



South East Cornwall Multi Academy Regional Trust

Appraisal and Performance Management Policy

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Introduction

There is an extremely strong commitment throughout SMART to ongoing training and development for all staff to provide them with the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively and continuously improve professionally.

Please refer to the guidance document on the Trust website that sets out the functions and methods referred to in this policy in more detail. <https://www.smart-trust.net/teaching-and-learning/our-expected-standards>

In research by TALIS (2008,2013), Hattie (2009) and Sutton Trust (2014), effective feedback through appraisal is strongly linked with staff self-efficacy, greater effectiveness and job satisfaction. For classroom teachers this translates to improved quality of teaching and improved student outcomes. For support staff this results in greater ownership and job satisfaction.

This policy sets out the structures for appraisal used across SMART to maximise support in achieving expected standards together with the common expectations across the Trust to;

Expect commitment to continuous improvement and learning; challenge all staff to **Question** the effectiveness of their practice and the validity of new ideas; provide clear **Understanding** of next steps within their current and aspired roles; and share learning as **Inspiration** from peers and the wider community to drive improvement fuelled by; **Positive recognition** of their successes.

This policy applies to all staff employed in SMART for one term or more. With the exception of those on formal capability for who the process is paused, those who are Early Career Teachers (ECT) who follow the ECT guidance, and those on a contract of less than 0.25 for whom appraisal is optional.

The appraisal process is a supportive and developmental process and is intended to foster professional dialogue between colleagues.

The appraisal period

The appraisal period is up to a year. Staff who join SMART after the Autumn term with a contract of a term or longer will have a reduced cycle which begins up to half a term after their start date and runs until the following Autumn term or the end of their contract whichever is sooner.

Appointing appraisers

| Group | Who appoints | Who is the appraiser? |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--|
| CEO | Trust Board | Panel including a skilled and/or experienced independent external advisor appointed by the Trust Board, funded by TSS |
| TSS and non-school based staff | CEO | CEO can delegate appointment and can include external advisors if appropriate |
| Headteachers | CEO | Panel including the CEO, and two governors appointed by the Chair of the LGC. LGC can also appoint an independent external advisor or SIP, if required, funded by the school. |
| All school based staff | Headteacher | HT responsible for signing off a document shared with all staff showing who appraises who. Where possible, staff with greatest seniority appraise limited to 6 each. The Appraiser should usually be the line manager of the member of staff, and will conduct all aspects of the review, including pay recommendations for teachers who are eligible. |

Expected standards

Where national standards exist, for example the Teachers Standards, we expect staff to refer to these during the Appraisal Process.

The Trust provides a specific set of expected standards for each grade of role called the 'Leadership Ladders'. With such standards in place it is then possible for all staff to gauge their own performance against their standards and their job description and understand their personal next steps. These should be used as a discussion point in Appraisal Meetings.

Appraisers must ensure that the objectives their appraisees choose to set themselves meet the following criteria:

- are in line with agreed, expected standards for the role
- are commensurate with the job description
- are a measurable and achievable next step in developing excellence
- are a realistic step for the member of staff to achieve within the normal pressures of their working year.

The expected standards of the member of staff will be referred to in recommending any training needs and in evaluation of their ability and planned progress in their current post.

Section 1 - Setting objectives

3 objectives will be agreed with each member of staff eligible for appraisal. The summary table below describes categories of objective.

| Objective | All staff |
|---|--|
| 1- Helping you bring about an improvement in your main role | This will focus on bringing about improvements in measurable key indicators for the role. For example, ICT support staff may focus on response time to tickets. Staff are encouraged to be aspirational and so the objective can still be 'met' if the intended outcome has not been reached. Where possible this should link to any published expected standards. For example a teacher could identify their pupil's response to feedback and then try out classroom based ideas to address this. |
| 2- Your STAR project – SMART tested action research | All staff are encouraged to research an idea that is new to them, try it for at least a term and then evaluate how it worked. |
| 3- Leadership at every level – Using your leadership skills to benefit others | All staff consider the leadership ladder published on the Smart-Trust website as a guide to the expectations of their role in relation to their pay grade. Appraisers will encourage appraisees to reflect on examples of work they have done throughout the year that demonstrate each of these levels. |

