



*I have come that they may have life and have it to the full
(John 10:10)*

APPRAISAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR SUPPORT STAFF

This policy is taken from the OLHOC Trust Handbook of Statutory policies and should be read in conjunction with the other policies within the document.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Subject to Section 1.2 below, this Appraisal Policy and Procedure applies to you if you are a member of support staff (hereinafter referred to as an “employee” or “you”).
- 1.2. This policy does not form part of any employee’s contract of employment and is not intended to have contractual effect. The policy may be amended by the Trust at any time and employees will be informed of those changes.
- 1.3. This Appraisal Policy and Procedure does not apply to those employees who are employed under a contract of employment for less than one term and those who are subject to the Trust’s Capability Policy and Procedure.

2. Scope

- 2.1. The purpose of this Appraisal Policy and Procedure is to establish a framework for a clear and consistent review of the performance of employees and for supporting their development within the context of the Trust’s plan for improving educational provision and performance and in order to enhance the professional practice. The review shall have regard to any applicable codes of practice or standards applicable to the employee’s employment as referenced in their job description.
- 2.2. The Trust is committed to ensuring respect, objectivity, belief in the dignity of the individual, consistency of treatment and fairness in the operation of this Appraisal Policy and Procedure. This commitment extends to promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating unlawful discrimination throughout the Trust community, which includes all of the academies in the Trust.
- 2.3. The Trust is committed to providing a supportive working environment for all employees through this Appraisal Policy and Procedure. Concerns about an employee’s performance will always be addressed in the first instance through the operation of this Appraisal Policy and Procedure. Where it is not possible to resolve concerns through the operation of this Appraisal Policy and Procedure it may be necessary to consider whether to invoke the Trust’s Capability Policy and Procedure in accordance with Paragraph 9.
- 2.4. This Appraisal Policy and Procedure does not form part of any other procedure but relevant information on appraisal, including Appraisal Reports, may be taken into account in relation to the operation of other applicable policies and procedures.
- 2.5. An employee is entitled to have access, by arrangement, to their personnel file and to request the deletion of time-expired records in line with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 2.6. The Trust delegates its authority in the manner set out in this policy.

- 2.7. The Trust is committed to ensuring that the operation of this Appraisal Policy and Procedure does not lead to an unnecessary increase in workload for employees and Appraisers. This Appraisal Policy and Procedure will always be applied in a way which is robust and fair, whilst monitoring the impact on workload for employees, Appraisers, Directors and Governors.

3. Appraisal in a Catholic Context

- 3.1. Appraisal will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all employees have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively within the context of the Trust ethos. It will help to ensure that employees are able to continue to improve their professional practice and develop as professionals in their area of expertise.
- 3.2. Arrangements for appraisal will be conducted in such a way that employees will be secure in the knowledge that their progress and commitment to the Trust are acknowledged.
- 3.3. Appraisal is a time to celebrate achievement wherever possible, as well as for discerning where there is scope for development. Challenge is at the heart of the Gospels. Christ challenged all whom he encountered, each according to their needs and readiness.
- 3.4. This Appraisal Policy and Procedure offers opportunities to ensure justice for employees and students alike and has the potential for the expression of Christian qualities such as honesty, self-knowledge, respect for others and their gifts, recognition of the needs and achievements of others, challenge of self and others, personal growth and openness.

4. The Appraisal Period

- 4.1. The Appraisal Period will run for twelve months from 1 April to 31 March.
- 4.2. Employees who are employed on a fixed-term or temporary contract of less than one year will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning this Appraisal Policy and Procedure. The length of the Appraisal Period will be determined by the duration of their contract of employment.
- 4.3. Where an employee starts their employment with the Trust part-way through the Trust's usual Appraisal Period, the CEO / Principal / Head Teacher shall determine the proportionate length of the Appraisal Period for that employee with a view to bringing their Appraisal Period into line with the Trust's usual Appraisal Period (as per Section 4.1 above) as soon as possible.
- 4.4. Where an employee transfers to a new post within the Trust or any other academy within the Trust part-way through an Appraisal Period, the CEO / Principal / Head Teacher shall determine, in discussion with the member of staff, whether the Appraisal Period should be re-set and whether the Appraiser should be changed.

