



APPRAISAL POLICY 2023/24

1. Key Principles

- 1.1 All pay and performance decisions across the Trust will have due regard for the Trust's commitment to the Equality Act 2010, in particular, not to adopt an appraisal policy or process that may discriminate against employees with protected characteristics (for example but not limited to disabled, part time or pregnant employees).
- 1.2 Appraisal across the Trust will be a robust and outcomes driven process. It will be both supportive and developmental with the focus on improved teaching practice to ensure that all teachers have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively and enable pupil achievement.
- 1.3 This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of teacher overall performance within the context of each school's development plan to support teacher development and school improvement.
- 1.4 The appraisal process will enable teachers to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop their teaching skills throughout their career with the Trust.
- 1.5 Objectives will be outcomes-based and aimed at improving pupils' learning. They will be informed by the school's improvement plan, and areas of development identified by both appraiser and appraisee.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The policy covers both qualified (QTS & QTLS) and unqualified teacher appraisal and applies to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Headteachers and all other teachers employed by Chiltern Learning Trust ('the Trust') except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (i.e. ECTs) and those who are subject to the capability procedures adopted by the Board of Trustees.
- 2.2 The appraisal policy has a supportive and developmental approach, however, on occasions it will be used also to address any concerns that are raised about a teacher's performance and appropriate support will be provided. If concerns are such that they cannot be resolved through the appraisal policy, consideration will have to be made on whether to commence the capability procedure.

3. The Appraisal Period

- 3.1 The appraisal period will run for 12 months, normally from 1 November to 31 October each year.
- 3.2 Teachers who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year but for more than one term 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.
- 3.3 If a teacher begins employment or moves to another Trust school part-way through the appraisal cycle, the Headteacher will meet the teacher within their first half term to determine the period of appraisal to ensure appropriate and timely objectives are set. This will then be aligned with the usual appraisal period as soon as possible. For Headteachers, this will be determined by the Chief Executive, and the Board of Trustees shall determine this for the Chief Executive if required.

- 3.4 Where a teacher undertakes a new role within the school part-way through the appraisal cycle, a meeting should take place within the first half term to ensure that their objectives are appropriate and fit for purpose. Consideration should also be made as to whether their appraiser needs to change.
- 3.5 The Appraiser will also take account of any changes in a teacher's circumstances that may have occurred such as a change from full time to part time working.
- 3.6 The Headteacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for a period of six years and then will be securely destroyed.

4. Appraisers

- 4.1 All appraisers, other than those for the Headteacher or Chief Executive, will be teachers and will have received the appropriate professional development linked to the appraisal cycle.
- 4.2 The Chief Executive will be appraised by the Chair of Trustees, supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the Board for that purpose.
- 4.3 Members of the Central Team who fall within this appraisal policy, will be appraised by either the CEO or an appropriate Director in accordance with the structure in place who then makes a recommendation regarding pay to the Board of Trustees.
- 4.4 Headteachers will be appraised by the Chief Executive. This may be delegated by the Chief Executive to a Director within the Central Team who then makes a recommendation regarding pay to the Local Governing Body.
- 4.5 Within the School, the choice of appraiser will be determined by the Headteacher.
- 4.6 In exceptional circumstances and for professional reasons, the appraisee may request, in writing, a change of appraiser. Within the school, this should be addressed to the Headteacher and in any other situations should be addressed to the Chief Executive. Where the request is not accepted; the reason(s) should be explained in writing and appended with the original request to the appraisal statement.
- 4.7 In exceptional circumstances and for professional reasons, the Headteacher feels that a change of appraiser is required, this will be put in writing to the appraisee and reasons for the change identified.
- 4.8 Where the appraiser is absent for the majority of the appraisal cycle, the Headteacher, Chief Executive or Board or Trustees (as required) will appoint a new appraiser for the duration of that absence.
- 4.9 If a Headteacher appoints an appraiser who is not the teacher'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. Appraisal Process

- 5.1 Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. Chiltern Learning Trust wants to encourage a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their own teaching through appropriate professional development.

