



# IAPS teacher appraisal guidance

July 2016



## **Appraisal/Professional Development Review/Performance Management Review**

IAPS guidance, updated July 2016

### **TEACHERS/GENERAL**

This document has been requested by IAPS members as a guide to good practice and is available for schools to adapt and use.

#### **What is Appraisal/Performance Management Review (PMR)?**

The purpose of appraisal in schools is to ensure staff effectiveness in achieving school aims. This is achieved through a cyclical review of the focus areas in the working life of each member of staff; his or her relationships with others, teaching and learning (as relevant) and deployment of resources and tasks as set out in the individual's job description. Through appraisal, staff are accountable for their effectiveness in school. Training and improvement targets are set out and reviewed.

The staff team is a school's most valuable resource and effective appraisal values staff achievement and promotes the highest professional standards. Appraisal (performance management review) is a system designed to nurture professional development based on informed judgement and supports encouragement, appreciation and pride in high standards. It should be seen to be a fair process, valuing the work that staff do to support school improvement and outlining areas for further development.

Performance management is one tool in a school's self-evaluation process, encompassing accountability and staff appraisal.

Effective preparation and high quality appraisers are key to a successful process.

Appraisal can be a significant aspect in ensuring high professional standards and motivation for staff.

It is important to allow sufficient time and resource to ensure an effective appraisal system.

Performance management and appraisal processes should

- Identify development needs for individuals and clarify how these will be addressed, by whom and when.
- Focus on improving learning and pupil progress and support whole school improvement
- Culminate in a written statement informing on-going performance management and staff support

#### **Equality**

Performance management review (PMR) procedures must operate in such a way as to ensure that all staff have equality of opportunity to achieve their full potential and are not discriminated against for any reason, for instance because of age, disability, gender, nationality, race, religion, sexual orientation or treated unfairly because they work part-time or are trade union representatives.

Schools must ensure that performance management procedures are outlined in the staff handbook.

### The Appraisal Cycle

Whilst annual appraisal is most common, some schools operate a two-yearly or a three-yearly cycle with interim reviews annually. It is important to ensure that the system and timescale is realistic and achievable.

Preparation and discussion leads to evidence-gathering through observation and interviews, questionnaires and conversations as agreed. Evidence can include work samples, planning documentation and notes from observations.

Preparatory notes/drafts are discussed with the appraisee. A final statement will include supportive comment, reference to evidence and agreed target areas for development, including continuing professional development (CPD) goals.

The outcome of appraisal should be improved performance that will enhance pupils' learning.

### Structure

The appraisee should have every opportunity to be fully engaged in the appraisal process, for instance, in agreeing scope, focus areas and who (staff and pupils) and what (evidence) will be involved.

### Appraisers/Performance Reviewers

The appraiser is key to the success of any performance management system-in particular, his or her communication skills-and appraisers will require training in order to undertake the role effectively. Appraising demands a respectful and empathetic approach and appraisers need to be prepared for the potential challenges and pitfalls of this important task.

Appraisers must be adept at listening, encouraging, questioning, analysing, paraphrasing and summarising. They must be able to coach appraisees through a reflective conversation. The role of the appraiser is to mentor the appraisee in developing self-awareness and setting performance targets.

The appraiser must ensure that there is evidence to back-up comments. Any intuitive comments must be handled sensitively.

### The Appraisal Agenda, focus and preparation

A review of job description, the school's mission statement and aims can be a good starting point.

At an early stage, the appraiser should have a frank discussion about the appraisee's feelings about appraisal whilst outlining the process and agreeing areas of focus. Feedback and progress report dates can be agreed at an early stage so that the appraisee feels confident that s/he is kept informed.

In enquiring about career development/retirement plans and absence patterns, it is important to ensure that all staff are asked the same questions, ensuring equal treatment. Therefore, it is best practice to include such items within the paperwork and ensure that these are dealt with consistently by appraisers.

Focus areas for appraisal can be established through self-review and discussion. This occurs at an early stage of the process and is crucial in establishing an effective working relationship between appraiser and appraisee. It can include talking through the kind of language that will be best used later in evaluative comments, so that the appraisee feels as comfortable as possible with phrases used to discuss performance. Appraisees can feel defensive so it is important that appraiser and appraisee develop trust and understanding in advance of any perceived criticism.

