is to indicate whether the employee has pay progression or not. In this respect it will resemble the pay progression screen for teachers.

'My Appraisal' key points for employees

The key points are that you as an employee will:

- Be expected to engage in professional conversations with your Manager, meeting face to face on a regular basis to discuss your progress
- Focus on achieving objectives and development that will enable you to grow and manage your career in line with the school development plan and priorities
- Know what your career aspirations are and how you are going to get there through your development activities
- Record your discussions in a format that works for you, your manager and your school. It is not about gathering supporting evidence in folders or other bureaucratic processes
- Role model the school's values and behaviours every day and discuss how you have demonstrated them in your conversations
- Receive a rating that is simple; you will either be "Achieving" or "Not Achieving"
- Agree your next steps with your manager looking at all relevant learning and development activities. Your rating is the only piece of information that has to be recorded centrally

You will receive an increment in pay if you are rated "Achieving", unless you are at the top of your grade.

'My Appraisal' Guidance for Schools

The new Appraisal is underpinned by regular face to face formal and informal conversations between you and your Manager about how you are performing against your objectives, how you are developing and role modelling the school's values and behaviours and how you are achieving your development activities.

The Appraisal conversation year for support staff in schools runs from the 1st September until the 31st August and it is up to you and your Manager how often you have these conversations and how formal conversations are recorded in line with normal practice in the school. Please ensure that you have sufficient opportunity for you and your Manager to discuss and record your progress.

The Appraisal conversation will be self-regulating based around trust and a genuine and authentic desire for improvement.

Values & Behaviours

We put citizens first, especially young citizens

We are empathetic and respectful in everything we do.

We are true to our word

When we make promises we keep them.

We act courageously

We lead, we manage and we tackle the difficult issues: every day, every one of us.

We achieve excellence

We aspire to get things right first time, every time.

Values and Behaviours underpin how we ensure that we are all 'Making a positive difference to citizens' lives' especially those of young citizens. They set the standard for how objectives will be achieved, and will make it easier to differentiate between good performance and excellent performance at work. So, they must be appropriate to you and clearly linked to the four values.

These will be discussed at your initial appraisal conversation.

More detailed guidance is available in the Values and Behaviours document. The examples given in this guidance should not be used as a list but as an aid to discussion.

Setting expectations / 'My Appraisal' form

Your Appraisal conversation needs to cover the following areas in discussions with your Manager:

- Objective setting
- Values and Behaviours
- Development activities
- My Appraisal Form

The elements of the new 'My Appraisal Form':

- Start with the basics, Values & Behaviours

This section is where you and your line manager agree the frequency and style of the meetings over the 12 month period, linking the conversations to values and behaviours.

- What my objectives are for the year

This section is where you establish some objectives, aligned to the values and behaviours of the school and the school development plan priorities. The goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely and agreed (SMARTA). Manager and employee adhering to values and behaviours of the school should lead to agreed objectives.

- What support am I going to need?

This is where you think about the development activities you need to help you achieve success

Objective Setting

Values and Behaviours underpin how we ensure that we are all 'Making a positive difference to citizens' lives, especially young citizens'.

You will need to align your appraisal objectives to the school's development plan approved by governors which the Head Teacher and Senior Managers share with all members of staff. It is important for you to think about the objectives that will develop you in your career.

There is not a minimum number of objectives; however you and your Manager need to consider how many objectives are relevant to your role and responsibilities..

What does success look like?

It is important for you and your Manager to identify what success looks like and how it is going to be demonstrated.

Think about behaviours and how they relate to you (see the values and behaviours document):

- Behaviours that are "just right" for you and how you intend to maintain these throughout the course of the year
- Behaviours that are "too much" or "too little" and what you can do to get them "just right"

- Behaviours that you can develop further that help you with your current aspirations

Development activities linked to your Goals

You should make sure that you agree development objectives which will:

- Improve your performance in the role that you do now
- Help to stretch you in your performance, and help you succeed
- Help you to fulfil your future career aspirations
- Build upon your strengths

Sometimes it is difficult to be clear about what your strengths are; the hints and tips below may help you to discover your own talents which you can discuss as part of your appraisal conversation.

Reflect on what you are doing when you are happy - often we are at our happiest when we are using our strengths:

- Reflect on what you find easy
- Consider when you have achieved your best outcomes

It is easy to think that all development objectives need to be addressed by formal training opportunities, but this is not the case. In the current climate it is important to be as innovative as possible about how you can build development into your role.

Remember if this involves time away from your work role or any financial costs, you will need to make sure this is agreed with your Line Manager during your Appraisal Conversation.

On-going Appraisal Conversations

You and your manager must ensure that there is sufficient opportunity for you to engage with each other and demonstrate your progress. This conversation should be a reflection of the following:

- Progress against your behaviours, objectives and development activities
- Exchanging all feedback - positive, and any constructive comments
- Agreeing an action plan
- Following up any action points from previous meetings
- Discussing evidence of progress

A suggested appraisal conversation form is provided. This form is entirely optional and your school may have its own preferred documentation to capture the above points.

It is important for you to do some reflection and preparation, before any appraisal conversation takes place, so that you will be able to identify your achievements and any issues or concerns which you may wish to discuss. It is often helpful to write these down before the conversation by way of a reminder.

As you are preparing for your appraisal conversation you may have identified that you need to have an open and honest conversation sharing observations and concerns that you may have with your Manager or with your colleagues. This could be for a number of reasons and you may not feel comfortable in having this type of conversation and you may wish to seek support beforehand from appropriate colleagues.

To get the best out of yourself and your experiences throughout the year, you should reflect on what you have done, and consider:

- What worked well, why, and what was the outcome?
- What did not work well, and why?
- How could you change/adapt your experience?

