THE SOCIETAS TRUST

Appraisal Policy & Procedure for Support Staff

Date of Policy	2021
Reviewed and Agreed by	The Directors' Board
Originally Adopted on	9 December 2021
Last Review Date	9 December 2021
Next Review Date	Autumn 2022

1. Introduction

1.1 This Policy has been designed for use with all non-teaching and support staff employed by The Societas Trust ("the Trust").

2. Review

2.1 This procedure/policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended by the Trust at any time, following consultation with recognised Trade unions.

3. Purpose

3.1 This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of non-teaching and support staff. The appraisal procedure may also be used to address and manage relevant areas for improvement raised about an employee's performance which are not concerns serious enough to require a Capability process.

3.2 The policy is also the framework for supporting staff development within the context of plans for improving educational provision and performance. Through the appraisal process the Trust seeks to improve outcomes for children/students by improving morale, encourage staff to update skills and encouraging professional dialogue. This policy will be operated separately to the Capability Policy, where this is relevant.

4. Application of the policy

4.1 The policy will be used with non-teaching and support staff so that a consistent approach in the management of staff is effective across the whole organisation. The headteacher or nominated performance management lead will consider whether it is appropriate to use the appraisal policy for other temporary staff or those subject to probationary period arrangements.

5. Appraisal

Appraisal will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all staff have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It will help to ensure that relevant staff are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop.

5.1 The appraisal period

5.1.1 The appraisal period will run for twelve months from 1 September to 31 August.

5.1.2 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 the period will be determined by the duration of their contract.**

5.1.3 The headteacher or nominated performance management lead will work with the member of staff to determine the relevant appraisal period when employment begins or ends during the normal

appraisal period and will bring the cycle in line with others as soon as possible.

5.2 Appointing appraisers

5.2.1 The headteacher or nominated performance management lead, will decide who will appraise non-teaching and support staff. Appraisers will be suitably skilled to undertake the role. Appraisers will normally have line management responsibility for the appraisee and will be responsible for managing all aspects of the appraisal. The appraiser should have equivalent or greater level of responsibility than the employee he or she is appraising, and normally have line management responsibility.

5.2.2 Where an employee is of the opinion that their appraiser is unsuitable for professional reasons, they may submit a written request to the headteacher or nominated performance management lead for an alternative appraiser, stating the reasons for the request. The request will be considered but ultimately it is for the headteacher or nominated performance management lead to make the decision.

5.2.3 Where possible, alternative appraisers will be offered where there is a genuine and valid reason, or the appointed appraiser is not available due to long term sickness. This will be confirmed with the appraisee at the beginning of the process. Wherever practicable, an appraiser should only have a maximum of four appraisees.

5.2.4 Sufficient time, within directed hours, should be provided to enable the appraiser and appraisee to fulfil their obligations with regard to the appraisal process.

5.3 Setting objectives

5.3.1 The objectives set for every employee will, if achieved, contribute to plans for improving the education provision and the individual's performance.

5.3.2 When setting objectives, the following principles will be used:

i. Objectives which are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART).
ii. Objectives which are relevant, realistic and reasonable for the role, responsibility and experience of the post holder and in the context of the Trust's wider HR policies.
iii. The number and type of objectives will be relevant to leadership/management resource of the development plan, pupil progress objectives (where applicable) and contribute to professional development.
iv. No staff member will be given more than three agreed objectives or additional sub-objectives. Setting more than three agreed objectives may cause increased workload and would be inconsistent with the Trust's strategy for achieving work/life balance for all staff.
v. Objectives themselves should not be based purely on numerical targets and success should not be determined by meeting these.
vi. Objectives should be agreed between the appraiser and appraisee but, where this is not possible, determined by the appraiser. Where agreement cannot be reached, the Headteacher or nominated performance management lead will make a determination following discussion with both parties. The appraisee may add comments to the plan.
vii. The appraiser will take into account the effects of an individual's circumstances when agreeing objectives. For example, this might include a reasonable adjustment to allow an individual slightly longer to complete a task than might otherwise be the case. When

staff return from a period of extended absence, objectives may be adjusted to allow them to readjust to their working environment.

viii. Objectives will be quality assured and moderated by the headteacher or nominated performance management lead.