### Talent Management

A rigorous Performance Management Review (PMR) process promotes reflection on practice which can underpin the development of whole school approaches to learning. There is an assumption that all staff will be engaged in professional development activities. Career progression is part of the discussion and supports succession planning. Focusing thoughts on current and future practice can support career development within school, aiding retention. The process draws out the successful qualities of staff and identifies where development needs lie, helping those responsible for CPD to plan worthwhile opportunities which will encourage staff development.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities should be defined for all involved in the process and PMR provides an opportunity to review job description, aims and purpose in the whole school context.

- the Governing Body should have a strategic role in agreeing the school's performance management policy and ensuring that it operates effectively for all.
- the Head is responsible for the appraisal of staff and for implementing the school's performance management policy. The Head should make sure that performance management reviews take place over the agreed timescale and, as a result of those reviews, make recommendations, where appropriate, to the governing body about teachers' pay. The Head should ensure that the monitoring of teaching takes place and that feedback enables teachers to reflect on their performance and participate fully in the discussion. Support staff should have appraisals.

A number of approaches to managing PMR in school may be used:

- a cascade method whereby the reviewer is the reviewee's line manager (eg Bursar or Domestic Bursar for support staff; HoDs for teachers).
- a pool of reviewers from which a reviewee may choose. This approach can clarify the difference between lesson observation for performance review and for monitoring and evaluation standards.

- a mixed approach using a pool reviewer and interview with the head. This has the advantage of the Head knowing the capabilities and ambitions of staff first hand.
- peer review by colleagues. This may seem non-threatening but there can be perceived pressures on the appraiser to be properly objective. Peer appraisal needs to be handled especially carefully.
- If Performance-related Pay (PRP) is to be introduced, this will require very careful planning, objectivity of targets and an annual review cycle. Independent schools are not obliged to provide PRP.
- Ideally, no-one should be responsible for appraising more than eight employees.

Middle managers can benefit greatly from the development of skills associated with running appraisals: coaching, mentoring and professional conversation. It is important that appraisers receive support and guidance in developing these important skills.

Appraisers need to understand the role of the appraisee in school and how his/her position supports overall objectives. Appraisers also need a good working understanding of the appraisal policy (or Performance Review Policy) as set out in their school staff handbook (schools might refer to the publication by the DfE in 2012:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/deployingstaff/b00201884/new-arrangements>).

#### A note for the appraisal of teachers

Lesson observation notes must be included in the appraisal of teachers since the quality of learning in class is of paramount importance to the school and will be a focus of any teacher's appraisal.

It is best practice to seek pupils' views on quality of learning.

Schools should establish peer observation. Notes from routine observations can contribute to appraisal.

ISI inspection advice includes two pages outlining 'how to observe a lesson' and a lesson observation form. See Standard Inspection Guidance on the ISI website ([www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)). Alternative lesson observation paperwork may be used to suit the school's needs.

Lesson observation must focus on learning outcomes.

The focus of appraisal for a teacher might include: planning; teaching strategies; assessment; standards of learning in class.

#### Managers

Focus areas for managers might include: deployment of staff; monitoring of standards and management of resources.

### Appraising heads/bursars/senior staff

For heads, bursars and often for deputies, an external appraiser is brought in by governors. This might be a retired head or consultant. IAPS provides a list of appraisers/reviewers to support and appraise in schools and to provide appraisal training for staff. ISBA provides a similar list for bursar appraisals.

See 'IAPS Performance Management Review of Heads' documentation on the IAPS website ([iaps.uk](http://iaps.uk)) and ISBA website for bursars ([www.theisba.org.uk](http://www.theisba.org.uk)).

### Support staff

It is important to ensure that all members of staff are engaged with performance management in some form.

### Paperwork

Simple paperwork is recommended and schools will develop their own. As a minimum, appraisal forms will require information relating to objectives from the previous appraisal; evidence that the objectives have been achieved/reasons why not; suggested objectives for next year and how they will be achieved including training needs.

Documentation can refer to relevant frameworks and standards set out by, for instance, ISI, TTA, NPQH. The appraisal document will include recognition and praise for the appraisee's achievements, agreed improvement targets and input into training.