It is important to obtain and discuss colleagues' feedback, ensuring that you understand the comments made and any actions that you may need to take to address them.

You should give and receive feedback from your Manager to discuss what's worked well and anything that needs improvement.

We are all motivated by different things within our lives and work. These things can change, depending on our life context and circumstances. It is worth taking time to understand what motivates you, and discuss this with your Manager during your on-going appraisal conversation.

Consideration of Continued Professional Development

If you are a 'Chartered Professional' (for example Accountants, HR Officers) then your professional body may have specific expectations that you undertake continuous professional development (CPD). If so, this should be discussed along with any other development requirements, during your appraisal conversation.

It might be worth working with another more experienced professional who is not your manager, to support your professional development.

As you progress through the appraisal year you may identify things which could be improved. It is important that you share these ideas, with your Manager as part of your appraisal conversation as they may lead to better and more effective education provision.

As part of your objectives and development activities you should consider sharing your knowledge and experience with colleagues and/or trainees to develop them and to enhance your skill set.

You and your team may wish to have a group conversation about how to improve and develop as a team. This conversation might include

- Conversations about achievement of team objectives, behaviour and development activities

- Changes to workload and new initiatives that may require objectives to be changed
- Role modelling and recognising the purpose whilst living the values and behaviours
- Identification of barriers and difficulties and discussion about how these can be resolved
- Acknowledging achievements and excellent behaviour as a group

Notes of conversations

You and your Manager, as good practice should keep a local record of your on-going appraisal conversations.

As part of the City Council's consistency review of appraisals, it may seek a sample of schools' practice, so these records should be kept in the school.

Review, Rating and Pay

Your conversations should result in a final discussion that completes your Appraisal conversations for the year and concludes with two ratings:

- Completion of role modelling our purpose, values and behaviours
- Completion of your objectives

The employee must achieve on both in order to achieve overall.

If you have several objectives, there may be mitigating circumstances or issues beyond your control which stop you from completing them all. Therefore, your manager will need to take a common sense approach to decide whether you are 'achieving' or 'not achieving', based on your overall performance for the review period.

The final rating should present no surprises at the end of the appraisal period. Any concerns should have been raised and addressed in earlier conversations.

If your rating is "achieving", you will receive an increment in pay unless you are at the top of the grade of the pay scale.

If your rating is "not achieving" you need to discuss the actions that you and your manager need to take to help you improve.

An eventual result of this action could be a discussion linked to the Capability procedure. Therefore any such discussion must be clear to ensure that you understand where future improvement is required and how to address it.

Pay

Once provisional ratings have been signed off, your rating will be used to make an assessment for you to receive an increment where you are currently not at the top of your grade within one of the

following grades GR1, GR2, GR3, GR4, GR5, GR6 or GR7, provided that you have six month's qualifying service.

Appraisal related increments are linked to an employee's Spinal Column Point and time in grade during the previous Appraisal year. A requirement of 6 months in the same grade is a principle which underpins the eligibility criteria.

Special Circumstances

At the end of the appraisal year, when the final ratings are being agreed, if your line manager is absent, it is important that arrangements are put in place to ensure that your appraisal assessment is completed. A meeting should then take place with your Manager once he or she returns to work.

It is recommended that this responsibility is taken up on behalf of your Manager by a peer manager, or by your manager's line manager. An end of year appraisal should be arranged and notes from previous conversations can be used to help inform this.

Similarly, if you are absent when final ratings are being agreed, the line manager should complete the appraisal assessment based on the conversations which have taken place during the year.

When you return to work, your manager should discuss the assessment with you to give you an opportunity to comment and make amendments as appropriate.

If you are absent for a significant part of the year due to:

- Long term absence
- Maternity related sickness
- Maternity Leave
- Paternity Leave
- Adoption Leave
- Disability related illness
- Industrial Injury
- Suspension without prejudice

your line manager may use the previous year's performance as a guide of predicted performance and award the appropriate rating.

Where there is no previous performance information (i.e. no previous performance rating), your manager is advised to base the assessment on the evidence of your performance in the current year.

If you change your role, your previous manager should make an assessment against your objectives and behaviours achieved to date. You will then have an appraisal conversation with your new manager to set goals for the remainder of the Appraisal year. It is good practice for both managers

to meet with you to discuss the end of year assessment and a final assessment made based on the combined evidence from both roles.

Acting Up

If the acting up is for a short period only, then, while you may set some objectives for the acting up role in order to provide clarity to the member of staff, you will also need to ensure that objectives are put in place for the substantive role which the employee will be delivering for the majority of the year.

On the last day of the performance cycle (31st August), the member of support staff will need to have been on the same grade or higher for at least 6 months over the performance year as this is one of the pay progression eligibility criteria for an increment. If the member of support staff's time in grade does not meet these criteria, no performance related increment will apply. However, scoring against objectives and final ratings should still take place as once the person returns to their substantive post it may be that the final rating achieved can be applied to the substantive post and any associated increment for which the member of support staff may be eligible, could then be applied.

Quality Assurance

Your School will develop its own quality assurance process around the appraisal conversation framework to ensure that a consistent and fair approach is followed and applied. The head teacher is accountable to the governing body for the effective implementation of the appraisal scheme.

Quality Assurance will include the following elements:

- Feedback – may be sought from you, your team and your Manager on how the appraisal conversation is working. This feedback will be provided to your School Senior Management Team to review, monitor and understand if this process is fit for purpose and take action, or not.
- Telephone and e-surveys may be undertaken by the City Council to hear your views and enable you to provide confidential feedback on the Appraisal conversation.
- Trade Unions have been invited to take part in a review system, reflecting experiences of their members of the new system.