- 5.2 The senior leadership team in each school will meet at the start of the academic year or at the end of the previous academic year to appropriately plan the next appraisal cycle. They will delegate teacher appraisal meetings to the appropriate line managers. This initial planning meeting will consider if training or support is required for newly appointed or inexperienced appraisers.
- 5.3 From the outset, confidentiality must be established with the annual review being held in an appropriate environment free from interruptions and distractions.
- 5.4 The appraiser will give each appraisee at least 5 working days' notice of their annual review meeting, which will take place during directed time.
- 5.5 The annual review should be a professional discussion between the appraiser and appraisee, with the appraisee being actively encouraged to express their views in relation to their performance over the past year and their future career development.
- 5.6 Both the appraiser and appraisee will prepare for the annual review meeting by sharing with each other all relevant documentation that will be considered at the meeting at least 5 working days' beforehand.
- 5.7 The minimum expectation for an appraisee is to complete the appraisal document which 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
 - an assessment of the teacher's training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
 - a space for the teacher's own comments;
- 5.8 The appraiser may wish to consult, with the knowledge and understanding of the appraisee, relevant third parties where the appraisee is employed across one or more departments/key stages/Trust schools, if they are unclear about the appraisee's performance against one or more objectives or if they are unclear if the appraisee may be eligible for pay progression.
- 5.9 At the annual review meeting, the appraiser and appraisee will agree on the frequency of further review meetings during the annual appraisal cycle. At least one mid-year review must take place in each appraisal cycle, ideally in Spring 2 term, but more may be agreed between the appraiser and appraisee.
- 5.10 At the mid-year review meeting, either the appraisee or appraiser may request an adjustment to any or all the appraisee's objectives that have previously been set, where there is a:
 - Significant change to the working arrangements of the appraisee that will have a significant impact upon the appraisee's ability to achieve their objectives (for example but not limited to a change of role, reduction in working hours).
 - Significant changes made by the Department for Education or as a result of Ofsted that may impact on pupil progress.
 - Any other substantial reason, such as taking on responsibility for another teaching group, for example, due to long term illness of a colleague.

6. Setting Objectives

- 6.1 The Chief Executive's objectives will be set by the sub-group of the Board of Trustees, normally made up of three members of the Board of Trustees after consultation with the external adviser and the Chief Executive.
- 6.2 Members of the Central Team objectives, will be set by either the Chief Executive or an appropriate Director.
- 6.3 The Headteachers objectives will be set by the Chief Executive or a Director within the Central Team after consultation with the Chair of the relevant Local Governing Body.
- 6.4 Objectives will be set before or as soon as practicable after the start of each appraisal period and ideally within the Autumn 1 term.
- 6.5 The appraisee will be set no more than 3 objectives in one appraisal cycle. These will be fair, reasonable and achievable.
- 6.6 The first objective should be related to pedagogy and practice; the second objective should be linked to professional development and research, and a third objective should be set for those with additional/whole school responsibilities or those currently on the Upper Pay Scale.
- 6.7 The objectives will contribute to the school's improvement plan and are aimed at improving the education for pupils and will also take into account the professional aspirations of the teacher.
- 6.8 The objectives set will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) and will be appropriate to the appraisee's role and level of experience. In setting the objectives, appraisers will have regard to what can reasonably be expected in the context of roles, responsibilities and experience, consistent with the Trust's strategy for achieving a work/life balance for all staff.
- 6.9 Appraisal is an assessment of overall performance of the post holder and objectives cannot fully cover the range of the teacher's role and responsibilities. Accordingly, objectives will focus on the priorities for the Trust/School for that academic year.
- 6.10 The School will operate a system of moderation to ensure that all appraisers are working to the same standards.
- 6.11 The appraiser and the appraisee will seek to agree on the objectives but where joint determination cannot be made, targets will be moderated across the school to ensure that they are consistent between teachers with similar performance and levels of responsibility. Should the objectives not be agreed, the final decision on allocation of objectives rests with the Headteacher. For those in the Trust Central Team who are teaching staff, the final decision on allocation of objectives rests with the CEO.
- 6.12 The appraiser will consider the effects of an individual's circumstances, including any protected characteristics such as any disabilities, when agreeing objectives. For example, this might include a reasonable adjustment to allow an individual slightly longer to complete a task than might otherwise be the case. When staff return from a period of extended absence, objectives may be adjusted to allow them to readjust to their working environment.