5.4 Reviewing performance

5.4.1 Observation:

Appropriate mechanisms will be used to review performance for non-teaching and support staff. The overall approach will include the principles set out in Appendix 2 but will need to be relevant to the role. Performance review may include:

i. Review of produced work
ii. Classroom observations of classroom support staff
iii. Observation in meetings or service delivery
iv. Peer review of classroom support staff
v. Discussion and other feedback

5.4.2 Reviewing other supporting information

Other information useful for reviewing classroom based performance may include:

i. Preparation
ii Work sampling
iii. Pupil progress information
iv. Pupil progress meetings
v. Pupil/parental discussion and feedback
vi. Pupil behaviour management

5.4.3 Development and support

Appraisal is a supportive process which will also be used to inform continuing professional and general development. It is important to encourage a culture in which all employees take responsibility for developing their performance and appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs of staff.

The CPD Plan will be informed by the training and development needs identified in appraisees' planning and review statements. In planning and providing budget and resources for staff development, the following will be taken account of:

i. The training and support required to meet priorities
ii. The support agreed as essential for an appraisee to meet their objectives
iii. The future aspirations of all staff
iv. Fair and equal access to development

An account of the support and development needs of staff in general, including the instances where it did not prove possible to provide any of the agreed CPD and the reasons for this not being provided, will form a part of the head teacher's or nominated performance management lead's annual report to the relevant Governing Board about the operation of the appraisal process.

5.4.4 Feedback

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 been assimilated. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

The appraisal meeting should hold no surprises for any member of staff as any concerns over performance should have been raised during the appraisal cycle. The appraiser will give consideration, as with the setting of objectives, to any circumstances which may have impacted on performance. Where any aspects of the employee's performance (as opposed to points for development) are of concern, the appraiser will meet him/her as soon as possible to:

- Give clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- Give the employee the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
- Re-confirm the requirements to be met (including reviewing set objectives to ensure they are achievable)
- Agree any support (e.g. coaching, mentoring, training, structured observations), that will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
- Make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress, allowing an appropriate period of time to address the issues raised;
- Explain the implications and process if no, or insufficient improvement is made
- The appraisee should receive, and be able to comment in writing on the notes of the meeting.

When progress is reviewed, if the appraiser is satisfied that the employee has made, or is making, sufficient progress, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed though that process.

5.4.5 Where concerns continue

Employees should not be held accountable for failing to make good progress towards meeting their objectives where the CPD or support recorded in the planning statement as being required to make progress has not been provided.

No member of staff should be subject to formal Capability procedures without understanding in full that this is the case, the reasons for this process being initiated, and the possible outcomes should the process not result in the necessary improvements.

If, however, despite support and opportunities to improve, the appraiser continues to have serious concerns that inadequate improvement/progress has been made, the appraiser will consider in consultation with the headteacher or nominated performance management lead as appropriate, whether the Capability procedure should be used. Should this be the case the employee will be invited in writing to a meeting under the Capability Policy.

At all stages of the Appraisal and Capability procedures employees are able to seek advice and guidance from their Trade Union representatives.

Where appropriate improvement is achieved under this separate policy and any capability process ceases, the employee's performance and development will be managed again in accordance with the Appraisal policy.

6. Annual assessment

6.1 Each employee's performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period.

6.2 This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed at the half way point.

6.3 The employee will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal a written appraisal report. The appraisal report will include:

- details of the employee's objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- an assessment of the employee's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards;
- an assessment of the employee's training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- other items specified by the appraiser;
- a space for the appraisee's own comments.

The assessment of performance and of training and development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period.

The employee will have the opportunity to comment on the appraisal report in writing.

8. Appeal

8.1 The appraisee may appeal against the Appraisal Report by appealing to the headteacher or nominated performance management lead within 10 working days, setting out the reasons for the appeal and requesting a meeting to discuss their concerns. The meeting will be held in line with the Formal Meeting Procedure. They may be accompanied by a trade union representative/official or colleague. The Employee will be informed in writing of the outcome of the appeal as soon as possible following the meeting, but at the latest within 5 working days of the appeal meeting.

Appendix 1 General principles underlying this Policy

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust's other HR Policies.

Confidentiality

The appraisal processes will be treated with confidentiality. Access to appraisal records will generally be restricted to Appraiser/Appraisee and line manager (where different). However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the headteacher or nominated performance management lead to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system.

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The Trust is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation.

Definitions

Where the term 'working days' is used, it is intended to indicate days on which the organisation is open, and staff are expected to attend; therefore, it includes inset days but specifically excludes periods of closure.

Delegation

Normal rules apply in respect of the Trust's Scheme of Delegation.

Retention

The head teacher or nominated performance management lead will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained and stored in a secure place in line with the Data Retention Policy. The appraisee should retain their own copies.