



THE PRIORY
LEARNING TRUST

Appraisal Policy

Policies approved by the Board of Trustees

Signed: 

Name: Barry Wratten

Date: 1st September 2020

Chair of Board of Trustees

Authorised for Issue

Signed: 

Name: Neville Coles

Date: 1st September 2020

Chief Executive Officer

History of Policy Changes

Date	Version	Author	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, change in legislation	Changed by
September 2017	1	FRL	Creation of policy	
June 2018	2		Scheme of Delegation & GDPR	DL
February 2019	3		Following consultation with Somerset Unions	DL
June 2019	4		Review of policy	DL
May 2020	5		Review of policy	LH

This policy applies to The Priory Learning Trust and all its academies.

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Review cycle	Annual
Review date	May 2021

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1. Purpose and Application

- 1.1 The Priory Learning Trust (Trust) needs all staff to perform effectively in order to deliver the aims and vision of the Trust. To achieve this, the Trust aims to ensure that effective recruitment is undertaken, performance expectations and standards are defined through an appraisal framework, performance is monitored and that employees are given appropriate feedback, support and training.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent appraisal of the overall performance of staff, and for supporting their development within the context of each academy's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected.
- 1.3 It is the Trust's aim that the appraisal process will be both developmental and supportive, designed to ensure that staff are able to continue to improve their professional practice. An appraisal will set objectives and provide support so staff have the skills they need to carry out their role effectively and with reference to the appropriate standards, Academy improvement plans and align with the Trust's strategy. Appraisal is only one element of the performance management of an individual member of staff. The appraisal process should be seen in this context.
- 1.4 Information about the arrangements that will apply when it is believed that a staff member's performance falls below the standards that the Trust can reasonably expect of them are contained in the Trust's Capability Procedure.
- 1.5 This policy and the procedures contained within it apply to all of the teaching and support staff at an academy, save for supply staff, those engaged under a contract for services and those undergoing induction (Newly qualified teachers). In the case of staff who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than 12 months, in the event that their contract is extended beyond 12 months or is at any time made permanent, the Trust will, within a reasonable period, complete an appraisal in accordance with the terms of this policy.

2. The Appraisal Cycle

- 2.1 The appraisal cycle will run for twelve months from September to August in the following year.
- 2.2 Each member of staff will be required to attend an Appraisal Meeting and an Interim Review Meeting. Appraisal Meetings will be held between September and October each year and Interim Review Meetings will be held between February and March each year.
- 2.3 Staff will receive their Appraisal Report as soon as is practicable following their Appraisal Meeting and will have the opportunity to comment on this at the meeting. Staff will receive their written appraisal reports by 31st October, wherever possible (31st December for the Principal).
- 2.4 The Appraisal Report will include:
 - An assessment of the appraisee's overall performance of their role and responsibilities;
 - An assessment of their achievement of their previously agreed objectives;

- An assessment of their training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- Details of their agreed future objectives and targets;
- Details of any concerns which have been raised about the appraisee's performance and the steps that have been agreed to address these;
- For Teaching Staff, a recommendation to the Principal and Pay Committee or Chief Executive Officer, as appropriate, in respect of the appraisee's pay progression.

2.5 Staff will receive their Interim Review Report within 6 weeks of their Interim Review Meeting and will have the opportunity to comment in writing on the contents of this.

2.6 The Interim Review Report will include:

- An assessment of the appraisee's progress towards their objectives;
- Details of any agreed amendments or adjustments to their objectives;
- Details of any training or development needs the appraisee has and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- Details of any performance assessment which has been undertaken since the Appraisal Meeting and the outcome of such assessment.

3. Appointing Appraisers

3.1 The Chief Executive Officer will decide who will appraise all Central Team staff.

3.2 The Principal of each academy will be appraised by the Head of Academy Improvement / Strategic Lead for Academy Improvement and Chair of Academy Council.

3.3 The Operations Manager of each academy will be appraised by the Deputy Chief Operations Officer and Principal.

3.4 The Principal will decide who will appraise all Academy staff.

4. The Appraisal Meeting

4.1 The Appraiser will contact the Appraisee to advise them of the date, time and location of their appraisal meeting. So far as is reasonably possible, the Appraisee will be given five days' notice of the Appraisal Meeting.

4.2 The appraisal meeting should take place during the Appraisee's normal working time.

4.3 The Appraisee shall complete **section one of the appraisal report** and provide this to their Appraiser in advance of the Appraisal Meeting. For support staff, the appraisee's Job Description should also be reviewed to ensure that it is still relevant.

4.4 The Appraisal Meeting will allow an opportunity for both the Appraisee, and the Appraiser to reflect, discuss and comment on the previous year's achievements. It will praise achievement and encourage the Appraisee in his/her role.

