



## HR: Staff Appraisal Policy

<b>Review Due:</b>	July2021
<b>Last Review</b>	September 2020
<b>Applicable to:</b>	All Trust Schools
<b>Reviewed By:</b>	SP
<b>Approved By:</b>	Board of Trustees September 2020

### Comments:

This policy has been reviewed in line with the Trust Board's review schedule. It ties together appraisal procedures for both Teaching and Support staff and provides guidance on the appraisal process and how it links to the development of Trust staff and pay progression. The policy is in line with Teacher Performance Management regulations as well as the relevant prevailing legal framework. Draft approved by external HR Consultants.

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The Board of Trustees of The Partnership Trust have agreed this policy. This policy applies to all schools within The Partnership Trust.

### 1. Preamble

- a. This policy aims to:
  - Set out the arrangements for appraising teachers and support staff, including the process and the responsibilities of individuals
  - Ensure consistency and fairness across the school
  - Create a process where professional development is supported and encouraged, in the context of the school’s latest Ofsted report, the school improvement plan, the Teachers’ Standards and the Trust’s vision for its staff.
  - Ensure all staff have the skills and knowledge they need to fulfil and excel in their role and provide, or support others to provide an excellent education to our pupils
- b. The policy applies to all staff employed by the Trust for one term or more except those undergoing induction/probation and those undergoing capability procedures.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

- a. As a Multi Academy Trust, The Partnership Trust (“the Trust”) is not obliged to follow the regulations that apply to maintained schools (ie. The Education (School Teachers’ Appraisal) (England) Regulation 2012) however, Trustees have decided to broadly follow these regulations for the appraisal of Teaching Staff.

- b. The new regulations place a legal obligation on qualifying schools to have an appraisals procedure in place for all teachers and a capability procedure in place for all staff.
- c. Refer to appendix one for information relating to regulation applicable to the appraisal of Teaching staff.

### **3. Guiding principles**

- a. In its oversight of the appraisal system, the Trust Board and each school's local governing body (LGB) are committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and to stay within the prevailing legal framework applicable to all employers; for example, the Equality Act 2010, the Employment Rights Act 1996, the Part-Time Workers Regulations 2000, the Fixed Term Employees Regulations 2002 and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- b. The latest School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD), Teachers standards and National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers during the appraisal period.
- c. The Headteacher will moderate all planning statements to check that the agreed plans are consistently weighted between employees who have similar levels of responsibility and that the plans comply with the school's appraisal policy.
- d. The appraisal process and the supporting documentation will be treated with strict confidentiality at all times. Only those who need access to such information will be granted access to enable them to discharge their responsibilities as directed by the school/Trust. Appraisal information will be anonymised when the information is reported to the Local Governing Body and Trust Board. Appraisal records will be kept securely in the appraisee's personnel file.
- e. The LGB will monitor the operation of the appraisal system and review it through receipt of an 'Annual Appraisal Statement' provided by the Headteacher

### **4. Definitions**

In this policy, the following definitions apply:

- Headteacher refers to Headteacher and/or Executive Headteacher,
- Teachers refers to teachers, middle and senior leaders.
- Support staff refers to all staff who are not employed as Teachers.

### **5. Purpose**

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers and support staff for supporting their development needs within the context of the Trust/school's improvement plan.

## **6. The Appraisal**

- a. The CEO (or member of the Executive Team as delegated by the CEO) must appraise the performance of a Headteacher. In turn, the Headteacher of a school is responsible for ensuring the review of the performance of every other teacher and member of support staff employed at the school.
- b. Appraisal meetings should be held during normal working hours and should be scheduled for at least one hour or longer if necessary.
- c. The purpose of the appraisal meeting is to review the employee's current job, their performance and their future plans. More specifically, the meeting will also be an opportunity to discuss how the employee can contribute to the wider work of the school and to agree and set a number (typically 3) of objectives (if more than three objectives are required this will be discussed and agreed). The objectives must be fair, reasonable and achievable.
- d.

