**Appraisal 2021/22 – A Managers Guide**

**The introduction**

Introduce the appraisal meeting explaining that it is a joint discussion to reflect on the previous year and to look forward to the next period and encourage and value the individual’s contribution. Complete the relevant fields on the appraisal form.

## **Appraisal year**

It is important to make sure that you complete this field with the correct appraisal year.

The appraisal year looks back over the current year, and then forward to set objectives for the period. This could be September to August or April to March depending on the appraisal process in operation.

# Our aim is to meet

This section is where you and your team member agree the frequency, style and format of your one-to-one meetings over the upcoming 12-month appraisal period.

You should aim to meet termly during the appraisal year or more frequently as mutually agreed. This should be an ongoing fluid process and 1:1 meetings/discussions can contribute to these discussion sessions; there should be sufficient opportunity engagement and to demonstrate progress.

When agreeing how often you will both meet, you will need to balance the individual team member’s preferences with those of the rest of your team.

The most important thing is that communication with your team member is ongoing, and that you link your one-to-one conversations back to the appraisal form to make sure that the objectives are still relevant and achievable.

# How are you?

We are committed to employee health and wellbeing and wants all its employees to thrive at work.

Our wellbeing is influenced by all aspects of our life, both inside and outside the workplace, this includes our physical and mental health, our physical working environment, and whether we feel valued and supported in our job.

Use this section as a starting point to talk to your team member about their personal wellbeing.

It is important that you give your team member the opportunity to talk honestly, and openly, about:

* how they are feeling
* their role/workload
* what they find motivating and/or frustrating
* what help they feel they need, and so on.

This will help you spot any wellbeing or workload issues that are aﬀecting them so that you can address them early.

It can be difficult to talk about how we are feeling when somebody asks us, so we may say that we feel ‘fine’ when we don’t.

It is very important that you are familiar with the support that is on offer to all employees, so that you can help your team member find the most appropriate source(s) of help and support.

**Occupational health and wellbeing service**

Please discuss the support provision provided for employees e.g.

* Employee Assistant programme (EAP)
* Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA)
* Occupational Health Service (through manager referral)
* Chaplains

# Our behaviours

Behaviours, in the context of the appraisal process, are not about **what**we do, but about **how** we do it, our motivation, and our attitude when we are at work. This could be BCC Values, Teachers Standard and or the school values as appropriate.

This is not a conversation about ‘grade’. Role modelling the desired, positive behaviours applies to everyone at all levels of the council, including senior management.

During the appraisal conversation, it is important that you and your team member feel comfortable enough to speak openly and honestly.

Use this section to help you identify and appreciate your team member’s individuality, their strengths, and the qualities that ‘they bring to the team’.

It will also allow you to identify, understand, and address any out of character, unusual or concerning behaviour.

Persistent, concerning behaviour is not only bad for performance, but can also impact negatively on others. If such behaviours continue after appropriate support and intervention, and they affect productivity and the services we provide to our pupils, parents and/or community, you may need to think about following formal procedures to address them.

As a manager you can also use this part of the conversation to reflect on your own behaviours and may feel that you need to adjust your style accordingly.

As part of the ‘behaviours conversation’, be prepared that your team member may challenge you, this will hopefully be constructive, but it is important that any decisions you make are in the best interest of your team and the school.

# Learn more about our values and behaviours

Our values and behaviours support our commitment to ensuring we are all making a positive difference to our pupils and communities’ lives.

They set the standard for how we will achieve our objectives and make it easier to tell the difference between ‘good’ performance and ‘great’ performance at work.

The initial appraisal conversation should be used to talk about the school’s values and behaviours, to help the employee understand what they mean for them, and how they can demonstrate them in their role.

**Looking back**

You should meet with your team member for one-to one conversations as set out in the 'Our aim is to meet' section of this document.

Use the looking back section to reflect, 'look back', on these conversations and focus on:

* how your team member has performed in their role over the appraisal year
* what behaviours they have role modelled
* any barriers they have faced and overcome.

Some of their objectives may still be in progress, so you may need to look at what support or development they need when it comes to looking at the ‘looking forward’ section.

This part of the form also gives you the ideal opportunity to explore how your team member has found the year, what aspects of their work made them happy, what motivated them, and any other points they want to raise.

It is also a perfect opportunity to use coaching techniques to encourage your team member to acknowledge their achievements, to think about some of the challenges they have faced, and anything they have learned that has given them confidence to resolve issues for themselves if they face similar situations in the future.

Although the main purpose of this section is to summarise your team member’s performance for the year and what they have done, you can also use this time to:

* talk about how they have done it
* celebrate when things have gone well
* learn from when things could have gone better.

You should ask your team member if they want to give you feedback on how you manage them as an individual.

If your team member has been given ‘stretch targets’ as part of their objectives, you can talk about them here, but your rating should be based purely on the speciﬁc requirements of their job.

# Looking forward

When you set your team member’s objectives, it is important to take on board their views on what they feel they can add to their role, and not automatically set objectives without considering what they feel is important, and why. Objective setting is a collaborative process and the individual employee has a responsibility to give some thought and bring ideas to the meeting regarding their own objectives.

## **Set SMART objectives**

Ensure all objectives are SMART:

**S**pecific

**M**easurable

**A**chievable

**R**ealistic and **R**elevant

**T**ime bound

It is important that you set a maximum of 3 key objectives and set realistic timescales and support for them to be achieved.

Using words like 'ongoing' is not helpful as they don't provide clear expectations and can lead to project/activity creep or drift.

Understand that other factors can sometimes mean that achieving objectives is out of your team member’s control, which is why it is so important to talk through their progress against their objectives during your regular one-to-one conversations.

When ~~you are~~ developing a team member’s objectives, it is important that you think about:

* how you can empower them to carry out activities well
* what support they need
* how they need to behave to enable them to positively role-model such behaviours for others
* the relevance and appropriateness of the objectives to the employee’s role and their hours of work (e.g. part time employees)

It is also important to make sure they can see how their contribution adds value to their team and wider service area, and how their objectives align to the school development plan.

It would be useful to signpost your team member to the school development plan before your meeting and highlight the sections that are most relevant to their role.

Remember, that **how** your team member does things is equally important as **what** they do, so it is important for them to see where they fit into the plan.

Think about what behaviours may, or may not, be helpful, and how the behaviours of others may be helpful or unhelpful, and what can be done to address this.

Try to be constructive, not critical or personal.

# Your development

This section is where you and your team member should look at the skills and knowledge they want to develop, and how this will support them to achieve their short-term and long-term objectives.

It is important that you think about your team member’s [career objectives](https://intranet.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20339/my_appraisal/1109/the_appraisal_form_managers_guide/9) as well as their job objectives. Some development can help prepare your team member for future roles.

# Your career

Some team members will want to develop their career further, others will want to focus on improving their performance in their existing job and are not interested in career progression. There is no right or wrong approach – both are okay.

Use this section is explore your team member’s career aspirations for the next year and for the longer-term.

Talk through the key milestones they need to work towards during the appraisal year to support these aspirations.

If your team member expresses an interest in developing their career, this can be useful for succession planning, so it is important that you support them to bridge gaps in their learning.

# The final sections

These are the final three sections that you need to complete.

## **Any comments**

Use this section for any final comments that you or your team member want to be recorded.

### Achieved/Not Achieved

This section is where you let your team member know whether they have **achieved** or **not achieved** in their appraisal, and where you record their rating.

If you have identified that they are **not achieving**, this should not come as a surprise to the individual, as early discussions should have taken place and where possible appropriate support mechanisms put in place or the objective reviewed as appropriate. The reasons behind why it was not possible to achieve should be discussed. Consideration should be given as to the appropriateness of commencing a performance improvement process where necessary.

### Signature

This section is where you and your team member sign the form to confirm that the objectives and one-to-one meeting arrangements have been agreed for the upcoming appraisal year.

You should make every effort to seek agreement from your team member and address any concerns they may have.