4.5 The Appraiser is accountable for giving the Appraisee constructive, timely and honest appraisals of their performance, which should take into account both the Trust or Academies goals and those of the individual.

- 4.6 The discussion should be a positive dialogue, and will focus on assisting the Appraisee to acquire the relevant knowledge, skills and competencies to perform his/her current role to the best of his/her abilities.

5. Setting Objectives

- 5.1 The objectives set for each Appraisee will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to their role and level of experience and will reflect priorities for the appraisee during the appraisal cycle. The number of objectives set should be reasonable. The Appraiser and Appraisee will seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the Appraiser will determine the objectives.
- 5.2 The objectives set for every member of staff will, if achieved, contribute to the Trust's plans for improving the educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils. For support staff objectives may also specifically relate to the effective deployment and use of resources, administration and organisation.
- 5.3 Whole Trust, Academy or team objectives should reflect published improvement priorities or the Trust Strategic Plan.
- 5.4 The performance of all teachers should be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called "Teachers' Standards" and relate to the quality of teaching. In order to meet the Teachers' Standards, a teacher will need to demonstrate that their practice is consistent with the definitions set out in Part 1 'Teaching' and Part 2 'Personal and Professional Conduct'. The Principal or Academy Council (as appropriate) will need to consider whether certain teachers should also be assessed against other sets of standards, including those published by the Secretary of State, that are relevant to them.
- 5.5 Teaching staff who are, at the time of the Appraisal Meeting, on the Upper Pay Scale, will specifically be set objectives consistent with the Upper Pay Scale Criteria and will have their performance assessed accordingly.
- 5.6 Teaching staff who are in receipt of a permanent TLR (Teaching & Learning Responsibility) payment will specifically be set objectives consistent with the appropriate TLR criteria and will have their performance assessed accordingly.
- 5.7 Though appraisal is an assessment of overall performance, objectives cannot cover the full range of roles/responsibilities. Objectives will, therefore, focus on the priorities for an appraisee during the appraisal cycle.
- 5.8 The Appraiser will, in their absolute discretion, judge whether objectives set in one appraisal cycle should continue to be relevant in the subsequent appraisal cycle and such a judgement will be recorded in the Appraisal report.
- 5.9 On occasions during the appraisal cycle, usually as a result of unforeseen circumstances, it may be considered that an objective set at the start of the process is no longer appropriate or requires some adjustment. Either at the Interim Review stage or an additionally scheduled meeting, changes to an objective can be agreed and this should be recorded within appraisal documentation.

- 5.10 Through moderation, objectives will be reviewed by the Principal and Academy Operations Manager, for the appropriate academy staff, to ensure objectives are fair and challenging across the academy and provide assurances to the academy council and Chief Executive Officer.
- 5.11 Through moderation, objectives will be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operations Officer, to ensure objectives are fair and challenging across the Trust and assures the Trustees.

6. Reviewing Performance

- 6.1 The assessment of a staff member's performance should be supported by evidence. Evidence should be sought and collected throughout the Appraisal Cycle and may include task and/or lesson observations, learning walks, talking to pupils about their learning experience, review of pupil assessment outcomes, internal tracking of pupils' attainment and progress, financial and/or other data assessment records, work sampling, lesson planning records, self-assessment, peer reviews and stakeholder feedback.
- 6.2 Both the Appraisee and the Appraiser are at liberty to present evidence during the Appraisal Meeting for discussion. In the interests of efficiency and to obtain the best possible value from the Appraisal Meeting, the Appraisee and Appraiser should seek to ensure that any evidence they seek to discuss and/or rely upon is presented at the Appraisal Meeting.

Teaching staff:

- 6.3 The Trust believes that observation of classroom practice and key responsibilities is important both to assess performance and identify any particular strengths and areas for development a member of staff may have and for gaining useful information which can inform the Trust improvement more generally.
- 6.4 Teachers' performance will be regularly observed. The amount and type of classroom observation undertaken will be such as is necessary to make an accurate assessment of a teacher's performance and will therefore depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the Trust. Teachers (including the Principal) who have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.
- 6.5 Classroom observation will only be undertaken by those who have had adequate preparation and the appropriate professional skills to undertake observation and to provide constructive oral and written feedback and support in the context of professional dialogue between colleagues.
- 6.6 *Scheduled classroom observation:* The arrangements for scheduled classroom observation will be included in the appraisal documentation and will include the purpose of observation, any particular aspects of the teacher's performance which will be assessed, the duration of the observation, when during the appraisal cycle the observation will take place and who will conduct the observation.