All objectives, as far as is practical, must be:

- SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound)
- Proposed by the appraisee but, agreed by the Appraiser and Appraisee
- In place as soon as possible after the start of the appraisal cycle
- Referenced to the expected standards for the role, for teachers this will be the Teachers Standards
- An achievable personal challenge which develops the member of staff
- Linked specifically to the educational outcomes of children or other measurable outcomes, providing the objectives include strategies for Teachers to improve pupil performance rather than just reliance on data targets.

Further policy provisions are in place for a number of staff including UPS holders, Headteachers and the CEO. These cases are set out below.

UPS (Upper Pay Scale – teachers only)

Teaching staff can choose to apply for the upper pay scale. This involves staff being assessed as having made 'sustained and substantial annual contributions to whole school targets' and that the teacher is 'highly competent in all elements of the Teachers Standards'.

For convenience, we have amalgamated the UPS and Appraisal processes so that UPS staff can evidence their sustained and substantial annual contribution on the same appraisal form by threading evidence of their UPS performance through their three appraisal targets.

Teachers on M5 can express an interest in UPS1 and can apply in the year after M6 with the required two years of meeting the criteria above. UPS1 staff can, after two years of sustained and substantial contribution, apply for UPS2 and similarly after two years at this level of sustained and more substantial contribution choose to apply for UPS3.

Staff who are eligible and wish to apply for UPS progression should refer to the Pay Policy for Teaching Staff in the policies section of the SMART-Trust website.

Headteacher objectives

The Headteacher and CEO meet regularly throughout the year and through these meetings should regularly discuss future and current objectives. Each September the Headteacher should complete the appraisal form including the first draft of these objectives. These first draft objectives will form the basis of discussion between the Headteacher and CEO to arrive at an agreed second draft. This document should then be used in the Headteacher's appraisal meeting.

Headteachers are able to request that the governors appoint an independent external consultant or SIP (School Improvement Partner) or governors can decide to appoint a SIP. The governors will then conduct research and select an applicant who they are confident will provide impartial and reliable advice to assist them in their ability to challenge the process of appraisal. If a Headteacher objects to the SIP selected by the governors then where possible, an alternative SIP will be employed.

The headteacher's appraisal meeting should be attended by the Chair of the Local Governing Committee, the CEO and the Headteacher. Where the Chair is not available to fulfil this role the Local governors will vote at the start of the year to select the the governor. The Chair of Governors may also invite a SIP if they have appointed one.

In the appraisal meeting the governors will establish that the proposed objectives are sufficiently challenging and yet achievable. If a SIP has been appointed they will provide support for their governors to help them establish this. Following this discussion, the SIP and Headteacher will leave the room whilst the panel agree on the objectives they would like to recommend for the coming year.

The Headteacher is invited back in to hear the recommendation of the governors.

At the remuneration committee meeting, the recommendation of the LGC is debated alongside the views of the CEO. It is expected that the CEO has the final word on such discussions where there are differences, but in exceptional circumstances the committee can alert the Trust Board to differences in opinion for further clarification. It is the role of governance to ensure the process is robust and the challenges are appropriate rather than to direct the specific objectives.

CEO objectives

The CEO is responsible for drawing up the strategic plan for the Trust. This document will set out the intended direction of travel and will be debated and agreed with the Trust Board. This document will set out proposed timescales. As with other staff the CEO will propose the first draft of their targets based upon the agreed direction of the Trust in relation to this strategic plan.

The Trust Board may choose to appoint an independent external consultant or Trustimprovement partner who is able to interpret the strategic plan and challenge the proposed priorities, rate of change and objectives which are appropriately challenging and realistic for the CEO to achieve. They may decide to discuss the objectives proposed by the CEO in a meeting with the Trust Board without the CEO present, having studied the agreed strategic plan and other key documentation.