7. Moderation

- 7.1 The Headteacher will ensure that the whole appraisal process (including objective setting) is applied fairly and consistently across their individual school
- 7.2 The CEO will ensure that the appraisal process is applied fairly and consistently within the Trust's Central Team.
- 7.3 The Headteacher will set up procedures for monitoring and moderating the appraisal process, including the setting of objectives. These will be shared with the Local Governing Body (LGB).
- 7.4 The Headteacher may choose to review all appraisal outcome statements or a select number of outcome statements at random from across the academy, within 10 days of their completion.
- 7.5 If the Headteacher has reservations about the quality of the appraisal outcome statement, they may instruct the appraiser to prepare a new outcome statement prior to it being finalised and retained.
- 7.6 A Headteacher may change an outcome statement on the grounds that the outcome statement was not consistent with those for other teachers with similar experience and/or who had similar levels of responsibility; or that the outcome statement was not in line with the Trust's appraisal policy or school improvement plan.
- 7.7 If a Headteacher is concerned about an outcome statement following discussions with the appraiser and appraisee, a revised outcome statement may be prepared. The appraiser and appraisee should produce a revised statement within 10 working days of being instructed by the Headteacher to do so. The appraisee can also add any comments at this stage.
- 7.8 The Headteacher may decide to share appraisal moderation across the Trust but are under no obligation to do so.
- 7.9 Pay awards will not be made, in situations where the primary objective has not been achieved, without the approval of the Chief Executive.

8. Reviewing Performance

Observation

- 8.1. The Trust believes that observation of classroom practice plays an important role in the assessment of a teacher's performance and their development, as it enables the identification of someone's strengths and areas for development.
- 8.2. All observations will be carried out in a supportive and developmental manner. Accordingly, observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion, with professionalism, integrity and courtesy, will be evaluated objectively and reported accurately and fairly and will take account of particular circumstances which may affect performance on the day.
- 8.3. All teachers will be regularly observed but the amount and type of classroom observation will be determined by the Headteacher and will depend on the overall needs of the School.
- 8.4. Formal classroom observations will only be carried out by qualified teachers.

- 8.5. Formal observation for the purpose of appraisal will not exceed 3 occasions per academic year and will not exceed more than 3 hours in one academic year and will be accompanied by written feedback (except where a teacher is subject to an Informal Improvement Plan).
- 8.6. Teachers (including the Headteacher, members of the Central Team and Chief Executive) whose posts have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities assessed.
- 8.7. The effective and efficient operation of the appraisal cycle requires observation to be a confidential process of constructive engagement within an atmosphere of support and cooperation.
- 8.8. The date and time of an observation will be mutually agreed, in line with the school monitoring cycle.

Feedback

- 8.9. Teachers will receive constructive written feedback on their performance throughout the appraisal cycle and as soon as practicable and no later than 5 working days after an observation has taken place or if other evidence has come to light.
- 8.10. It is important that areas of concern are addressed as they arise throughout the academic year and not just retained on file for discussion at the appraisal review meeting.
- 8.11. Feedback will highlight areas of strengths as well as any areas that require further development.

9. Performance Concerns

- 9.1. Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance the appraiser will meet with the post holder as part of a mid-cycle review to:
 - Give clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns.
 - Give the appraisee the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns.
 - Agree any support (e.g. coaching, mentoring, structured observations) that will be provided to help address the specific concerns.
 - Make clear how and by when, the appraiser will review progress.
 - Explain the implications and process if no (or insufficient) improvement is made
 - Review and change the appraisal objectives
- 9.2. A mid-cycle review can be brought forward before the recommended Spring 2 term date, if the appraiser deems it necessary to support the teacher's performance 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.
- 9.3. Where it is apparent that a teacher's personal circumstances are leading to difficulties at school, support will be offered as soon as possible, without waiting for the formal annual assessment.
- 9.4. If during the appraisal process or via other sources of information, (e.g. parental complaints or assessment data), it is evident that a teacher is experiencing difficulties that, if not rectified, could lead to capability procedures the mid-cycle review meeting can be brought forward. The appraiser, the Headteacher, or a member of the leadership team, will, as part of the appraisal process will write to the teacher, giving them at least 5 working days written notice that a mid-

cycle review meeting will be held to discuss objectives for improvement alongside a programme of support, and inform the teacher that s/he has the right to be assisted by a companion* at the meeting and at any future meetings where capability will be discussed;