5. Appointing Appraisers

- 5.1. The CEO / Principal / Head Teacher will appoint an Appraiser to appraise each employee of their local academy during the Appraisal Period. Appraisers should have received appropriate training for the role.

- 5.2. The Appraiser will set the employee objectives in accordance with Section 6 below.
- 5.3. The Appraiser, through the CEO / Principal / Head Teacher and / or Governing Board, may seek advice from other external advisers including, but not limited to, the Diocesan Schools Commission.
- 5.4. Where it becomes apparent that an Appraiser appointed by the CEO / Principal / Head Teacher will be absent for the majority of the Appraisal Period, the CEO / Principal / Head Teacher may perform the duties of the Appraiser or delegate those duties to another employee for the duration of the absence.
- 5.5. Where an employee has an objection to the choice of Appraiser, their concerns will be carefully considered by the CEO / Principal / Head Teacher and, where it can be reasonably accommodated, an alternative Appraiser will be provided.

6. Setting Objectives

- 6.1. Appraisal objectives should reflect the Catholic identity and mission of the Trust and the values it proclaims¹ and Appraisers are expected to explore the alignment of such objectives with the Trust's priorities and plans, working at all times to ensure that the Catholic ethos is developed, preserved and maintained.
- 6.2. The Appraiser and the employee will engage in a professional dialogue with a view to agreeing no more than **three** objectives which shall be reasonably achievable during the course of the Appraisal Period taking into account the professional development aspirations of the employee. Part time employees should have less targets than their full time equivalent. Objectives may be revised following discussion with the employee if circumstances change. The Trust operates a system of moderation to ensure that all appraisals are carried out in a consistent manner. Objectives will be moderated across all the academies within the Trust to ensure that they are consistent between employees with similar experience and levels of responsibility. Should the objectives not be agreed, a record of the employee's comments in relation to the objectives set shall be added to the appraisal documentation but the final decision on allocation of objectives rests with the Appraiser.
- 6.3. The objectives set for each employee will, if achieved, contribute to the Trust's plans for improving educational provision and improving the progress, development and well-being of the students at the Trust. This will be ensured by quality assuring all objectives against the Trust's improvement plans for it and its academies.
- 6.4. Objectives, where met, should contribute to improving the progress, development and well-being of students at the Trust as understood in relation to the Catholic nature of the Trust and so include the academic, spiritual, moral, social, emotional and cultural development of each student.
- 6.5. The objectives set will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the employee's role and level of experience.

¹ Such values should include the principles of Catholic social teaching in respect of justice for all, the needs of the whole person, respect for the individual and the community and the preferential option for the poor. More information about these principles and how they might apply in the context of appraisal can be found in the CES User Guide.

- 6.5.1. **Specific** means that objectives are clearly defined and well understood by you and your appraiser – they identify the expected work / behaviour and achievement / outcome in precise terms to help you and your appraiser consider whether the objective has been achieved.
- 6.5.2. **Measurable** means that you can decide whether the objective has been achieved by reference to the appropriate evidence.
- 6.5.3. **Achievable (or attainable)** means that the objectives are realistic and linked to factors within your control – they may be stretching targets (although the degree of challenge should be recognised when progress is assessed) but should not be impossible to achieve or be outside your control. This should also take into account what a part-time or temporary teacher can achieve compared to a full-time equivalent.
- 6.5.4. **Relevant** means that the objectives are linked to the school or department development priorities – but also that they are linked to your own professional development.
- 6.5.5. **Time-bound (or time-limited)** means that the objectives have a clear timetable for progress and achievement, with interim milestones where appropriate, to help you assess how you are progressing towards them.
- 6.6. The Appraiser will take into account the Trust's work / life balance strategy and the effects of an individual's circumstances, including any disability requiring the implementation of reasonable adjustments, when agreeing objectives and Appraisers will include a review of an employee's workload in the Appraisal Report.
- 6.7. Following discussion between the Appraiser and the employee, set objectives may be revised by the Appraiser in accordance with the needs of the Trust and the employee, and any such revision(s) to set objectives will be recorded in writing and a copy will be provided to the employee.