## **7. The Appraisal Period**

- a. For teachers and support staff ,the appraisal period will be for 12 months and will begin on 1 September; it must be completed by 31 October for teachers and by 31 December for Headteachers. Mid-year review meetings may also be held if agreed and considered necessary. This could be by the request of the appraisee or following concerns from the management.
- b. Where a teacher or member of support staff starts their employment or transfers to a new post within the school part way through a performance management cycle, the Headteacher, or in the case where the employee is the Headteacher, the CEO, shall determine appraisal arrangements for the remainder of the appraisal period, with a view to bringing their cycle into line with the cycle for other teachers and support staff as soon as possible.
- c. Where a teacher or member of support staff is employed on a fixed term contract for a period less than 12 months, the length of the appraisal period will be determined by the duration of the contract.

## **8. The Appraisers**

- a. All appraisers should be provided with appropriate training.
- b. For the CEO
  - i. The Trust Board may appoint an external adviser for the purposes of providing it with advice and support in relation to the appraisal of the CEO. The qualifications and experience required of an external adviser are not set by regulation. It is for the Trust Board to decide who they wish to use as an external adviser, ideally with the agreement of the CEO. The Trust Board will be the appraiser for the CEO, and will discharge this particular responsibility on its behalf, to the Chair of the Board and one other independent Trustee. CEOs can raise an objection to the Chair of Trustees, in writing and with good reason, outlining why an appointed Trustee should be excluded from the appraisal process.

- ii. Any external adviser is not responsible for determining a recommendation to the Pay Committee on whether an increment should be paid to the CEO, following the review; this is a matter for the Trust Board pay committee alone. However, Trustees can ask for advice and should take account of any advice offered.

c. For the Headteacher

- i. The CEO as line manager will be the appraiser for the Headteacher. The CEO may delegate this responsibility to a member of the Executive Team.
- ii. The appraiser will engage with the Chair of the LGB to ensure that the views and observations of the LGB are incorporated into the process. The LGB contribute to the processes of Headteacher performance management through the Chair and being informed of the completion of the process by the Trust.
- iii. The Headteacher can raise an objection to the CEO in writing and with good reason, outlining why a member of the Trust Executive Team should be excluded from the process. Where objections are rejected by the CEO, the Headteacher should be advised in writing.

d. For all other employees

- i. The Headteacher is responsible for the appraisal of all other employees but may delegate this responsibility to others who normally have line management responsibility for those they appraise.
- ii. Employees should be able to object to the appointment of an appraiser, on professional grounds, in writing to the Headteacher who will consider this and make a decision. Where the objections are rejected by the Headteacher, the employee should be advised in writing.

## 9. Objective setting

- a. The setting and agreement of objectives is fundamentally important to the effective operation of a performance management system. The job description can be a particularly useful place to begin the process of identifying relevant objectives for each individual job holder. However, the job description is just one 'reference document' that can be a helpful context to the process of setting and agreeing objectives. Other useful 'reference documents' may include the School Improvement/Development Plan, the School's Business Plan, the Ofsted School Inspection Report, the Teachers' Standards or the 'Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants'.
- b. In addition, it may be prudent to allow for some flexibility in the setting and agreement of objectives with the appraisee to enable objectives to be set and agreed around issues that are emerging for the school or the Trust and that require some dedicated attention that is best articulated as one or as a set of objectives. On the grounds that emerging issues are unlikely to be known at the outset of an appraisal period, objectives may need to be adjusted throughout the appraisal period so that they remain relevant to the performance and development of the individual and to the priorities of the school. This is considered to be perfectly standard practice; the ideal outcome for all parties is that

the overall weight of objectives is broadly or proportionately the same at the conclusion of any subsequent 'objectives' discussion.