In the appraisal meeting the Trust Board together with their appointed advisor will discuss with the CEO their proposed objectives based on the strategic plan and a finalised set of objectives will be drawn up. The Trust Board has the final word in the setting of the CEO objectives but if the CEO is unhappy with these they can raise their objections and have them noted.

Section 2 – Working Towards the Objectives

The process of converting objectives to successful outcomes.

Once the objectives have been set, the dialogue will switch to 'how these objectives will be met'. At least termly throughout the year, the appraisee will be encouraged to return to these objectives and add to their appraisal document. This may be to simply record an event having taken place or could be following a discussion with the appraiser.

No comments or changes made to the appraisal form are ever deleted, it is a working document that by the end of the year will tell the story of successes and failures. The objectives don't change but all good appraisers know that members of staff will often need to try a number of strategies that may not work before they hit the one that does. An objective can still be marked as achieved if it is clear that everything reasonable and possible was attempted along the way.

Setting good strategies

One of the reasons for setting the objectives and providing staff with the flexibility to devise and use their own strategies, is to encourage greater diversity and ownership of ideas and solutions. Staff therefore, should be encouraged to use a wide range of strategies to help them.

Feedback

It is critical that regular feedback is given to enable the member of staff to make most progress towards meeting their objectives. This can come from appraisers, mentors, peers or any individual qualified to provide valuable advice as to further progress. In the case of a teacher feedback should only be given by those with QTS, and usually by their line manager.

All staff can expect to receive at least one piece of written feedback relating to at least one of their objectives per term: The 'First Appraisal meeting' in the Autumn, the 'Mid-year review' in the Spring and evaluation in the summer.

Evidence and ongoing discussion will be included in the appraisal document as a dialogue or 'living document' covering the year.

It is essential that feedback is felt to be genuinely useful and specific enough to both challenge and recognise achievement. Members of staff should be encouraged to speak out if this is not the case. Senior leaders should actively monitor that this is the case and ensure appropriate training is given to appraisers and members of staff to ensure the dialogue is as useful as possible.

Evidence required at the end of the process should be agreed at the objective setting meeting. No further evidence should be required unless the appraisee wishes to include this.

Teaching staff can expect at least one formal observation of their teaching a year, carried out by a professional with QTS who has the skill required to give actionable feedback in a supportive fashion.

Written feedback and debrief should, where possible, be within five days and it is recommended that the focus of any such formal observation should be agreed beforehand. Verbal feedback should be provided by the end of the next day. It is also recommended that no more than three hours of formal observation time in total within any year and the policy of little and often incremental coaching and support is favoured wherever possible. These guidelines do not apply to staff who are part of a formal support plan.

All schools should foster an ethos of transparency, collaboration and sharing of practice such that staff feel confident to share their practice, details for protocols surrounding this can be found in the observation policy

Section 3 – Final Evaluation of Objectives

Annual evaluation and appraisal report

This annual evaluation is the end point to the appraisal process. The following table summarises the timescale and responsibilities within this process. Objectives are confidential to the appraisee, appraiser, Headteacher and CEO. (Governors role is to oversee the process)

| Who | Responsibility | By when? |
|--|--|--|
| The Member of Staff (Appraisee) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the completed appraisal forms and agreed evidence for the process to their appraiser. | 3 weeks prior to the end of summer term |
| The Appraiser | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up a meeting with the member of staff Consider ONLY the evidence provided to arrive at a clear statement if each objective is 'Achieved', 'Partly Achieved' or 'Not Achieved' and why. Recommend if pay increments could apply. Pass the completed copy to the Headteacher (or CEO for Headteachers and TSS staff). | Before the final week of the summer term |
| The Headteacher | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check agreement with the appraiser. Request further evidence if appropriate. Arrange an authorised administrator to collate. | By the end of September |
| Authorised Administrator | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compile the files on behalf of the Headteacher Files will be retained securely for 6 years. | As instructed by Headteacher |
| CEO | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange Appraisal meetings and moderation meetings with Headteachers. Act as the appraiser in these meetings. Moderate samples from each Headteacher to prepare a report to the remuneration committee. | Prior to 31 st October. |
| Trust Board Panel | Arrange the appraisal meeting and act as the appraiser for the CEO. | Prior to 31 st October |

Evidence which should be included

It is the policy of SMART that all evidence of professional development and achievement should be compiled in the annual evaluation. In a successful school there will be an understanding that all staff will have both projects that have worked and those that have not. The Trust is keen to ensure that staff feel comfortable taking risks and trying new ideas, safe in the knowledge that such approaches are seen favourably.