7. Reviewing Performance

7.1. Gathering Evidence

- 7.1.1. In order to review performance, the Appraiser will need to rely on the available evidence obtained in connection with the employee's performance. The evidence required will depend on the employee's role and where possible, the evidence to be obtained should be agreed when the objectives are set.
- 7.1.2. When collecting evidence, the focus will be on using evidence which is readily available from day-to-day practice wherever possible.

7.2. Observation

- 7.2.1. The Trust believes that observation of work practice is important both as a way of reviewing employee performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development as well as gaining useful information which can inform Trust improvement more generally.

7.2.2. All observation of work in practice will be carried out in a supportive fashion and will not lead to unnecessary increases in workload and all feedback will be developmental.

7.2.3. Employees will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will include discussion with the employee, highlighting their areas of strength and areas that need attention and will determine any appropriate action required.

7.3. Development and Support

7.3.1. Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform the employee's continuing professional development. The Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all employees take responsibility for improving all academies within the Trust through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to the Trust's improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual employees.

7.4. Informal Support

7.4.1. An employee's line manager may identify concerns on an informal basis at any time about any performance falling short of the standards expected by the Trust and/or the Governing Board (as appropriate).

7.4.2. An employee's line manager may also provide informal advice and appropriate support which may include training, coaching, mentoring, counselling, monitoring, working in a professional learning community, learning and development opportunities, supervision, occupational health, or discussing practice with other employees (as appropriate to the employee's role). These arrangements will take into account the employee's workload. Consideration will be given when budget planning to ensure, as far as possible, appropriate resources are made available for the training and support agreed for staff.

7.4.3. Informal support could include reaffirming the expectations that the Trust and/or the Governing Board (as appropriate) has of the employee and what support may be provided to help the employee to meet those expectations.

7.4.4. Informal support may be recorded in writing and may be referred to at a later stage as evidence of an attempt to address the concerns identified using informal support and the outcome of such an attempt. Where any informal support is recorded in writing, the employee will be provided with a copy of any written record and will be given 5 working days to comment on the written record in writing.

7.5. Alternative Support

7.5.1. There may be a situation where the employee's line manager and / or the Appraiser considers that a recent promotion or job change has been a contributory factor in any unsatisfactory performance. In such a case, informal support should be provided as described in Sections 7.4.1 to 7.4.4.

7.5.2. If such informal support is ineffective, the employee's line manager / Appraiser may offer the employee the option of agreeing to voluntarily give up the promotion or job

change as an alternative to proceeding with formal action pursuant to Paragraph 9 of this Appraisal Policy and Procedure.

8. Annual Review

- 8.1. Employees' performance will be formally reviewed in respect of each Appraisal Period by way of an Annual Review.
- 8.2. The Annual Review is the end point to the annual Appraisal Period but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed throughout the year at an interim meeting (which shall be conducted in person or via other appropriate medium, depending on the circumstances) which may take place mid-way through the academic year. Employee workload will be considered when determining the frequency of such interim meetings.
- 8.3. The employee will receive, as soon as practicable following the end of each Appraisal Period but in any event by 31 March, a written Appraisal Report. The employee will have the opportunity to comment on the Appraisal Report in writing.
- 8.4. The Appraisal Report will include:
 - 8.4.1. Details of the employee's objectives for the relevant Appraisal Period;
 - 8.4.2. A review of the employee's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and any relevant standards;
 - 8.4.3. An assessment of the employee's training and development needs and details of any action that should be taken to address them;
 - 8.4.4. A recommendation on pay where that is relevant;
 - 8.4.5. A space for the employee's own comments;
 - 8.4.6. A review meeting will take place after the end of the Appraisal Period to discuss the content of the Appraisal Report and the employee's written comments in the Appraisal Report (if any), to decide any further action required, including setting a period for review of performance, and to inform objective setting for the next Appraisal Period.
- 8.5. Where it has not been possible for employees to fully meet their objectives because the agreed support has not been provided this will be taken into account in the review meeting.

