



THE PRIORY  
LEARNING TRUST

# Appraisal Policy

**Approved and Authorised for use by the Trust Board 18th July 2023**

## 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
May 2021	6		Review of policy	LH
July 2022	7		Review of policy	LH
June 2023	8		Review of policy. Introduction of automatic pay progression on main pay scale	LH

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

Date policy adopted	September 2023
Review cycle	Annual
Review date	May 2024

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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 school'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, school 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 (Early Career teachers).

## **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 (31<sup>st</sup> 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 on the Upper and Leadership Pay Scales, 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 be appraised by the Chair of Trustees and at least one other Trustee
- 3.2 The Chief Executive Officer will decide who will appraise all Central Team staff.
- 3.3 The Principal of each school will be appraised by the Director of Primary/Secondary Education and Chair of Academy Council.
- 3.4 The Academy Operations Manager of each school will be appraised by the Deputy Chief Operations Officer and Principal.
- 3.5 The Principal will decide who will appraise all school 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 and achievable. 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, school 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 school and provide assurances to the academy council and Chief Executive Officer.

- 5.11 Through moderation, objectives will be reviewed by the Director of Primary/Secondary Education and Deputy 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, Director of Primary/Secondary Education, 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, a school or Trust Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme will be informed by the development needs identified in the Appraisee's Appraisal Report.
- 7.3 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 upper pay range; or
  - within the leadership pay range.

## 10 Policy Review

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.

## APPENDIX 1 – Assessment of Teacher Performance

Assessments of performance will be made based on the extent to which teachers have met their individual objectives and the Teacher Standards and the quality of their teaching. Quality of teaching will be assessed according to Ofsted criteria and categories.

The measures that will be taken into account when assessing whether teachers have met their objectives and the standards may include the contribution / impact they have made, specifically their:

- impact on pupil progress;
- impact on wider outcomes for pupils;
- improvements in specific elements of practice, such as behaviour management or lesson planning;
- impact on effectiveness of teachers or other staff;
- wider contribution to the work of the school
- commitment to improving their own performance and to continuing professional development.

When making judgments about the meeting of standards, full account will be taken of both Parts of the Teaching Standards: Part One: Teaching and Part Two: Personal and Professional Conduct. Additionally, improvement in teaching skills may be taken into account with regard to unqualified teachers.

To be fair and transparent, assessments of performance will be clearly based on evidence and this should be recorded. Teachers are expected to collate evidence to demonstrate performance. The evidence we will use as the basis for assessing performance may include:

- self-assessment
- peer review
- tracking pupil progress
- review of pupil assessment outcomes
- work review (for example, task observation, lesson planning, work sampling)

Objectives and performance management discussions will not be exclusively based on teacher generated predictions, and pay progression of teachers will not be absolutely dependent on the assessment data for a single group of pupils. Pupil performance objectives will not be used in isolation and other factors will be considered when decisions are being made about pay progression.

Appraisal objectives will be more challenging as the teacher progresses up the scale.

### **Pay Progression on the Main Pay Range**

Pay progression is not linked to appraisal for teachers on the main pay range. All eligible teachers will be automatically awarded pay progression of one point annually up to point 6 of the main pay range, unless there are significant concerns around performance and formal action has been taken to address this.

## **Pay Progression on the Upper Pay Range**

For eligible teachers on the Upper Pay Range, decisions regarding pay progression will be made with reference to teacher appraisal reports and the pay recommendations they contain.

The Principal may recommend to the Pay Committee based on the individual teacher's performance, an advance of one point every two years. Only in exceptional circumstances for outstanding performance, at the discretion of the Principal and in agreement with the Pay Committee, will progression occur at intervals of less than two years.

As the teacher moves to, and up the upper pay range, an increasing positive impact in each of the above mentioned areas should be in evidence. Any pay increase will be clearly attributable to the performance of the teacher concerned. In all cases, it will be possible for a "no progression" determination to be made without recourse to the Capability Procedure.

Initial recommendations on pay progression will be made by the Central Leader, Assistant or Vice Principal. In accordance with the provisions of this policy, the Principal will moderate all initial recommendations to ensure consistency. The Director of Primary/Secondary Education will moderate initial recommendations across the Trust to ensure consistency.

A teacher who is dissatisfied with a pay recommendation will have the opportunity to discuss the recommendation with the appraiser or Principal before the recommendation is actioned and confirmation of the pay decision is made by the school. Feedback will include advice and support with regard to improvement will be offered.

