Staff Appraisal Policy

Henry David Learning

Woodfield School

Agreed by the Proprietor: **August 2024**

Review date: **August 2027**

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Set out the arrangements for appraising members of staff at Woodfield School, including the process and the responsibilities of individuals
- Ensure consistency and fairness across the school
- Create a process where staff professional development is supported and encouraged, in the context of the school's latest Ofsted report, our school improvement plan and the Teachers' Standards
- Ensure staff have the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil and excel in their role and provide an excellent education to our pupils

The policy applies to all staff employed by the school, except those on contracts of less than 1 term, those undergoing induction and those undergoing capability procedures.

For staff in their first year of employment with Henry David Learning, they will have a probation meeting at 6 months. Please refer to the Probation Policy.

2. Legislation and guidance

As an independent school, we are free to determine our own appraisal arrangements. This policy is based on the model policy produced by the Department for Education (DfE).

3. The appraisal period

The appraisal period will run for 12 months from October to October of the following year.

For members of staff on fixed-term contracts of less than 12 months, the appraisal period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

Staff who start at or leave the school during the appraisal period can have a longer or shorter appraisal period in that appraisal round.

It is intended that staff will have had their annual appraisal meeting and received their appraisal report by 31 October.

4. Setting objectives

Staff' objectives will be set before, or as soon as possible after, the start of the appraisal period.

The Principal's objectives will be set by the Proprietor.

Objectives will:

- Contribute to improving the education of pupils at the school and the implementation of any school improvement plans. To ensure this happens the Principal and Deputy Principal will quality assure all objectives against the school improvement plan
- Be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART)
- Be appropriate to the member of staff's role and career experience
- Be revised if circumstances change throughout the year

When objectives are set, staff will also be informed of the standards their performance will be judged against.

The appraiser and member of staff will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives.

5. Standards

The Teachers' Standards will be used as a guide to assess teachers and the Principal, and other school leaders where relevant, will also be assessed against the Principals' Standards.

6. Reviewing performance (including observation protocol)

We will use a range of evidence to judge a member of staff's performance:

- Formal and informal lesson observations
- Observations and results from wider school activities, if applicable
- Performance of their pupils
- Reviews of planning and marking
- Parent and pupil voice, if applicable

6.1 Observation protocol

We believe that observations are an important way of assessing staff performance, and are also needed to fulfill the requirements of awarding bodies. They can help identify a member of staff's strengths and areas for improvement, and can help us identify areas of good practice that can be shared across the school.

There will be both formal and 'drop in' observations. Staff with responsibilities outside the classroom will also have these responsibilities observed.

All observations will:

- Be carried out in an objective, fair, professional and supportive manner
- For teaching staff, be carried out by teachers with Qualified Teacher Status
- Provide constructive feedback
- Remain confidential to those who need to know details as part of their jobs

6.2 'Drop in' observations

- Drop-in observations will usually be conducted by members of the Leadership Team in order to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.

They will usually last around 15 minutes, and may involve the observer talking to pupils and looking at their work.

The frequency will depend on the individual teacher and the school's needs at the time.

Generally, verbal feedback will be given the following day.

Please note that we also carry out drop-in observations where fellow teachers observe a lesson for their own professional development. Notice may not be given and evidence will not be used as part of the appraisal process.

6.3 Formal observations

The purpose of formal observations is to assess the member of staff's performance and progress against their objectives and the relevant standards.

We will take into account the member of staff's workload and individual circumstances when determining the number of formal observations.

For example, less experienced teachers who have recently started at the school will receive a number of formal observations to establish their strengths and areas for development. A very experienced teacher will typically receive fewer observations.

Teachers will not receive more than 2 formal observations over the year.

Generally, verbal feedback will be given the following day.

We will use all reasonable endeavours to provide written feedback within 5 working days as required.

6.4 Additional observations

Additional formal observations will take place if:

- The member of staff requests them
- There are concerns that the member of staff's performance is not up to standard (this may be triggered by poorly performing or poorly behaved pupils)
- The member of staff is subject to formal capability proceedings

The above protocols will still apply to these additional observations.

7. Annual assessment

Performance will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the year in termly meetings with the member of staff's line manager.

The annual appraisal meeting is the end point of the annual appraisal process and will take place in the Autumn term. In this meeting, the appraiser will:

- Review the relevant evidence
- Assess performance in the appraisal period against the relevant standards
- Assess performance in the appraisal period against objectives
- Discuss the member of staff's professional development needs and identify action that should be taken
- Discuss the member of staff's wellbeing, career aspirations and any difficulties they may be facing
- If necessary, discuss underperformance and put a plan in place to address it. If a member of staff continues to demonstrate serious underperformance and does not respond to support provided, they 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 they will be invited to a formal capability meeting.

8.Conducting annual appraisal meetings

The principal's appraisal meeting will be conducted by the Proprietor.

The principal will decide who will appraise staff.

All appraisers will be provided with appropriate training.

Appraisal meetings will take place within the member of staff's normal working hours and will typically last for at least an hour.

9. Appraisal report

Staff will be provided with a written report of their appraisal. The report will be completed by the person who conducted the appraisal. We will use all reasonable endeavours to complete this within 5 working days.

This will include:

- An assessment of the member of staff's performance against their objectives and the relevant standards
- An assessment of the member of staff's training and development needs, and the action that should be taken to address them

There will be space in the report for the teacher's own comments.

After the report has been issued, we will hold review meetings where teachers can discuss the contents of their report if they wish.

10. Concerns about a member of staff's performance

If it becomes clear a member of staff is having difficulties at any point during the appraisal period, they will be provided with additional support. The principal will discuss any concerns about a member of staff at an early stage so that appropriate advice can be provided.

This will begin with a meeting with their line manager, where the problem will be discussed and potential solutions identified. A performance improvement plan may be created.

The nature of the support will be based on the individual's circumstances. For example, staff whose difficulties are linked to a long-term health condition may be referred to the occupational health service. Staff new to the school may be given a mentor or coach.

The concerns may be of a nature that would usually involve beginning the capability procedure. In these cases, refer to our capability policy.

11. Confidentiality

The appraisal process and relevant documents are strictly confidential. Only staff members who need the information in order to do their jobs will have access to the information.

Appraisal information will be anonymised when information is reported to the governing board.

Appraisal records will be kept securely in the member of staff's personnel file.

12. Monitoring arrangements

The Proprietor will monitor and review the effectiveness of the appraisal arrangements. The principal will monitor objectives and assessments to ensure consistency.

Once agreed and approved by the Proprietor, this policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the principal.

13. Links with other policies

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

Appendix 1: appraisal timeline

DATE	ACTION
September / October	Appraisal meeting held to review the previous appraisal period

DATE	ACTION
31 October	Appraisal process is completed for all staff, deadline for appraisal reports to be sent
Termly throughout the year	Meetings held to review progress
Throughout the year	Formal and drop-in observations and monitoring take place, constructive feedback is provided