



**LIGHTHOUSE**  
SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP

# **SUPPORT STAFF APPRAISAL POLICY**

## **Non Statutory**

**Policy Approved by the Board of Trustees**

**Signed :**

**Date: 10/02/22**

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## Document History

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This Policy applies to all schools and support staff within the Lighthouse Schools Partnership.

# SUPPORT STAFF APPRAISAL POLICY

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Appraisals are a supportive and developmental process. They help to ensure that support staff are able to continually improve and develop in their role and are designed so that support staff have the skills and support they need to effectively carry out their roles, to be the best they can be, and thereby contribute to and support the best provision for young people. Each member of staff will have an annual Performance Appraisal meeting with their line manager or appropriate Manager. It is essential that one to one meetings throughout the year support the appraisal process, through monitoring progress, providing an opportunity for constructive feedback and ensuring that the necessary support is provided for objectives to be achieved.

Appraisals involve:

- Reviewing performance against principal areas of accountability and previous objectives.
- Celebrating good professional practice.
- Identifying training needs within the context of whole Trust planning.
- Setting objectives.

The purpose of appraisal is to:

- identify the specific contributions support staff make so that they understand how their work contributes to the achievement of the Trust as a whole
- reflect on their performance, so that support staff are aware of what they have achieved or not achieved in the previous 12 months
- improve motivation, attitude and behavioural development, ensuring that all support staff have a clear understanding about the standards of performance expected
- enable management and monitoring of standards, agreeing expectations and objectives, and delegation of responsibilities and tasks for all support staff
- establish individual training needs and enable organisational training needs analysis and planning to take place
- provide a formal, recorded, regular review of an individual's performance, and plan for future development.

### 2. APPRAISAL PERIOD

#### 2.1

The appraisal period for support staff is 1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> August. Support staff who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of period will be determined by the duration of their contract. When support staff commence employment at the Trust, their initial appraisal cycle will commence following the successful completion of their probationary period (where applicable) and may be for less than 12 months to allow it to be brought in line with the Trust's appraisal cycle. When a member of support staff has a period of extended absence (i.e., six months or more) within the appraisal period, for example due to a long-term sickness absence, the objectives for the appraisal period will be adjusted accordingly following the return to work to reflect the reduced time available. Where the support staff member is absent at

the end of the appraisal period and therefore it is not possible to conduct an appraisal, the line manager must ensure that the support staff's record is updated to reflect this.

- 2.2 At this meeting the previous year's performance will be jointly reviewed and new targets set for the following year. In addition, the learning and development plan will be considered and determined for the next year. The individual staff member and manager will consider the evidence gathered and make a joint assessment of the levels of performance and attendance achieved by the individual. This discussion should focus on objective evidence and staff should expect to receive constructive critical feedback as well as positive feedback.

**Before the meeting:** The appraiser should notify the Appraisee in writing or by email at least 1 week in advance of the date of the appraisal meeting, at a time and place that is suitable for both. The appraisee will be given the opportunity to prepare for their review and should undertake a self-evaluation to review their performance against the objectives that were set at the start of the appraisal period and against the wider responsibilities of the role, and to identify any training needs. The Appraisee should complete the performance appraisal form in advance of the Performance Appraisal meeting and send a copy of the form to the appraiser as far in advance as possible of the appraisal meeting.

- 2.3 **Meeting 1 Review the last 12 months (September)** Appraisers are asked to consider the achievement of individual team members. Achievements should be linked to stated targets as set out in the previous Performance Appraisal review, team, departmental and annual strategic plan. Members of staff should assess their own achievements, levels of performance and reflect on their development over the last year (by using the previous Performance Appraisal documentation.) Each support staff member should be able to provide substantive and clear examples of their level of performance. Both parties are also encouraged to consider the training and development that has been received during the appraisal cycle to assess the impact this has had on performance.

**Meeting 2: The Mid-year Performance Appraisal Review (February/March)** Six months after the Performance Appraisal meeting, a review meeting will take place to ascertain both the individual's performance against targets and objectives but also to ensure that the Trust is fulfilling its obligations in terms of the individual's development through the implementation of the learning and development plan.

The Appraisee should bring any relevant documentation/materials that would aid this process e.g., outcomes of courses attended, research findings, examples of resources made/used, etc. It may be appropriate to redefine objectives or targets at this stage if priorities have changed. A Performance Appraisal Review form is completed and signed as a record of this meeting. The review may involve a mixture of formal and informal evidence gathering and will be based on evidence of what has been achieved during the whole of the appraisal period in relation to the objectives set at the start of the appraisal period, together with an evaluation of the wider responsibilities of the role. The appraiser will also prepare for the review, referring to their notes collected throughout the year. The review will involve a discussion between the appraisee and appraiser and the form will reflect the views of both parties.

- 2.4 Throughout the appraisal cycle, the appraiser and appraisee are encouraged to record events and situations as they occur against appraisal objectives as this will enable both parties to draw upon achievements as well as areas for development in the appraisal review.

### 3. **SETTING OBJECTIVES**

Objectives will be aligned with Trust priorities so that the achievement of them will contribute to the success of the Trust. Objectives will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives will be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) and will be based on the nature of the role, the individual's level of experience and the extent to which professional or other qualifications are required. Where possible, objectives will take into account the professional aspirations of the individual. Where support staff are part time, objectives will be proportionate to the support staff's working pattern.