- c. Objectives should be CSMART:

Challenging, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed

- d. Professional standards for Teaching staff should be considered when setting objectives and the appraiser should refer to the further information in appendix one.
- e. Professional standards for support staff are non-mandatory and non-statutory but individual schools may use the 'Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants' or any other professional standards they feel are appropriate for support staff roles.
- f. Objectives should also be fair and equitable when judged across employees with similar roles and responsibilities.
- g. Headteachers may use their discretion regarding the setting of objectives for support staff. The Trust recognises that they may not be appropriate for every role.
- h. The Trust Board must, before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, in relation to the CEO, inform the CEO of the standards against which their performance will be assessed and set objectives for the CEO for the appraisal period.
- i. The CEO must, before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, in relation to a Headteacher, inform the Headteacher of the standards against which their performance will be assessed and set objectives for the Headteacher for the appraisal period.

## **10. Reviewing Performance and the Annual Assessment**

- a. At the end of the cycle, assessment of performance will be on the basis agreed at the beginning of the cycle.
- b. In determining an appraisal, the appraiser must assess the performance in the appraisal period, apply the relevant 'Standards', assess performance against the agreed objectives and assess the professional development needs as well as identifying any action that should be taken and, finally, if relevant, include a recommendation relating to pay.
- c. It will be for individual schools to establish their own arrangements for determining the overall evaluation of individual performance. Many schools may wish to continue to use their existing arrangements for evaluating individual performance, applying the Teachers' Standards where appropriate. In their School Inspection Handbook, Ofsted also provide some useful 'grade descriptors' that schools may find helpful in determining the overall assessment of teachers' performance.
- d. A written appraisal report must be provided at the conclusion of the appraisal process – this should be within the academic year for support staff, by 31<sup>st</sup> October for teachers and by 31<sup>st</sup> December for

CEO/Headteachers; the report must record the overall performance assessment and, where applicable, pay recommendation.

- e. Good progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective, even if the performance criteria have not been met in full, may be assessed favourably. If agreement cannot be reached, especially on the outcomes of an appraisal meeting, the employee may appeal to the Headteacher or in the event that the appraisal was carried out by the Headteacher, the CEO; the Headteacher may appeal to the chair of the Trust Board, whose decisions will be final.
- f. If no, or insufficient improvement has been made against the performance objectives within the appraisal cycle, employees will be invited to a transition meeting to determine whether formal capability proceedings will be invoked. In these cases, employees should refer to the Trust Capability Policy.
- g. The overall assessment of performance and its subsequent performance evaluation for individual members of staff will be subject to a process of moderation, arrangements for which will be put in place by the Headteacher with the approval of the LGB.
- h. The final version of the appraisal documentation will be placed on the employee's file. The sharing of such information is governed by the data protection principles under the Data Protection Act 2018.
- i. The appraiser will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained on the appraisee's personnel file.
- j. Appraisee should have sight of the final document to agree. If agreement cannot be reached, the appraisee should be able to record their comments on the documentation

#### **11. Continuing Professional Development**

- a. The school's CPD programme will be informed by the training and development needs identified through the appraisal procedure. The LGB will ensure in the budget planning, that, as far as possible, appropriate resources will be made available for any agreed training, support and continuing professional development.
- b. Support to meet individual or collective development needs should be provided within the context of the school's improvement plan.

#### **12. Conflict of Interest**

In any circumstances where an individual believes that their participation in any part of the appraisal process amounts or may amount to a 'conflict of interest' they should declare this to their appraiser and/or absent themselves from any part of the appraisal process where they believe that a 'conflict of interest' would or is likely to prevail.

### **13. Staff experiencing difficulties**

When a member of staff is experiencing difficulties in achieving their objectives, support and guidance will be provided through the appraisal process. Where it is clear that a member of staff's personal circumstances are leading to difficulties at work, appropriate support should be offered at the earliest opportunity.

### **14. Monitoring Arrangements**

The Trust Board will monitor and review the effectiveness of the appraisal arrangements for all staff. The Headteacher will monitor objectives and assessments for any teacher and support staff appraisals to ensure consistency. The CEO will monitor objectives and assessments for Headteachers.

### **15. Links with other Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust Capability Policy and the Trust Pay Policy.