9. Employees Experiencing Difficulties

- 9.1. It is the Trust's aim, when dealing with an employee experiencing difficulties, to provide support and guidance through the appraisal process in such a way that the employee's performance improves and the problem is, therefore, resolved.
- 9.2. Where it is apparent that an employee's personal circumstances are leading to difficulties at work, the Trust will aim to establish informally whether the reason is due to ill-health, lack of competence, misconduct or other mitigating personal circumstances. Support will then be offered and/or appropriate action taken as soon as reasonably practicable, without waiting for the Annual Review detailed in Paragraph 8. Support could include informal advice and appropriate support which may include training, coaching, mentoring,

counselling, monitoring, working in a professional learning community, learning and development opportunities, supervision, occupational health, or discussing practice with other employees (as appropriate to the employee's role). These arrangements will take into account the employee's workload.

- 9.3. If an Appraiser identifies through the appraisal process, or via other sources of information, that the difficulties experienced by the employee are such that, if not rectified, could lead to the Trust's Capability Policy and Procedure being invoked, the Appraiser, the CEO / Principal / Head Teacher or a member of the senior leadership team (as appropriate) will meet with the employee to:
 - 9.3.1. Give clear written feedback to the employee about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
 - 9.3.2. Give the employee the opportunity to comment on, refute, explain and discuss the concerns;
 - 9.3.3. Give the employee at least 5 working days' notice that a meeting will be held to discuss targets for improvement alongside a programme of support and inform the employee that they are allowed to be accompanied at any such meetings by a work colleague or trade union representative.
 - 9.3.4. In consultation with the employee at the above meeting, an action plan with support will be established (e.g. coaching, training, in-class support, mentoring, structured observations, visits to other classes or schools or discussions with other employees, (as appropriate to the employee's role), that will help address those specific concerns;
 - 9.3.5. Make clear how progress will be monitored and when it will be reviewed; and
 - 9.3.6. Explain the implications and process if no, or no sufficient, improvement is made.
- 9.4. The employee's progress will continue to be monitored as part of the appraisal process and a reasonable time will be given for their performance to improve. The relevant monitoring period will depend on the circumstances but will usually be for a period of between four and six working weeks, with appropriate support as agreed in the action plan detailed in Section 9.3.4 above in order that the aim of improving performance can be achieved. During this monitoring period the employee will be given regular feedback on their progress and arrangements will be made to modify the support programme if appropriate.
- 9.5. At the end of the review period referred to in Section 9.4 above, if sufficient improvement is made, such that the employee is performing at a level that indicates there is no longer a possibility of the Trust's Capability Policy and Procedure being invoked, the employee will be informed of this at a formal meeting with the Appraiser. Following this meeting, the appraisal process will continue as normal. The employee will be given at least 5 working days' notice of such formal meeting and notified that they may be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague or trade union representative. The outcome of such meeting will be confirmed in writing to the employee within 5 working days of the meeting taking place.
- 9.6. If no, or no sufficient, improvement has been made by the end of the monitoring period referred to in Section 9.4 above, the employee will be invited to a transition meeting with

the Appraiser to determine whether the Trust's Capability Policy and Procedure needs to be invoked or whether the appraisal process will remain in place. The employee will be given at least 5 working days' notice of such meeting and that they may be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague or a trade union representative. The outcome of such meeting will be confirmed in writing to the employee within 5 working days of the meeting.

- 9.7. Prior to invoking the Capability Policy and Procedure, the Appraiser will seek to ensure that the employee has undergone an appropriate period of induction to their role, an up-to-date job description has been issued to them, professional standards and overall expectations of performance have been made clear and the employee's performance has been monitored and feedback has been provided.
- 9.8. Whilst the Appraisal Report does not form part of any formal capability or disciplinary procedures, any relevant information from the appraisal process including the contents of the Appraisal Report may be taken into account by those responsible for taking decisions about capability and disciplinary matters.