The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives but if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. Objectives will be moderated by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure that all appraisers are working to the same standards.

The appraiser will take into account the effects of an individual's circumstances, including any disability, when agreeing objectives. When a staff member returns from a period of extended absence, objectives may be adjusted to allow them to readjust to their working environment.

All support staff will have a minimum of two objectives which will focus on the priorities for the appraisal period. In addition to the objectives set, support staff will be required to fulfil the wider responsibilities involved in their post. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.

**Setting Objectives and Targets for the Coming Year:** This is a critical part of the Performance Appraisal review. Objectives should be agreed between the manager and support staff member for the year ahead. The Trust strategic plan as well as individual job roles will feed into individual objectives. The number of targets set will depend on individual circumstances but should not exceed 3. The learning and development needed to support the support staff member in achieving their objectives should be considered and detailed in the learning and development section of the appraisal form. The Appraisee should be given time to reflect before agreeing the 'Performance targets'. Once signed by the staff member and the line manager the annual Performance Appraisal forms must be countersigned by the Appraisers line manager. The original form belongs to the Appraisee and is copied to the Appraiser.

### 4. **DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORT**

Appraisal is a supportive process which will inform continuing professional development. The Trust is proud of the culture of all staff taking responsibility for improving their performance through appropriate professional development, linked to Trust, department and team improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual staff.

### 5. **STAFF EXPERIENCING DIFFICULTY/TRANSFERRING TO CAPABILITY**

Where there are concerns about any aspects of a support staff's performance at any point during the appraisal cycle, they will be referred to the informal stages of the capability procedure. If progress remains unsatisfactory their performance will be managed under the formal capability procedure.

### 6. **REVIEWING ANNUALLY**

Support staff's performance will be formally reviewed in respect of each appraisal period. This review is the end point in the annual appraisal process and must take place by September each year, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed throughout the year.

Following the annual review, the support staff member will receive a copy of their appraisal form (TEMPLATE FORMS PROVIDED) which will be written by the appraiser and reflect discussions between the appraiser and appraisee. The appraisal record will include:

- details of the objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- a review of the support staff's performance against their previous objectives and wider responsibilities in the role;
- a reflection of any development the support staff has received in the appraisal period;
- an assessment of the support staff's professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- any aspirations the support staff has for career development and how these can be supported by the Trust;
- a reflection on the support staff's professional successes and achievements.

The review of performance and of professional development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period. In addition to the annual review, there will be at least one interim review between February and March. These will focus on the objectives that were set at the start of the appraisal period, and review performance against these. The interim reviews will also look to identify if any training needs have arisen since the initial review was completed.

A flow chart of the Support Staff Appraisal Process is provided in a flow chart on p.8.

## **7. RECORDS**

The appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality. Written appraisal records will be kept in accordance with the Records Management Policy. The desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the senior management lead for support staff to quality assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. The Performance Appraisal form provides a record of the meeting and has been designed to provide a mechanism for recording targets, key areas of achievement and learning and development needs, as well as providing a format for action planning. Once the forms have been signed by all parties the original form should be provided to the support staff member, a copy of the form should be retained by the manager and sent to HR. The Performance Appraisal Action Plan form will be stored confidentially.

## **8. TRAINING & CPD**

All appraisers will be briefed on the operation of this policy as necessary and will receive training support as required in order for them to be able to discharge their duties under this policy effectively. The learning and development plan must be based on the objectives and performance standards to be achieved along with consideration of the support staff's wider professional development needs.

The Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all staff take responsibility for their continued professional development (CPD). Professional development will be linked to the Trust strategic plan and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities

of individual staff as detailed in appraisal form. Support staff can request for a secondment via the 'Opportunities Register' which is part of the Appraisal form.

## **9. GENERAL PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THIS POLICY**

- 9.1** If a support staff's performance is referred to the capability policy, this will be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the ACAS Code of Practice.
- 9.2** Performance appraisal does not replace the need to take remedial action under the Trust's capability policy where there is lack of capability. Where performance is below required standards managers should provide support to support staffs to bring about an improvement through normal management practice and one-to-ones. If competence issues cannot be resolved through normal management action, they should be dealt with under the Trust's capability policy. Where the Trust's capability policy is applied, the support staff should not be appraised until use of the capability procedure is satisfactorily concluded.
- 9.3** The Trust is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation. The Chief Executive will have overall responsibility for the quality assurance of the appraisal process across the Trust, and each Headteacher in the Trust. This will include ensuring the consistency and equality of application of the process throughout the Trust. The Chief Executive may delegate responsibility for monitoring consistency and equality of application to a member of the senior management team.
- 9.4** The Appraisee can submit information as part of the final appraisal meeting to support their case however there is no formal right of appeal against the appraiser's decision. In some cases it may be possible to agree to disagree. Should staff still have concerns, then they are able to follow the Trust's grievance procedure.
- 9.5** Where a member of support staff raises a grievance during the capability procedure the capability procedure may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and capability cases are related it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

## **10. SUPPORTING POLICIES;**

LSP Pay Policy  
LSP Records Management Policy  
LSP Data Protection Policy

## PROCESS FOR SUPPORT STAFF APPRAISALS