The chosen companion can be one of the following only:

- A work colleague
- A Trades Union Representative*
- An official employed by a Trades Union
- A 'support worker' may be allowed to accompany an employee with a disability, agreed in advance as a reasonable adjustment under the Equalities Act 2010

9.5. At the mid-cycle review meeting, the appraiser and appraisee will:

- give clear feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns;
- in consultation with the teacher, a performance improvement plan with support will be established (for example coaching, training, in-class support, mentoring, structured observations, visits to other classes or schools or discussions with advisory teachers), that will help address those specific concerns;
- confirm objectives and make clear how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed;
- confirm a review period of ideally 6 working weeks and agree a date to meet to review progress
- explain the implications and process for transfer to capability procedures if no or insufficient improvement is made.
- Advise that written feedback, confirming the content of the meeting will be provided.

9.6. 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. This will depend upon the circumstances but will be for a period of 6 weeks, with appropriate support as agreed in the Performance Improvement Plan, in order that the aim of recovering and improving performance can be achieved. 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.

10. At the mid-cycle review follow up meeting

- 10.1 If sufficient progress is made such that the teacher is performing at a level that indicates there is no longer a possibility of capability procedures being invoked the teacher should be informed of this at a formal meeting with the appraiser or Headteacher. Following this meeting the appraisal process will continue as normal.
- 10.2 Informal capability will usually not exceed six weeks however if a teacher is making considerable progress consideration will be given to extending the monitoring period for a period of up to a further 6 weeks.
- 10.3 If no, or insufficient, improvement has been made over this period, the teacher will be advised at the meeting and then notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the Trust's Capability procedure. The letter will advise the teacher of the date and time of the First Formal Capability Meeting.

11. Annual Assessment

- 11.1. Each post holder's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. This assessment is the end point of the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year in interim meetings and at the mid cycle review.
- 11.2. The post holder will receive as soon as practicable after the end of the appraisal period a written appraisal outcome statement. Written appraisal outcome statements will be provided by 31 October for all teachers and unqualified teachers and by 31 December for the CEO, Central Team and the Headteachers.
- 11.3. The appraisal outcome statement will include:
 - Details of the post holder's objectives for the appraisal period in question.
 - An assessment of the post holder's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives.
 - An overview and assessment of the post holder's training and development needs. This will inform the planning process for the next appraisal period.
 - A recommendation on pay where this is relevant.

12. Pay Progression

- 12.1. Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the recommendation is made by the appraiser and will be based on the assessment of their performance against the agreed objectives and overall performance. The decision made by the relevant decision-making body will be based on the statutory criteria and guidance set out in the *School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD)* and the relevant teacher standards.
- 12.2. Chiltern Learning Trust has agreed the pay policy of the school and has considered the implications of the appraisal policy with respect to the arrangements relating to teachers' pay in accordance with the STPCD. The Local Governing Body will ensure that decisions on pay progression are made and confirmed in writing by 31 December for headteachers and by 30 November for other teachers.
- 12.3. A teacher may appeal against the decision not to recommend a pay award to the CEO or the Pay Committee, whichever is relevant. Please refer to Chiltern Learning Trust's Pay Policy for further information.

13. Appeals

- 13.1. Any appraisee may appeal against the decision not to recommend a pay award to the Headteacher or Chief Executive or Pay Committee, whichever is relevant. They may also refer the decision to the Pay Appeals Committee. Please refer to the Trust's Pay Policy for further information and guidance.

14. Monitoring and Evaluation

Chiltern Learning Trust and Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements.

The Headteacher will provide the Local Governing Body with a written report on the operation

of the school's appraisal and capability policies annually. The report will not identify any individual by name. The report will include an assessment of the impact of Equality and Diversity.

The Chief Executive will report to the Board of Trustees on whether there have been any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination.