



LINCOLN ANGLICAN
ACADEMY TRUST

DIOCESE OF LINCOLN

Appraisal Policy for Support Staff

Status Consulted - Not agreed

Church schools serving their communities through excellence, exploration and encouragement within the love of God.

The Diocese of Lincoln is called to faithful worship, confident discipleship and joyful service and our church schools bear witness to our belief that every child is made in the image of God and loved by Him. They were founded for the good of their local communities so that children can be educated through the values and stories of Christianity.

Policy Owner: LAAT CEO
Policy Date: September 2019
Policy Review Date: September 2020

Excellence

Exploration

Encouragement

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust (LAAT) is committed to providing high quality teaching and learning. Our aim is to provide opportunities for every student whatever their ability and it is through our workforce that we hope to achieve this. In our Trust, each employee will be given support to help them develop to their full potential in their job and in turn this will help improve outcomes for our young people.
- 1.2 We are committed to continually developing and improving performance of our employees, guiding them through their careers with us. Support staff in this school play a vital role in supporting teaching and learning, and making sure effective services and processes are in place to help students and the school as a whole. Effective appraisal processes are one of the ways we can support our employees and deal with performance matters as they arise. This involves effective day-to-day supervision, carrying out appraisals, providing development opportunities and operating a fair and reasonable capability process.
- 1.3 This policy has been implemented following consultation with recognised trade unions and employees within the Trust.

2. Purpose and application of the policy

- 2.1 This appraisal policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of support staff, and for supporting their development within the context of the school's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of each employee.
- 2.2 The policy applies to the appraisal of all support staff employed by the school, except those on contracts of less than one term, those in their probation and those who are subject to the school's capability policy. It does not apply to agency workers, contractors or volunteers.
- 2.3 Where an employee is not covered by this policy as set out in 2.2 above, then performance will be managed through regular supervision and feedback.

3. Appraisal process

- 3.1 Appraisal in this Trust will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all members of support staff have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. This helps ensure that support staff are able to continue to improve their performance and to develop as employees of the school.

The appraisal period

- 3.2 The appraisal period will normally run for twelve months.

Appointing appraisers

- 3.3 Employees will be notified of who their appraiser will be as soon as practicable. The dedicated appraiser should normally have line management responsibilities for the employee whose performance they are reviewing and will conduct all aspects of the review, including any pay recommendations, for support staff who are eligible. On an exceptional basis, where an employee objects to the Headteacher's/CEO choice, the employee's concerns will be carefully considered, and an alternative appraiser may be appointed. The appraiser will normally be trained in order to ensure that they understand the appraisal process, can set appropriate objectives and agree suitable support plans. All appraisers will be able to seek support from a HR professional if required.

Setting objectives

- 3.4 Objectives for each member of support staff will be set at the start of each appraisal period. Objectives should reflect the key tasks and responsibilities of the employee's job role and should be sufficiently challenging to help the employee perform effectively and aid development. The objectives set for each member of support staff, will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) and will be appropriate to their role and level of experience. The objectives will be fair and reasonable. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change during the appraisal period, for example, absence or a change of line manager. Should the objectives not be agreed, the final decision on allocation of objectives rests with the headteacher. The employee may record his/her objection to an objective on the planning statement.
- 3.5 The number of objectives will vary according to the nature of the job and the level of responsibilities. There should not normally be more than 3 objectives for the year ahead.

Where an employee does not achieve an objective, this will be discussed with the appraisee. The appraiser will be expected to establish the reasons for this, in order to inform the future support or other action. Issues with performance will have been discussed throughout the year.

- 3.6 The objectives set for each member of support staff will, if achieved, contribute to the school's plans for improving the educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at the school. The Headteacher together with the senior leadership team will be responsible for quality assuring the objectives against the school's improvement plan.

- 3.7 In the case of an employee with a disability LAAT will undertake to incorporate any adjustments which can reasonably be made to give an employee who is absent for disability related reasons an equal opportunity to participate in appraisal and to access pay progression.
- 3.8 For staff on maternity, adoption or shared parental leave or prior to maternity leave, there will be flexibility in the objective setting process. We will not require employees to use Keeping in Touch (KIT) days for the purposes of appraisal.

Reviewing performance

Observation

The Trust believes that observation of Teaching Assistants working in the classroom is important both as a way of assessing performance to identify any particular strengths and areas for development as well as gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion.

In this Trust, the performance of teaching assistants will be regularly observed as part of the appraisal process. Classroom observation will be carried out by a Senior Leader. There will be no more than 3 observations per appraisal cycle.

Development and support

- 3.9 The Trust encourages a culture in which all support staff take responsibility for improving their work and skills, and extending their depth of knowledge through appropriate training and professional development. In addition to this our appraisal process is used to inform and decide continuing training and development which improves performance. Agreed training and development will be linked to school improvement priorities and where possible to the ongoing development needs and priorities of individual support staff members. We are committed to supporting appropriate and reasonable professional development, which not only assists the employee in their work but also helps the individual develop their career with us.

Feedback

- 3.10 Within the Trust, support staff will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year (see 3.13) Feedback should highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention. Feedback will also be sought from other employees within the school who are supported by the appraisee, for example a Teacher may be asked to provide feedback on a Teaching Assistant who works with them. The process will be as supportive as possible and where there are concerns about any aspects of the employee performance relating to the appraisal process the appraiser will meet the employee to:
- (a) give clear feedback to the employee about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
 - (b) give the employee the opportunity to comment and discuss the

- concerns;
- (c) find out if there are any issues (including issues outside work) that are affecting the employee's performance that the appraiser can assist with or provide support;
- (d) make clear what improvements need to be made by the employee and how this can be achieved;
- (e) agree any support (for example coaching, mentoring, training), that will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
- (f) make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress either by setting new and clear objectives which will be assessed during the informal review period or by revising current objectives, allowing sufficient time for improvement; the amount of time for this should reflect the seriousness of the concerns). This will be an informal review period;
- (g) explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made during the informal review period ie the application of the capability procedure.

3.11 This meeting can happen at any point during the appraisal period and does not have to wait until the annual assessment. It is a supportive meeting, and designed to address issues early to avoid the matter escalating, giving the employee every opportunity to improve. At the meeting, the appraiser will be required to present evidence collected that indicates that the employee's performance is meeting the required standard. There is no right to be accompanied to this meeting.

3.12 Although this is part of the informal process, a note of the meeting will be made and a copy given to the employee so that they are clear about the support they will be given and what improvements need to be made. This will include a review timetable. The length of the review timetable will be determined by the appraiser based on the individual circumstances and the situation. During the informal review period, regular meetings will take place to ensure progress is being made. Wherever possible this will be agreed with the appraisee however, where this is not possible the appraisee's objection will be noted on the review documents.

3.13 This assessment is the end point to the annual appraisal process, but performance and development priorities will be reviewed and addressed on a regular basis throughout the process. To ensure further support for support staff, an interim appraisal meeting may take place at the mid-point of the cycle. At this meeting, performance will be reviewed and progress towards objectives will be noted. Any concerns will be noted and if appropriate a support plan will be put in place for the remainder of the cycle. The support plan will set out what improvement is required and what support will be provided

3.14 At the end of the informal review period when progress is reviewed, if the appraiser is satisfied that the employee has made, or is making, sufficient improvement, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through that process. If performance is improving but the appraiser feels that further time is required to support development, the appraiser can decide to extend the informal review period.

3.15 Appraisal is an ongoing process. If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress or insufficient improvement is being made including only partial

meeting of targets, despite the support provided, the employee will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the capability procedure, and will be invited to a formal capability meeting.

Annual assessment

3.16 Each member of support staff will have their performance formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. The annual review meeting (appraisal) will be a structured discussion between the appraiser and appraisee. The aim is to assess overall job performance during the review period and find ways to improve and extend performance for the benefit of the employee and our school.

The context for the annual review meeting will be as follows:

- (a) sufficient time and notice should be allocated for both parties to prepare and exchange information
- (b) the discussion should be conducted in the spirit of participation, support and encouragement
- (c) there should be no surprises, as any problems should have been raised at review sessions during the year
- (d) enough time should be allocated to do justice to the discussion
- (e) the discussion should take place in a private area where the meeting will not be interrupted
- (f) the discussion should be open and honest with the individual taking the lead
- (g) the conclusions and actions for both parties should be documented

The meeting will cover the following areas:

- a review of performance over the previous 12 months, based on the [work plan/objectives], work observations, the termly reviews and any supervision sessions that may have been held in the interim
- an opportunity to recognise and celebrate the appraisee's achievements
- an opportunity to consider whether or not the appraisee's job description is accurate, or may need further review.
- an opportunity to reflect on areas where the appraisee's performance could be improved and to agree ways of achieving this
- a review of ways in which the appraiser may be able to assist the appraisee to improve their own performance and, where appropriate, improve the appraiser's own contribution to the process
- agreement on the [work plan] and objectives for the next 12 months
- agreement on any additional support the employee may need in order to achieve the agreed objectives.
- Learning and development plan

- an opportunity to consider the learning and development the employee may need to undertake in order to achieve the agreed objectives
- an opportunity to discuss the employee's career aspirations

3.17 The employee will receive a written appraisal report as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period, and usually within 2 weeks. The employee will have the opportunity to comment in writing on the report. The appraisal report will be a summary of the performance during the year and set out the employee's development needs for the next year. In particular, the report will include:

- (a) details of the personal objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- (b) an assessment of performance against objectives, targets and expectations
- (c) an assessment of the support staff training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them.
- (d) A recommendation on pay progression.

3.18 The assessment of performance and or training and development needs from each individual appraisal will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period for the whole school.

The appraisal review statement at the end of the cycle must be the only source of evidence support staff require to support pay progression. Support staff may submit additional evidence if they so choose but they cannot be requested or directed to submit additional evidence or penalised if they choose not to do so. The recommendation on pay is made by the appraiser and will be ratified by the Local Board/Chief Executive. This will be written in the Appraisal review statement to the Headteacher before being referred to the Chair of the Local Board.

Monitoring & Evaluation

3.19 During the appraisal period, each employee has a responsibility for gathering evidence of their progress throughout the year in order for them to identify any particular strengths or areas for further development at the interim and annual review meetings. The appraiser will then record the discussion on this evidence and make an assessment in the appraisal report.

Appeals

If the employee is dissatisfied with the appraisal process, this should be raised informally in the first instance. This gives opportunity for an employee to discuss the appraisal, and to resolve issues quickly and informally. If this does not resolve an issue, an employee may follow the formal grievance procedure.

The Pay Policy sets out the process for appeals if the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome of their pay review.

4. General Principles Underlying This policy

4.1 Confidentiality

The appraisal process will be treated confidentially. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Headteacher and Governing body/Board of Directors to quality assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. Within each Academy, the Headteacher, in conjunction with the senior leadership team, is responsible for reviewing objectives and written appraisal records, in order to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers. Within the central team, this role would be carried out by the Chief Executive Officer.

4.2 Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The Trust is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness. It will abide by all relevant equality legislation, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees. The Board of Directors are aware of the guidance on the Equality Act issued by the Department for Education.

4.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Local Board and/or Board of Directors and the Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of each Academy's appraisal. In developing, applying and evaluating this policy we will monitor the impact on different groups of people with protected characteristics in line with the Trust's Equal Opportunities policy. This will ensure that what we do is done fairly.

This policy will be subject to regular review by the Board of Directors at not more than three yearly intervals to ensure that it remains appropriate to the needs of the Trust. The policy will be consulted on with the recognised trade unions

4.4 Retention

The line manager will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place. All records will be kept no longer than is necessary in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Appraisal Record (End or mid-year review)

Name of employee	
Job title	
Name of appraiser	
Date of appraisal meeting	

Review of performance over the last 12 months

Objective	Assessment of performance	Has this objective been met? Full/ Partially/Not met

Review of performance in relation to expectations and standards?

Review of development undertaken over last 12 months (what impact has this had on performance?)

Summary of performance over the last 12 months - Summarise key achievements and progress, and performance in relation to overall attendance, improvement in competency areas, as well as achievement of objectives

Looking forward

Objective	Expected outcome of meeting objective	Development needs required (where appropriate)	Target date

Any other agreed development needs

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Appraisee's comments			
Signed		Date	
Appraiser's comments			

Signed		Date	
Line Manager's comments (if not appraiser)			
Signed		Date	