

Appraisal Policy for Support Staff

Approval Body:	MST Standards Committee
Approval Date:	May 2021
Implementation Date:	June 2020
Review Date:	June 2022
Policy Version:	3

Version Control

Version	Reviewed	Changes since last version
1	June 2019	Existing
2	June 2020	Changes made to reflect staffing structure changes.
3	May 2021	No changes made to the policy – awaiting further updates from Tower Hamlets which have not been published yet.

This policy has been adopted by the Mulberry Schools Trust and will be applied to all schools which belong to the Mulberry Schools Trust.

Introduction

The role of Education Support Staff in schools is vital, both for the direct support given to teachers and for the running of the Trust as an organisation. The process of appraisal is an important way of assisting staff in contributing to the Trust and having the right performance and development in their roles. This scheme runs in parallel to that for teaching staff, acknowledging the different roles and the diversity of posts within the support staff structure.

Increasingly, senior staff roles within multi-academy trusts are paid at senior officer levels within the Local Authority's job evaluation scheme, which the Mulberry Schools Trust adheres to. This is because the skills and expertise they bring to the support of education are considerable and highly competitive in the wider London market for such roles. This is particularly true in roles such as HR Director, Chief Finance Officer, Director of ICT, Communications and Governance. All senior roles in the support staff team at the level of Service Head in the Mulberry Schools Trust are awarded pay in relation to performance and so the appraisal process in such cases also informs pay progression.

It is good practice for all staff to have an appraisal and so regardless of pay grade, the Trust continues to operate an appraisal policy for every member of the support staff team.

Principles

Appraisal is central to the provision of high quality, professional and effective services, and as such must be given high priority within the normal workload.

It represents the more formal and structured side of the overall management of individual staff members, helping and being informed by the normal day-to-day processes of dialogue and supervision.

The principle aims of appraisal for support staff are to:

- Set overall work plans and targets
- Monitor individuals' progress against their work plan and objectives
- Recommend pay progression within the job grade where appropriate
- Challenge and develop the postholder
- Assess how the overall job may be changing and consider re-evaluation of the post where appropriate
- Assess how the overall job may be changing and consider re-evaluation of the post where appropriate
- Identify new areas for training and skills development
- Enable regular feedback in a two-way dialogue
- Build trust and encourage professional growth

Roles

As with the appraisal policy for teachers, the Trust will have a strategic role in agreeing this appraisal policy for support staff, ensuring that their performance is regularly reviewed and for monitoring the performance management process. The HR Director is responsible for implementing the support staff's appraisal policy and ensuring that reviews take place. The Business and Resources Manager and HR staff for each school in the Trust ensures the policy is implemented effectively and reports the HR Director and Head teacher for each school.

Appraisal involves both the line manager and the post holder working together to ensure that targets are discussed and agreed, objective feedback is given, adequate coaching and that training and development are provided.

Responsibility for Reviews

The HR Director in conjunction with the school HR team, shall determine who will have responsibility to carry out appraisals for each member of support staff. The number of post holders appraised by a line manager will normally be limited to no more than six.

Timing of reviews

In order to ensure uniformity with teaching staff the appraisal cycle will normally encompass the academy working year.

The timetable for the support staff appraisal cycle is:

- **Academic year**– there should be a formal review meeting, in October and May. The first meeting should review and / or set targets and the second should assess progress and obtain feedback.

The whole review process will inform the Trust’s management policies and the School Improvement plans for financial and academic years. It will identify the costs of development and training discussed in review meetings.

Appraisal Cycle

The appraisal scheme for support staff is the process by which performance of individuals will be evaluated and assessed. The scheme is complemented by a dialogue about staff development where the learning and training needs of staff will be determined.

1. Key features of the Scheme

- Each member of support staff will have an annual Review meeting (normally in September / October) with his/her line manager where the previous year’s performance will be jointly reviewed and new targets set for the following year. In addition a personal development plan will be considered and determined for the next year.
- As part of the scheme support staff will have a one to one meeting in May of each year to support the process and assess how things are going
- The scheme is based on assessing performance against pre-set targets. These targets allow for team, service and organisational assessment in addition to the assessment of the individual.
- By assessing performance against targets the scheme is made as fair as possible concentrating on tasks and achievement rather than individual personal characteristics. It also gives support staff an opportunity to agree their own targets and to carry out a form of self-assessment.
- Account will be taken of any significant new duties unforeseen in the job description which the staff member has taken on since the previous appraisal
- If agreement cannot be reached between a line manager and a member of staff, the matter will be referred to the HR department.
- The Trust is committed to all aspects of equal opportunity. These are reflected at all stages of the appraisal scheme and service planning process.

In this regard it is essential that all members of staff have the opportunity to have an effective appraisal.

2. Preparation for the Appraisal Meetings

- The line manager is responsible for planning the appraisal meetings and should agree dates/times with members of staff at least one week prior to the meeting.
- Prior to the meeting, each member of staff will be expected to complete a self-review using the school's support staff pro-forma and pass it to the line manager before the appraisal meeting. (See attached).
- The member of staff should have a copy of their completed training and development record for the meeting.
- The line manager should use the self review form and appraisal record to prepare for the meeting.