10. Appeals

- 10.1. Employees have a right of appeal against any of the entries in the written Appraisal Report and a separate right of appeal against a decision to invoke the Trust's Capability Policy and Procedure made in accordance with Section 9.6 above. If an appeal relates to a decision about pay, the employee is referred to the Trust's Pay Policy and Procedure.
- 10.2. An appeal in accordance with Section 10.1 must be made in writing to the Clerk and lodged within 10 working days of receipt of the Appraisal Report (which will usually be received in the review meeting referred to in Section 8.4.6) or the date of the letter confirming the outcome of the meeting provided for in Section 9.6.
- 10.3. The appeal letter must set out the grounds of the appeal in detail.
- 10.4. An Appeal Meeting will normally be held within 20 working days of an appeal letter being received by the Clerk.
- 10.5. The appeal will usually be heard by the CEO / Principal / Head Teacher unless they have participated in the appraisal review, which is being appealed, in which case the appeal will be heard by the Chair assisted by a representative appointed by the Local Governing Body (if the Chair deems this is necessary).
- 10.6. The outcome of the Appeal Meeting will be confirmed in writing to you within 5 working days of the date of the Appeal Meeting. The decision reached following the Appeal Meeting is final and there will be no further right of appeal. The possible outcomes of an Appeal Meeting are any one or more of the following (as appropriate):
 - 10.6.1. the entries made in the Appraisal Report are upheld;
 - 10.6.2. the outcome of the meeting provided for in Section 9.6 stands and the Capability Policy is invoked;
 - 10.6.3. the appeal is upheld and any disputed entries in the Appraisal Report are referred back to the Appraiser for reconsideration;

- 10.6.4. the outcome of the meeting under Section 9.6 is overturned and the appraisal process will continue as normal.
- 10.7. Where an appeal is against entries in the Appraisal Report and the outcome of a meeting heard under Section 9.6, the appeals will be heard together. For the avoidance of doubt, it will be possible for the outcome of each appeal, where both entries in the Appraisal Report and the outcome of a meeting heard under Section 9.6 are appealed, to be different.

11. Companion

- 11.1. Where a meeting is held under Sections 9 or 10 above, you may be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative.
- 11.2. You must let the person appointed to hold such meeting under Sections 9 or 10 above know who will be accompanying you at least one Working Day before the meeting.
- 11.3. If you have any particular reasonable need, for example, because you have a disability, the Trust may agree to you being accompanied by a suitable helper, such as a relative or friend.
- 11.4. Your companion can address the meeting in order to:
 - 11.4.1. put your case;
 - 11.4.2. sum up your case;
 - 11.4.3. respond on your behalf to any view expressed at the meeting; and
 - 11.4.4. ask questions on your behalf.
- 11.5. Your companion can also confer with you during the meeting.
- 11.6. Your companion has no right to:
 - 11.6.1. answer questions on your behalf;
 - 11.6.2. address the meeting if you do not wish it; or
 - 11.6.3. prevent you from explaining your case.
- 11.7. Where you have identified your companion and they have confirmed in writing to the relevant person appointed under Sections 9 or 10 that they cannot attend the date or time set for the meeting, the meeting will be postponed for a period not in excess of five working days from the date set by the Trust to a date or time agreed with your companion. Should your companion subsequently be unable to attend the rearranged date, the meeting may be held in their absence or written representations will be accepted.

12. Timing of Meetings

- 12.1. The aim is that meetings under this Appraisal Policy and Procedure will be held at mutually convenient times but depending on the circumstances meetings may:
 - 12.1.1. need to be held when you were timetabled to assist with lessons (if that is appropriate to your role);

- 12.1.2. exceptionally be held after the end of the working day;
- 12.1.3. not be held on days on which you would not ordinarily work;
- 12.1.4. be extended by agreement between the parties if the time limits cannot be met for any justifiable reason.

13. Venue for Meetings

- 13.1. Any meeting held under Sections 9 and 10 may be held off the Trust's premises or local academy site to minimise any distress to the employee.

14. Assistance

- 14.1. Where matters fall to be decided under Sections 9 and 10, the Diocesan Schools Commission may send a representative to advise the Trust.

15. Review of This Procedure

- 15.1. This procedure was produced in September 2013, amended in June 2016, May 2018 and May 2020 by the Catholic Education Service (CES) for use in Catholic Voluntary Academies in England following consultation with the national trade unions. It may be adapted, as appropriate, for use in joint Church academies subject to the approval of the CES on referral by the relevant Catholic diocese.