Good practice in PMR for teachers is now characterised by encouragement of ongoing reflection on how children learn best and developing effective teaching. It requires teachers to be engaged with and aware of learning processes in their own classrooms and across the school. It also requires up to date knowledge of relevant research and practice. Good PMR assumes that there is co-operative working, sharing and support throughout the whole school: shared professionalism. An outline of expectations of teachers is described in the 'Teachers' Standards'.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/301107/Teachers\\_Standards.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/301107/Teachers_Standards.pdf)

The Standards provide a useful reference for independent schools by ensuring that everybody is familiar with the high standards of professionalism embedded in modern teaching practices. Any school involved in the ISC teacher induction programme of newly qualified teachers will be familiar with the standards since there is reference to them in induction.

### The appraisal statement

There should be no surprises in the final statement because discussion will have been wide-ranging. The appraiser and appraisee need time to consider findings, discuss targets and agree the final statement.

The final statement should not be too long and will be kept on file. A signed copy should be kept by the HR manager in the personnel file and a second signed copy retained by the appraisee. All other paperwork pertaining to the appraisal should be destroyed.

If agreement is delayed and points are under dispute, an appeal process will be invoked.

### Targets

Targets should be discussed and agreed ideally. Training needs should be listed (pending agreement with the member of staff in charge of CPD and bearing in mind likely budgetary constraints) and all targets should be clear, agreed and set to a timescale with follow-up dates which will be adhered to. Success criteria are helpful, demonstrating how it will be known that the individual has achieved a target.

Development targets can include mentoring/coaching, shadowing, sharing best practice with colleagues, change of duties/responsibilities, CPD, reading and research.

There should not be too many targets (usually three) and they should be connected with the raising of standards and professional development ***linked to the schools development plan***. (ie to improve KS2 maths marking). Target areas may be extensions of current work. It is important that follow-up action is taken, ensuring that appraisal feeds in to improved professional effectiveness. Staff will soon lose faith in a system which is not pursued properly and in full.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/537031/160712 - PD Expert Group Guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/537031/160712_-_PD_Expert_Group_Guidance.pdf)

### Summary/Overview of the Appraisal/PMR Process

- Preparatory session: outlining the process and establishing a working relationship. Planning ahead, review of the past year and self-review paperwork. Reflecting on the appraisal process and purpose; looking ahead to likely target areas. Discuss appropriate language for professional conversation and consider focus areas. Relate to personal goals and plans as well as school development. There should be ample opportunity to raise issues which feed-in to whole school development.
- First Meeting: reviewing the performance review cycle and where the appraisee is in this process related to his/her career plan. Discuss objectives for next year. Talk through relevant paperwork. Review job description. Discuss personal, professional aspirations and how those support the school development plan and mission. Discuss barriers and challenges as well as relationships with others. Discuss and agree the process for gathering evidence for this appraisal. Consider professional development needs. Agree timescale and dates for further meetings tracking progress.
- Further Meetings: regular review of the process, progress and findings. A few short, informal meetings might be required to satisfy reviewer and appraisee that the process is well underway and for further discussion of issues.
- Final Meeting: the appraisal statement is discussed in full and the appraisee has time to question and suggest amendments as necessary. Targets should be as specific as possible and timed, with outcomes. The agreed document is passed to the Head before it goes to file. If the Head is not the appraiser then he/she may complete appraisals with a brief, final meeting session. This helps to ensure that all staff feel valued and engaged.

## Final Comments

Appraisal provides opportunities for individuals to focus on professional priorities based on achievements to date and to set targets based on aspirations for the future, in support of overall school aims. Appraisal should remind appraisees of their valuable position with respect to the school's success and should support increasing each individual's positive impact. By focussing on the strengths of individuals by listening and by motivating staff towards improvements, schools move from good to great.

## Useful links, contacts and pro formas

Model Performance Management Policy:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/deployingstaff/b00201884/new-arrangements>

Professional Standards for Teachers:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/301107/Teachers\\_Standards.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/301107/Teachers_Standards.pdf)

Standard Inspection Guidance: [www.isi.net](http://www.isi.net)

NPQH Information: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-professional-qualification-for-headship-npqh>

Independent Bursars Association: [www.theisba.org.uk](http://www.theisba.org.uk)

IAPS website <https://iaps.uk/>

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