3. The Appraisal meeting

The appraisal meeting should include the following key elements:

- Reviewing the past period: a joint review of performance over the past period – a discussion of how the member of staff has met the agreed targets.
- Planning for the future: agreeing and confirming the main accountabilities, objectives and specific targets.
- Identification of training and development needs and planning how to meet them.

4. Conducting the Review Meeting

- The meeting should be held in a quiet and confidential space, with no interruptions.
- Agreeing and setting targets is crucial, it is only by setting clearly defined targets that performance can realistically be assessed. Targets need to be linked to school priorities and reflect the nature and scope of the individual's role and job description.

- The setting of targets is not a “one off” exercise. Targets will constantly be under review to reflect the constantly changing priorities and constraints of the organisation. It may be necessary in some circumstances to alter or amend some targets during the course of the performance period.
- Targets need to meet the following criteria and be:
 - i. Specific* *Each target concerned with a single topic*
 - ii. Measurable* *Is their attainment measurable*
 - iii. Agreed* *Each target should be agreed*
 - iv. Realistic* *Are the targets related to the post holders duties*
 - v. Time bound* *Each target should have a target end date*
 - vi. Stretching* *Are the targets challenging*

The HR Director’s targets will be set by the CEO.

Targets for support staff will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. Setting more than three targets may lead to staff experiencing unreasonable workload and pressure, making targets more difficult to achieve. Therefore, other than in the case of senior support staff in the Executive Central Services team, support staff will not be given more than three targets. Senior support staff, whose pay progression is related to performance, may have more than three targets to allow coverage of their responsibilities, although the same considerations should apply with regard to workload that apply to other support staff.

The targets set for each member of support staff are intended to contribute to the school’s or the Trust’s plans for improving provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at a particular school or within the Trust. This will be ensured by quality assuring all targets set against the school improvement plan or other appropriate Trust plans / strategies. Targets will also take into account professional aspirations. Targets set should reflect relevant contractual hours and conditions of service.

5. Pay progression within the job grade

Where individual members of staff have performance related pay and are eligible for progression within their job grade, the line manager may recommend this on the basis of fulfilment of targets taking into account their other achievements in the review period.

6. Consideration of the grade of the job

Where the appraisal reveals evidence of a permanent significant change to the duties and responsibilities of the post outside those in the job description, the line manager should refer to HR for a possible re-evaluation of the post under the Trust's job evaluations scheme.

7. Supporting the member of staff through training and development

- An essential element of an effective review is the identification of training and development needs and planning how to meet these needs. Future training and development actions should be agreed and noted on the appraisal review record.
- Priority will be given to job-related training to ensure all staff are able to carry out their duties and responsibilities to achieve their individual objectives.
- It is essential that managers and employees share responsibility for learning and development.

8. Administration of the Support Staff Appraisal scheme

Role of the HR department:

- To ensure the process is being carried out as effectively as possible
- To ensure that there is consistency across the support staff structure
- To ensure managers conduct appraisal meetings on the agreed dates
- To evaluate the quality of documentation from the appraisal meeting
- To consider and decide on any disagreements about appraisal meetings highlighted by employees
- Provide information to the Trust's Pay Committee on the effectiveness of the appraisal scheme for support staff

What happens if the member of support staff disputes his / her appraisal

There is a review process set out in the Trust's pay policy for any dispute of an appraisal policy decision. The Trust's reviewing officer for any disputes not resolved with the CEO is the Vice Chair of the Trust Board. The same process for review of decisions in the pay policy should be followed for any dispute of appraisal.

Support Staff Appraisal Self Review Form

The purpose of this self-review is to help you reflect on your work performance over the past period as preparation for the review discussion with your line manager. Think about the questions and use the form to make notes. Give this document back to your line manager prior to your Appraisal meeting.

SELF-REVIEW

What do you see as the main objectives and targets in your work?

Are you achieving these objectives and targets, what is not going well and why?

What training and development have you had since your last review and what impact has it had?

What support do you need from your manager to help you/other issues for discussion

Support Staff Appraisal Record Form

The purpose of this document is to provide a structure for the review meeting, and a formal record of the key points discussed and objectives / actions agreed. This review should take place twice per year.

REVIEWING THE PAST PERIOD

Key points from Self Review by member of staff

Comment on whether previous objectives met, achievements, and blocks to achievement

Record of training and development undertaken and main outcomes

Note of significant issues

Needs for future support, training, development

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Planning for the future - confirmation of main **role objectives and specific targets** for next period: List these

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Training and development actions to be undertaken: List these

<i>Development objective</i>	<i>Development Action planned</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Who</i>

Name of Postholder		Job title	
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Name of Manager		Job title	
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Date of this Review		Date of next Review	
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CONFIRMATION

By Member of Staff

I agree with the outcomes as set out in this record of my Appraisal

Additional comments

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Signature		Date	
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By Manager			
<i>Additional comments</i>			
Signature		Date	