The following evidence must be included in the final annual evaluation from the perspective of the MAT.

All staff:

- The completed appraisal form
- Any written feedback that has been given by the appraiser during the year
- At least one evidenced reflection in support of each objective during the year
- Discussion of which level on the leadership ladder applied at the start and end of the cycle which may often remain unchanged.
- Confirmation that the current job description reflects the current requirements of the post and expected standards have been consulted.

In addition to this, all Teachers:

- Use of available data from assessments with classes and feedback from coaching and observations so that reflections are based on evidence wherever possible.

Moderation of the appraisal process

- By the end of September, the Headteacher will finalise the appraisal of all staff.
 1. Headteacher collects completed appraisal report for all staff and conducts internal moderation to verify that all their appraisers have followed the policy with consistency.
 2. Any appraisal report that has not been completed correctly will be sent back to the appraiser to check and, if necessary, clarify so no appraisee is disadvantaged.
 3. When all moderation samples are completed two weeks the CEO together with the Chair of Governors of the LGC meet with the Headteacher to moderate the sample. The Headteacher will provide a list of all staff including their pre-moderated judgement, what moderation has happened, their current pay scale and proposed change.
 4. When complete, the Chair of Governors will contact the remuneration committee to confirm that they believe the process was robust and consistent.

Annual evaluation and appraisal report for headteachers

The Trust Board delegates the evaluation of the headteacher's annual appraisal to the CEO. They delegate the moderation of this process to the Remuneration Committee who delegate this to the LGC providing there is evidence that the LGC is good or outstanding in this regard.

The headteacher's appraisal meeting should be attended by the Chair of Local Governor the CEO and the Headteacher. Local governors will vote at the start of the year to select this governor if the Chair is unavailable The Chair of Governors may also invite a SIP if they have appointed one.

Prior to the meeting, the Headteacher will provide their evidence file showing progress towards their objectives and if each is achieved, partly achieved or not met.

In the appraisal evaluation meeting the governor will establish their view regarding the objectives and the evidence provided. If a SIP has been appointed they will provide support for their governor to help them establish this. Following this discussion, the SIP

and Headteacher will leave the room whilst the panel agree on their assessment. They will also decide if they feel that overall the Headteacher has achieved their appraisal.

The Headteacher is invited back in to hear the recommendation that the governor will be sending to the remuneration committee for their consideration.

At the remuneration committee meeting, the recommendation of the LGC is debated alongside the views of the CEO. It is expected that the CEO has the final word on such discussions where there are differences, but in exceptional circumstances the committee can alert the Trust Board to differences in opinion for further clarification. It is the role of governance to ensure the process is robust and the challenges are appropriate rather than to direct the outcome.

Annual evaluation and appraisal report for CEO

The CEO will provide evidence of having achieved, partly achieved or not met each of their objectives prior to the evaluation meeting.

The Trust Board may choose to appoint an independent external consultant or MAT improvement partner who is able to interpret the evidence file provided by the CEO. The CEO has the right to request this. If the CEO objects to the external consultant selected by the Trust Board then where possible, an alternative will be employed.

In the appraisal evaluation meeting the Trust Board together with their appointed advisor will question the CEO to establish their view of the evidence and which objectives have been achieved, partly achieved or not met.

The CEO and external advisor will be asked to leave while the Trust Board deliberate. The CEO will then be invited back to hear the conclusion of the Trust Board.

