

“Together in Achievement”



Performance Management Policy for all staff

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Performance Management Policy

Introduction

Aspire Multi-Academy Trust aims to deliver the highest outcomes for pupils. To achieve our vision, staff appraisal within our academies will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all employees have the skills and support needed to carry out their role effectively and to help them improve their practice.

Revised appraisal arrangements for teachers came into force on 1 September 2012. They are set out in the Education (Academy Teachers' Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 (the Appraisal Regulations) which replace the Education (Academy Teacher Performance Management) (England) Regulations 2006 (the 2006 Regulations). Whilst academies are not required to abide by the 2012 Regulations, Aspire MAT has chosen to do so in the interests of best practice. We have also chosen to implement performance management processes for all employees as a demonstration of the value we place on everyone's contribution to the success of our academies.

1. Definitions

- 1.1 The term "employee" refers to any member of the Aspire Multi-Academy Trust employed to work at one of the member academies or in the central team.
- 1.2 The term "senior leader" refers to any member of teaching staff on the leadership scale, as defined by the Academy Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, or a senior associate employee in reference to associate staff.
- 1.3 The role of the Headteacher will be taken by the CEO/Chair of Local Governing Body for their academy where the appraisal and or capability being reviewed is that of the Headteacher, or in the case of the CEO of Aspire Multi-Academy Trust, by the appropriate personnel/committee of the Board of Directors.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of employees covered by the Performance Management Policy and for supporting their development within the context of the Trust's/academy's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of employees in their respective roles.
- 2.2 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time following consultation.

3. Application of the policy

This policy applies to all employees of Aspire Multi-Academy Trust, except those on contracts of less than one term, those teachers undergoing induction (i.e. NQTs) and those employees subject to a probationary period.

4. The appraisal period

- 4.1 The appraisal period for all employees will run for twelve months from 1st September to 31st August.

- 4.2 Employees who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year, but more than one term, will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of the review period will be determined by the duration of their contract.
- 4.3 Where an employee starts their employment at Aspire Multi-Academy Trust part way through a performance management cycle, the Headteacher or a nominated representative (or in the case where the employee is the Headteacher, the CEO, or where the employee is the CEO, the Board of Directors) shall determine the length of the first cycle for that employee, with a view to bringing the cycle into line with the cycle for existing employees as soon as possible.

5. Appointing appraisers

- 5.1 The Headteacher will be appraised by the Local Governing Body in consultation with the CEO. The CEO will be appraised by nominated representatives from the Board of Directors.
- 5.2 The Headteacher of each academy, (or in the case of employees employed to work in the central function, the CEO), will decide who will appraise other employees covered by the policy. The number of employees that any one person will appraise will depend on their role and level of responsibility and will be monitored by the Headteacher/CEO (or their representative). If the Headteacher/CEO appoints an appraiser who is not an employee's line manager, the appraiser to whom they delegate those roles will have an appropriate position in the staffing structure, together with the necessary background knowledge, skills and training to undertake the role.

6. Setting objectives

- 6.1 Aspire Multi-Academy Trust has adopted a developmental model for staff appraisal based on *Aspire & Grow Personal and Professional Conversations*. This replaces the previous performance-related pay system and the formal three-objective performance management model. Under this approach, all staff participate in **twice-yearly protected conversations** with their line manager (or the CEO for headteachers) focused on wellbeing, professional development and the ongoing development of practice.
- 6.2 The CEO will lead the Aspire & Grow Personal and Professional Conversation with the Headteacher. A nominated performance management governor or the Chair of Governors may attend. Following the meeting, the Headteacher's professional development commitments will be shared with the Local Governing Body for transparency.
- 6.3 The first Aspire & Grow conversation will take place during the Autumn Term (normally before October half term for staff and by 31 December for headteachers). A mid-year conversation will take place in the Spring/Summer Term. These conversations are reflective, supportive and developmental in nature. They are not tied to pay progression. All teachers and leaders will be assessed as meeting the Teachers' Standards/Headteacher Standards unless concerns have been identified and are being managed through Aspire's Capability or Managing Underperformance procedures.
- 6.4 Each Aspire & Grow conversation will explore two areas:
 - a) **Personal (Wellbeing)**

A structured wellbeing conversation, using the Trust's wellbeing prompts where helpful. Notes will only be taken with the employee's consent. Any notes will be stored confidentially and will not be used for performance management decisions.

b) Professional (Development and Practice)

All staff will have a single, Trust-wide professional focus:

“To accept the professional obligation to improve practice by engaging in regular, meaningful CPD to become the best practitioner you can be.”

For classroom teachers, this includes engaging with the Teachers’ Standards, the Academy Development Plan, the Aspire 8 Elements and evidence-informed practice (e.g., Walkthrus). For leaders, this includes their leadership responsibilities and the Headteacher Standards. For support staff, the wording will be adapted to reflect their role (e.g., teaching assistant, ABM).

- 6.5 Rather than setting three measurable performance objectives, each employee will identify areas for professional growth **and** CPD activities for the year ahead. These may include, but are not limited to:
- improving classroom practice in line with school priorities;
 - developing expertise in a subject, phase or aspect of provision;
 - strengthening leadership skills;
 - contributing to school or Trust-wide work (for UPR teachers or senior leaders);
 - enhancing role-specific knowledge for non-teaching staff.

These priorities will be recorded on the Aspire & Grow Personal and Professional Conversation form.