## Appendix One – Teachers Appraisal

### 1. Legislation and guidance

- a. As a Multi Academy Trust, The Partnership Trust (“the Trust”) is not obliged to follow the regulations that apply to maintained schools (ie. The Education (School Teachers’ Appraisal) (England) Regulation 2012) however, Trustees have decided to broadly follow these regulations for the appraisal of Teaching Staff.
- b. The following regulation applies to Teachers’ Appraisal

The Education (School Teachers’ Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012, made under the Education Act 2002, came into force on 1 September 2012 and replaced The Education (School Teacher Performance Management) (England) Regulations 2006; the most recent regulations can be found at [www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/115/pdfs/uksi\\_20120115\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/115/pdfs/uksi_20120115_en.pdf)

### 2. Objective Setting

In addition to the requirements under section 9 of the Staff Appraisal Policy,

- i. The Headteacher of a school must, before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, in relation to every member of staff employed at that school, inform **the** them of the standards against which their performance will be assessed and set objectives for them for the appraisal period. The Headteacher may delegate this responsibility to those who normally have line management responsibility for the appraisee.
- ii. The objectives must be set such that they will contribute to the improvement of a school’s educational provision and performance and appraisers will therefore be expected to align individual objectives with the school’s priorities.
- iii. Every effort should be made to achieve agreement on the Headteacher’s objectives; only in the last resort, should targets be imposed on the Headteacher. Similarly, all appraisers and appraisees should look to agree objectives; where agreement cannot be reached, the appraiser will make the final determination.

Objectives should focus on the priorities for the school or individual for the duration of the appraisal cycle. Normally, staff should expect to have no more than (typically) 3 objectives but there is no actual minimum or maximum number. If more than 3 objectives are required, this will be discussed and agreed and will happen in exceptional circumstances

- iv. Objectives will be set out in a planning statement, along with details of any training and support which have been agreed. The planning statement should also specify the evidence that will be collected to support the review of performance including details of the arrangements for task or classroom observation, where relevant.
- v. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.

### 3. Teachers' Standards

- a. The performance of all teachers, regardless of their career stage, will be assessed against the Teachers' Standards. The standards define the minimum level of practice expected of trainees and teachers from the point of being awarded QTS. Assessment against the Teachers' (or other) Standards will start from the premise that all teachers are routinely meeting the teachers' standards.
- b. The standards against which performance must be assessed in respect of a teacher are the set of standards articulated in the Teachers' Standards document and any other set of standards relating to teachers' performance published by the secretary of state as the governing body or Headteacher determine as being applicable.
- c. In order to meet the Teachers' Standards, a teacher will need to demonstrate that their practice is consistent with the definitions set out in Part 1 (Teaching) and Part 2 (Personal & Professional Conduct).
- d. Applying the Teachers' Standards

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in their work and their conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity, have strong subject knowledge and are self-critical. They forge positive professional relationships with those around them and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

- e. Teachers

The Teachers' Standards effectively set out a 'code' of good teaching practice and professional conduct and as such, it would seem to be perfectly reasonable for schools to expect all teaching staff to meet the expectations set out in the Standards document. Teachers will be evaluated against all the elements set out in the Teachers' Standards and it is for schools to put appropriate arrangements in place to achieve a fair and equitable process of evaluation.

- f. Headteachers

Teachers' Standards may be applied to Headteachers as well as to all other teachers. However, on the grounds that only a proportion of Headteachers spend part of their scheduled week teaching, reference should be made by the appraiser to the National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers.

### 4. Gathering the evidence

- a. As part of the overall appraisal process, it will be critically important for all members of staff who are subject to the school's staff appraisal policy to be clear about the evidence that will be required by their appraiser to enable the appraiser to assess their performance and make a substantiated and evidence-based pay recommendation to the 'decision maker'.
- b. Judgements relating to performance should be supported by evidence, agreed at the beginning of the performance cycle. Evidence should show and demonstrate a contribution towards:
  - an increasing positive impact in pupil progress;

- an increasing impact on wider outcomes for pupils;
- improvement in specific elements of practice, e.g. lesson planning;
- an increasing contribution to the work at the school;
- an increasing impact on the effectiveness of staff.