Section 4 – Progress Below Expected Standards

Consequences of insufficient progress against objectives

For most members of staff there will be a review within a term and a half of the objectives having been set. If it is clear in this review that the member of staff is not making sufficient progress towards their objectives, then the appraiser can take one of the following options:

1. Review the objectives to consider if they were appropriate. Discuss this with the Headteacher to arrange for them to be reduced or changed.
2. Agree intermediate objectives for the next review.
3. Provide an extension due to circumstances such as staff absence etc.
4. Provide support for the member of staff such as training.

When progress is reviewed again, if the appraiser is satisfied the member of staff 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. If not, then:

- The appraiser will arrange a meeting with the member of staff in a confidential space.
- The appraiser will formally document the meeting and provide the member of staff with a copy. The member of staff will be given an opportunity to comment on or amend these notes.
- Any serious concerns will be clearly stated together with implications and process if no, or insufficient improvement is made.
- The member of staff will have the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns in writing within the appraisal document.
- 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 and/or objectives. This is usually half a term but may be extended if required

If the Appraiser feels that insufficient progress is still being made, then they will discuss their concerns with their Headteacher who may advise a meeting to which union representatives can be invited to discuss next steps which may include pausing the appraisal process.

Section 5 – Appeals Process

Any member of staff who feels the process has not been conducted in line with this policy, has the right of appeal to the Trust Board if the Appraisal process could have an impact on any pay award.

In such cases the member of staff concerned will write to the Chair of the Trust Board after their appraisal evaluation meeting and notification has taken place and within two weeks of having received formal notification of the outcome. If their concern relates to the setting of objectives or the appraisal cycle throughout the year then there is scope within the policy for such concerns to be addressed during the cycle. Hence it is only after the final appraisal evaluation meeting has taken place that the Trust Board will be able to determine if the intention of the policy has not been delivered.

After their appraisal evaluation meeting the member of staff should provide the Trust Board with the following evidence in support of their appeal.

1. The appraisal report submitted in support of the appraisal.
 - a. Please note that the Board cannot accept any additional evidence which was not provided in the original appraisal.
 - b. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure that any evidence they wish to present, was provided by the same deadline that applied to all staff.
 - c. If substantial new evidence emerged after the evaluation meeting **that the member of staff could not have had access to prior to the deadline** (for example a large number of examination scripts were remarked, considerably altering the overall examination performance) then this evidence should be passed to the Headteacher (or CEO in the case of Headteachers, or Trust Board in the case of the CEO), to allow them the

- opportunity to reconsider the outcome. If, after this consideration, the member of staff wishes to appeal then this evidence can be included.
2. The completed appraisal report.
 3. An additional report to the Trust Board from the appraisee to outline the nature of their appeal including the following information.
 - a. A timeline of events showing the normal cycle but also including any key conversations and events throughout the year in which evidence included in the file would have been corroborated.
 - b. A detailed explanation of which aspect of this policy was not, in the view of the member of staff, conducted correctly, why they believe this was the case and what evidence there is to support this view.
 - c. An explanation of which objective is contested and a narrative to explain to a non-specialist, how the evidence provided in the file can be interpreted to deliver the different outcome contested in the appeal.

A panel of three governors without the Headteacher present will consider the appeal within 15 working days of receipt of the information. Their role will be to verify the process described in this policy has been followed correctly. The member of staff will be notified of their decision. If the member of staff wishes to appeal the decision rather than the process then they can do so to the remuneration committee.

If the Trust Board agree that the policy has not been applied as intended, they have the ability to uphold the appeal and require the Headteacher to reverse or modify the previous decision.

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The governing body and Trust Board is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness. It will abide by all relevant equality legislation, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled teachers. The governing body is aware of the guidance on the Equality Act issued by the Department for Education.

Grievances

Where a member of staff raises a grievance during the Appraisal procedure the Appraisal procedure may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and Appraisal cases are related it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

Sickness

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 school's absence policy and will be (e.g. referred immediately to the occupational health service to assess the member of staff's health and fitness for continued employment and the appropriateness or otherwise of continuing with monitoring or formal procedures).

Monitoring and Evaluation

The governing body and Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements including annual review of this policy.

Retention

The governing body and Headteacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.