6.7 *Agreed classroom observation:* In addition to scheduled classroom observation, a line manager may at any time during the Appraisal cycle agree with the employee that a classroom observation will be undertaken. It is envisaged that this may occur where:

- there has been a complaint or concern raised in respect of the teacher's performance;
- the teacher is subject to their probationary period;
- new teaching methodology or subject matter has been introduced; or
- the teacher has sought assistance from their line manager.

In such circumstances, the date, time and purpose of the classroom observation will be confirmed in writing at least 5 days in advance of the observation taking place (unless the teacher chooses otherwise).

6.8 The Chief Executive Officer, Principal and other leaders will continue to walk the academies and visit classrooms to support staff as part of normal working practices.

Support staff:

6.9 Members of Teaching and Learning support staff will also be involved in a work review/observation process in a format agreed as being appropriate to their role. (For example, a classroom observation of a Teaching Assistants contribution to a lesson). The number of observations will vary depending on the developmental objectives of the individual and will normally be decided through discussion with the individual.

Feedback:

6.10 Staff will receive constructive feedback on their performance as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

6.11 Where there are concerns about any aspects of the employee's performance the employee will be asked to attend a meeting at which:

- they will be given clear feedback about the nature and seriousness of the concerns and the opportunity to comment on and to discuss the concerns;
- there will be discussion, with the aim of seeking to identify and agree what, if any support (e.g. coaching, mentoring, structured or peer observations), will be provided to help address the concerns;
- it will be agreed when and how the employee's progress will be reviewed;
- the employee will be made aware of the implications for them and the procedures that will apply should improvement not reasonably be achieved or sustained within the timeframes that have been agreed.

Following the meeting, the employee will receive written confirmation of the discussions held and the agreements reached during the meeting.

6.12 An employee who is requested to attend a meeting to discuss their performance may request that they are accompanied to the meeting by a work colleague. Such a request will be granted unless it is not reasonably practicable for the chosen colleague to attend.

7. Development and support

- 7.1 Appraisal is a developmental and supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional and personal development and improvement. The Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all staff take responsibility for improving their performance through appropriate professional and personal development. Professional development will be linked to improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individuals and teams.
- 7.2 As such, an academy or trust Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme will be informed by the development needs identified in the Appraisee's Appraisal Report.
- 7.3 The Academy Council will make appropriate but affordable resources available to support staff development arising from the appraisal process. The Principal will report, as required, to the full Academy Council each year on CPD activities.
- 7.4 Where CPD is identified as key to the improvement of an individual, they should not be held responsible for lack of progress against agreed priorities if the resources are not forthcoming/have not been provided.

8. Retention of Documents

- 8.1 Appraisal documentation will be retained and held securely in accordance with the Trust Data Protection Policy and will thereafter be destroyed.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 9.1 The Principal and Academy Council will review the impact of appraisal for the academy. The Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operations Officer and Trustees will review the impact of appraisal for the Central Team.
- 9.2 The Principal will provide the Academy Council and the Trust with a written report on the operation of the Trust appraisal policy annually. The report will not contain any information which would enable any individual to be identified. The report should include:
- The operation of the appraisal policy;
 - The effectiveness of the appraisal procedures;
 - Staff training and development needs.
- 9.3 The Trust is committed to ensuring that the appraisal process is fair and non-discriminatory. The Principal should assess the impact of the process and of performance objectives to ensure that they do not represent possible grounds for unlawful discrimination in regard to any of the relevant protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, part-time work, fixed-term contracts or trade union membership.
- 9.4 The Principal should, therefore, also report annually to the Academy Council Pay Committee and the Chief Executive Officer, in a confidential section, appropriate details of:

- Any appeals or representations on an individual or collective basis on the grounds of alleged discrimination under any of the categories above in relation to appraisal.
- Cases, including the circumstances, where teachers have not made satisfactory progress towards objectives to the Pay Committee.
- Any instances where the training and development set out in the training and development annex of an appraisal has not been provided.
- Numbers who have fully achieved objectives.
- Number who have partially achieved objectives but with acceptable reasons.
- Number who have partially achieved objectives but with unacceptable reasons.
- Number who have not achieved their objectives.
- Number of those who have partially achieved objectives but with unacceptable reasons and those who have not achieved their objectives and/or fails to meet or to sustain Teachers' Standards who are due to progress within the unqualified pay range.
- Number of those who have partially achieved objectives but with unacceptable reasons and those who have not achieved their objectives and/or met the teacher standards and/or fails to meet or to sustain Teachers' Standards who are due to progress:
 - within the main pay range;
 - within the upper pay range; or
 - within the leadership pay range.

10. Policy Review

- 10.1 This policy is reviewed annually by the Trust and where materially amended is consulted on, where necessary. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.