Remove the word “increasing”. More and more and more cannot be demanded. Possibly replace with “continuing”. Bullet point 3 might be better worded by using the words “if required”

c. The evidence gathered by a member of staff will largely be determined by the nature and scope of the agreed objectives and / or the Teachers’ Standards. Examples of evidence may include:

- classroom observations
- task observations
- reviews of assessment results
- reviews of lesson planning records
- internal tracking
- moderation within and across schools
- Headteachers’ walkabouts
- evidence supporting progress against Teachers’ Standards

d. Any classroom or task observations will be carried out in accordance with the schools ‘classroom and task observation protocol’. Classroom observation for appraisal purposes will be carried out by qualified teachers. At least 5 working days’ notice of the date and time of the observation will be given and verbal feedback provided by the end of the next school day in a suitable private environment. Written feedback will be provided within 5 working days. The appraisee has the right to append written comments to the feedback document.

e. For appraisal purposes, the Trust and School are committed to ensuring that classroom and task observation is developmental and supportive and that those involved in the process will:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
- evaluate objectively;
- report accurately and fairly; and
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained.

f. The arrangements for classroom / task observation will be in agreement with the appraisee and appraiser giving appraisee 5 days notice of any observation to be carried out where possible.

g. Where evidence emerges about the appraisee’s performance, which gives rise to concern during the cycle, additional observations may be arranged during the cycle.

h. Despite the fact that there is no longer a limit on the number of observations which can be undertaken for appraisal purposes, within this Trust the total period for classroom observation arranged for any teacher for appraisal purposes will not normally exceed three hours per appraisal cycle, having regard to the individual circumstances of the teacher. There is no requirement to use all of the three hours. The amount of observation for each teacher should reflect and be proportionate to the needs of the individual.

In rare cases the appraisee may choose to benefit from exceeding three hours of lesson observations when they are supportive and developmental in nature.

- i. A Headteacher may determine that it is necessary to collect additional evidence to help inform the evaluation of teaching standards and school improvement strategies. This additional evidence may include walkabouts, task observation, reviews of assessment results and lesson planning records. It may not be practicable to provide advance notice of these additional monitoring activities.
- j. As part of their overall inspection framework, Ofsted wishes to see evidence in schools that the appraisal procedure is used effectively and enables school improvement; if appraisal evidence is not available, this is likely to impact negatively on the Ofsted Inspection Grade for Leadership and Management. It is therefore prudent for schools to generate and retain as much reasonable 'appraisal system' evidence as practicably possible.

## **5. Teachers' Pay progression linked to performance**

- a. The LGB must consider annually whether or not to increase the salary of teachers who have completed a year of employment since the previous annual pay determination and, if so, to what salary within the relevant pay ranges.
- b. All pay recommendations should be clearly attributable to the performance of an employee.
- c. The relevant body must decide how pay progression will be determined, subject to the following:
  - i. The decision, whether or not to award pay progression, must be related to a teacher's performance.
  - ii. A pay recommendation must be made in writing as part of a teacher's annual appraisal report.
  - iii. Where a teacher is not subject to either the 2012 or the 2011 regulations, the relevant body must determine through what process the teacher's performance will be assessed and a pay recommendation made for the purposes of making its decision on pay.
  - iv. Continued good performance, as defined by an individual school's pay policy, should give a teacher or an unqualified teacher an expectation of progression to the top of their respective pay ranges.
  - v. A decision may be made not to award pay progression, whether or not the teacher is subject to capability proceedings.
- d. The relevant body must set out clearly in the school's pay policy how pay progression will be determined. The Headteacher will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put in place to support the links between performance and pay and that rates of pay progression are affordable and comply with prevailing legislation (e.g. Equal Pay).
- e. Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the recommendation made by the appraiser will be based on an assessment of performance against agreed performance objectives. The decision made by the relevant decision-making body will be based on the statutory criteria and guidance set out in the STPCD and the relevant teacher standards.