- 6.6 For UPR teachers and senior leaders, professional conversations may include opportunities to contribute to Trust-wide development in line with the Aspire UPR grid.
- 6.7 Professional growth activities are developmental, not evaluative. They do not form a target-setting process and are not used to determine pay. Pay progression for teachers and leaders on the main pay range is automatic unless there are significant concerns about performance being managed through the Capability procedure. Applications for the Upper Pay Range will continue to follow the process set out in the Aspire Pay Policy

7. Reviewing performance

Observation

- 7.1 Aspire Multi-Academy Trust believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities for teachers, and for employees who support teaching, is important both as a way of understanding classroom practice and identifying strengths and areas for development, and for informing school and Trust improvement more generally. Observations sit alongside wider quality assurance processes and are not used as part of a performance-related pay system.
- 7.2 All observations will be carried out in a supportive manner, with professionalism, integrity and courtesy. Assessment against the Teachers’ Standards starts from the premise that all teachers are meeting the standards. Observations will not be used as a checklist but as a professional tool to support reflective dialogue and development within the Aspire & Grow model. Where an employee teaches across more than one Key Stage or subject, observation may occur across different areas. Observations for performance and developmental purposes will not total more than three hours per academic year.

- 7.3 Classroom observation of employees employed to work in class will be carried out by those with QTS.
- 7.4 Aspire Multi-Academy Trust retains the right to use learning walks/visits for the quality assurance of learning. Learning walks/visits will not be used for performance management purposes unless concerns arise in line with The Teacher Standards that the Headteacher (or delegated staff) considers are important, and in these circumstances, there will be discussion with the teacher's line manager. Learning walks/visits are intended for leaders to monitor the quality of Teaching and Learning and to look at the work of the pupils

8. Performance Review and Annual Assessment

- 8.1 Performance is reviewed through the Aspire & Grow Personal and Professional Conversations held twice a year. These conversations replace the former annual performance management meeting and objective-setting model. The conversations focus on wellbeing, professional growth, and the development of practice, and they reference the Teachers' Standards/Headteacher Standards and relevant school priorities.
- 8.2 Following each conversation, agreed notes may be recorded (with employee consent) using the Aspire & Grow documentation. These notes reflect professional development priorities and wellbeing considerations and **are not used to determine pay progression.**
- 8.3 For teachers and leaders on the Main Pay Range, **pay progression is automatic**, unless the employee is subject to a live capability process or the Managing Underperformance procedure, in line with the updated Aspire Pay Policy. Teachers remain expected to meet the Teachers' Standards.
- 8.4 Applications for progression to the Upper Pay Range will continue to follow the process set out in the Aspire Pay Policy. Professional development conversations for UPR teachers may include Trust-wide contributions, in line with the Aspire UPR framework.
- 8.5 For non-teaching staff, pay progression is not linked to appraisal and increments will only be withheld where serious concerns have resulted in formal capability procedures, in line with the Pay Policy.

9. Development and support

- 9.1 Appraisal is designed to be a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. Aspire Multi-Academy Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all employees take responsibility for improving their performance through appropriate development.
- 9.2 Teachers' professional development will be linked to Aspire Multi-Academy Trust/Academy improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers. The Academy's CPD coordinator will be informed by the training and development needs identified as part of the appraisal process as well as other monitoring activities.

10. Feedback

Employees will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after an observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback

will highlight areas of strength as well as any areas that can be developed through continued professional development.

11. Informal support and progression to capability

11.1 Where it is apparent that there are performance concerns, support will be offered as soon as possible, without waiting for formal annual assessment. Performance concerns may be for several reasons such as:

- Failure to meet the national Teacher Standards.
- Failure to meet the expected standards in an observation may lead to further action (e.g. follow up observation or Informal Support).
- A pattern of underperformance in terms of pupil progress identified in tracking and exam outcomes.
- Non-completion of leadership responsibilities (impacting on the performance of colleagues and/or pupils).
- Parental complaints as part of a wider pattern of any dissatisfaction rather than isolated incidents. Validity of any complaints will be checked carefully by the line manager or a designated senior member of staff.
- A pattern of underperformance compared to the employee's job description and/or appraisal objectives.

11.2 If the appraiser (through the appraisal process or via other sources of information) identifies that concerns are such that, if not rectified, could lead to capability procedures then the Headteacher/CEO (or a member of the Senior Leadership Team) will meet the individual to consider the appropriateness of Informal Support. The employee may wish to invite a union representative to attend this meeting.

This will include the following:

- An initial discussion around aspects of underperformance. Minutes of this meeting will be taken.
- Giving clear written feedback to the individual about the nature and seriousness of the concerns.
- Giving the individual the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns.
- Meeting with the individual to discuss objectives for improvement alongside a programme of support.
- Creating a support plan which includes appropriate supportive measures which may include coaching, training, in-class support (where relevant), structured observations or mentoring, that will help to address those specific concerns.
- Making clear how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed.
- Explaining that if the individual does not make the required improvement then it may be necessary to extend the informal support period or move to formal capability procedures as per the Managing Underperformance Policy.

The individual's progress will continue to be monitored through weekly meetings, which will provide informal support and training. A reasonable amount of time will be given for the individual's performance to improve: 12 working weeks. During this monitoring period, the individual will be given feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.

If, on consideration, the required improvement has been made and there is no longer the necessity that capability procedures will be invoked, the individual will be informed of this.

Alternatively, if, on consideration of the evidence, it is concluded that it is appropriate to progress to the capability procedure, the appraiser, Headteacher/CEO/member of the leadership team will meet with the individual to inform them. The employee may be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague and will have at least 10 working days' notice of the meeting.

12. Transition to capability – moving to formal support under the Managing Underperformance Policy.

If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress against objectives in the action plan, the employee will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that his/her performance will be managed under the Managing Underperformance Policy. The employee will be invited to a formal capability meeting. The capability procedures will be conducted as per the policy.