- f. To move up the main pay range, one point at a time, teachers will need to have made good progress towards achieving their objectives and have demonstrated that they are competent in all elements of the Teachers' Standards. Teaching quality over time should meet expectations.
- g. If the overall appraisal evidence shows that a teacher has demonstrated exceptional performance, the governing body will consider awarding enhanced pay progression, up to a maximum of two reference points (teaching quality over time exceeds normal expectations).
- h. The Trust will consult with staff and union representatives on the establishment of appraisal and pay policies and will ensure that appraisers have the knowledge and skills to apply procedures fairly.
- i. Teachers will work with their appraisers to ensure that there is sufficient evidence to support pay recommendations. Teachers will also keep records of objectives and review them throughout the appraisal period.

## 6. Applications by Teachers to be paid on the Upper Pay Range

- a. Any qualified teacher can apply to be paid on the Upper Pay Range. All applications should include the results of appraisals; where such information is not available, a written statement and summary of evidence that sets out how the applicant has met the assessment criteria will be sufficient. Teachers who have been absent through sickness, disability or maternity may cite written evidence over a 3-year period before the date of the application.
- b. To be assessed successfully, a teacher will be required to meet the criteria set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD):
  - The teacher is 'highly competent' in all the elements of the Teachers' Standards;
  - The teacher's achievements and contribution to the school is 'substantial' and 'sustained'.
- c. **Highly competent.** The teacher's performance is assessed as having excellent depth and breadth of knowledge, skills and understanding of the Teachers' Standards in the particular role they are fulfilling and the context in which they are working
- d. **Substantial.** The teacher's achievements and contribution to the school are significant, not just in raising standards of teaching and learning in their own classroom but also in making a significant wider contribution to school improvement which impacts on pupil progress and the effectiveness of staff and colleagues.
- e. **Sustained.** The teacher must have had two consecutive successful appraisal reports and have made good progress towards their objectives; they will have been expected to have shown that their teaching expertise has grown over the relevant period and is consistently good to outstanding.

## 7. Teaching staff experiencing difficulties related to performance monitoring

- a. 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 referred to the occupational health service who will assess the member of staff's health and fitness for continued employment and whether continuing with monitoring or formal procedures is deemed to be appropriate.

- b. If the appraiser identifies through the appraisal process or through other sources of information, parent complaints for example that the difficulties experienced by a teacher are such that, if not rectified could lead to the capability procedure, the appraiser will, as part of the appraisal process, meet the member of staff to:
  - i. give clear written feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
  - ii. give the teacher the opportunity to comment on and discuss the concerns;
  - iii. give the teacher at least 5 working days' notice that a meeting will be held to discuss targets for improvement alongside a programme of support and remind the teacher that they have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative at any future meetings where capability will be discussed;
  - iv. agree and establish, in consultation with the teacher, an action plan with support that will help to remedy specific concerns;
  - v. make clear, how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed;
  - vi. explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient, improvement is made.
- c. The teacher's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and a reasonable time given for the teacher's performance to improve. During this monitoring period, the teacher will be given regular feedback on progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.
- d. If sufficient progress is made, the teacher should be informed of this at a formal meeting and the appraisal process will continue as normal.
- e. If no, or insufficient improvement has been made, the teacher will be invited to a transition meeting to determine whether formal capability proceedings will be invoked. In these cases refer to the Trust Capability Policy.

## **Addendum for 2020 and the impact of partial closures of Schools due to Covid-19**

### ***The DfE have made it clear that for the 2019/20 appraisal cycle:***

“We would expect schools to use their discretion and take pragmatic steps, consistent with the Education (School Teachers’ Appraisal) (England) Regulations 2012 to adapt performance management and appraisal arrangements to take account of the current circumstances, for example, by basing performance on the period schools were open, adjusting, if necessary, for expected trajectory had there been no closures.”

At The Partnership Trust, we recognise that some objectives set for the 2019-20 period, which may or may not have been subject to a mid-year review, may not have been achievable post-20th March 2020.

Our approach is inclusive for all staff: Teachers and support staff who are subject to performance management/appraisal will not suffer any detriment as a result of school restrictions and staffing arrangements due to COVID-19.

Individual circumstances should be considered: The circumstances of each individual will be part of a conversation about progress and objectives.

### ***Those issues may include:***

- Living alone, struggling with a lack of contact
- Unable to exercise and feeling a real impact on their well-being
- Shielding
- Caring for others
- Bereavement
- A demanding and irregular work rota
- Juggling home responsibilities and shifting workloads

### ***In these circumstances, an evidence-based review will apply:***

- Evidence is vital and any judgement regarding the progress towards objectives will be based on agreed, documented evidence available on or up to 20th March 2020.
- Evidence which is inaccessible in the current circumstances will be included in any review of progress.
- Staff are entitled to draw attention to any relevant information post 20th March as part of the dialogue with their reviewer but staff who chose not to do so will not be disadvantaged.

### ***Communication:***

Schools should continue to provide clear documented guidance and record keeping at all times during the appraisal process.

### ***A potential action plan:***

The Trust recommends that school leadership make decisions on some key operational elements as a school and then ensure that all line managers are very clear about agreed protocols. It is important to put everything in writing.

***Some examples to think about:***

***Objectives:***

- Line managers should revisit the objectives set prior to any professional dialogue to consider which elements of the agreed evidence are likely to be available and communicate this to the teacher or support staff before the review. They should then consider, as part of a professional conversation, what progress against objectives was reasonably achievable ahead of the school closure on 20th March 2020.
- Ensure line managers know they should NOT modify objectives or set new ones.
- Don't ask for new evidence – the evidence required was agreed when the objective was set or possibly modified before the lockdown. Only this evidence should be brought forward and only if this is possible.
- Keep staff informed – make sure they know what to expect, how objectives will be assessed and what will and will not be used to assess progress

***These points could be then expanded to give more detail for staff and managers:***

- Any objectives set that rely on the outcomes of student data will be 'null and void' for the 2019- 20 performance management cycle.
- Schools should ask staff to provide evidence to support the completion of their objectives where possible up to Friday 20th March 2020. In the event of any lockdown or school closure, some of this evidence may be inaccessible so it can be validated once it is available.
- If line managers have the evidence, they should document what and where.
- Line managers need to be mindful of staff personal circumstances and take this into account when discussing progress towards their objectives.
- Consider what progress against objectives was realistic before the lockdown. What could have been reasonably achieved before initial closure on 20th March 2020?

***Mid-year reviews:***

Many schools will have been in the process of carrying out mid-year reviews at the point of lockdown which may or may not have been completed. The Trust recommends that all schools conduct mid-year reviews this year in order to provide more robust evidence and greater opportunity for staff to reflect on their objectives in a structured way.

***Some useful steps now would be:***

- Carry out a simple audit that identifies for each member of staff whether a mid-year review has taken place to review progress towards the achievement of objectives for 2019-20. Was the review

documented? Were staff fully engaged in the dialogue and were both successes and concerns recorded?

- If mid-year reviews did take place, follow up with line managers to identify any issues that were raised and determine whether:
  - Support had been offered to overcome identified challenges.
  - Progress had been made or work was in progress to overcome challenges.
  - There was not enough time to achieve any outcomes or progress to be identified.
  - Objectives had been changed to reflect any changes to an individual's circumstances (prior to 20th March 2020, non-COVID related).
  - Progress towards the achievement of objectives was noted.
- If mid-year reviews did not take place and have not done so since the lockdown ask line managers to begin a conversation with individual team members to 'look back' before 20th March 2020 to determine how progress towards objectives was being made and document that conversation. As above, this dialogue needs to be a supportive conversation which is mindful of the individual's circumstances regarding wellbeing, caring for others and so on.

### ***Monitoring staff post-lockdown:***

Clearly, it is important to ensure that schools monitor their staff in this situation. As at any other time, school leaders should set out their expectations of staff in line with the needs of the school and the needs of the teams within it.

It would be a good idea to give written guidance on those expectations and to monitor staff in achieving the aims required. However, it would not be appropriate to use this as part of the annual performance management review of your staff unless they are in breach of their terms of employment or evidently not meeting the teacher standards. In this instance, using the professional standards as a frame of reference for the expectations of staff professional practice is an important safeguard.