## **Pay Progression within the Leadership Group**

The appraisal reports of members of the leadership group will contain assessments of performance and pay recommendations. The recommendations should include references to the leader meeting or not meeting objectives and standards. Decisions about whether or not to accept a pay recommendation will be made by the Pay Committee, having regard to the appraisal report and taking into account advice from the Director of Primary/Secondary Education.

In the case of the Principals, judgments of performance will be made against the extent to which they have met their individual objectives, with reference to the latest Principal Standards, the Teacher Standards and, where applicable, the quality of their teaching.

In the case of other members of the leadership group, judgments of performance will be made against the extent to which they have met their individual objectives, the Teacher Standards and, where applicable, the quality of their teaching.

When making judgments about the meeting of standards, full account will be taken of both Parts of the Teaching Standards: Part One: Teaching and Part Two: Personal and Professional Conduct.

Quality of learning and teaching assessed will reflect the career stage attained by members of the leadership group.

The measures that will be taken into account in making judgments about whether members of the leadership group have met their objectives and the standards will include the whole school/Trust contribution / impact they have made, specifically their:

- effectiveness in leading, managing and developing in the school;
- contribution to academy/Trust strategy / planning;
- impact on whole academy or Trust objectives;
- impact on academy/Trust improvement;
- impact on pupil progress throughout the academy/Trust;
- impact on wider outcomes for pupils throughout the academy/Trust;
- improvements in specific elements of practice, such as behaviour management throughout the academy/Trust;
- impact on behaviour / effectiveness of teachers or other staff throughout the academy/Trust;
- wider contribution to the work of the academy/Trust and to the community;
- contribution to effective working with other agencies

As the leader becomes more experienced in their role, an increasing positive impact in each of the above areas should be in evidence.

Where appropriate, objectives will be longer term (over two or more years) to link to long term school improvement but will in that case incorporate intermediate (annual) objectives.

The Principal will agree objectives appropriate to their role for other school leaders. Appraisal objectives for leaders will be more challenging and wide-ranging than for classroom teachers (including lead practitioners) and will relate to the leadership and management of the academy/Trust responsibilities.

The rate of progression on the leadership pay range will be one point annually, up to the maximum of the individual's pay range, subject to substantial and sustained highly competent performance.

Where there is a risk that pay progression will not be recommended, the school leader should be notified of this by the appraiser(s) in the course of the appraisal cycle allowing the leader sufficient opportunity to improve. Feedback should be given on the areas requiring improvement.

In the case of the Principal, the performance appraisal will be carried out and recommendations on pay progression will be made by the Head of School Improvement/Primary Education and the Chair of Academy Council in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

In the case of other members of the leadership group, the performance appraisal will be carried out and recommendations on pay progression will be made in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

To be fair and transparent, assessments of performance will be clearly based on evidence and this will be recorded.

### **Pay Progression on the Unqualified Pay Range**

Pay progression is not linked to appraisal for teachers on the unqualified pay range. All eligible teachers will be automatically awarded pay progression of one point annually up to

point 6 of the unqualified pay range, unless there are significant concerns around performance and formal action has been taken to address this.

### **Pay Progression and Periods of Absence**

Where an unqualified Teacher, teacher or leader is away from the academy due to maternity or disability related leave the teacher will receive any pay increases they would have received, following appraisal, had they not been on leave. Appraisal and pay determination will be based on previous evidence of performance before the absence (including in previous appraisal periods) and, where relevant, after the leave.

## **APPENDIX 2 - The Appraisal and Pay Determination Cycle for all Teachers – appraisal**

### **June-July**

Teachers and their line managers begin to discuss appraisal objectives, what level of performance will be expected and how performance will be assessed.

Principal's Pay: Principal meets with Head of School Improvement / Head of Primary Education and begin to discuss appraisal objectives, what level of performance will be expected and how performance will be assessed.

Performance is monitored as set out in the Appraisal Policy

Pay and appraisal policies reviewed and updated as necessary in light of any changes to STPCD and experience.

Staff and Trade Unions consulted on any substantive proposed changes to the Policies.

### **September-December**

Trustees determine what provision should be made in the school's budget in light of the Pay Policy and its implementation.

Appraisal meetings take place and all objectives and success criteria for the academic year to be finalised. If agreement cannot be reached, they are set by the appraiser (by appraisal deadline, communicated annually and no later than 18th October)

Teachers receive an appraisal report which includes (amongst other things) an assessment against their objectives and the relevant standards and for those on the Upper or Leadership Pay Ranges, a recommendation on pay progression.

Teachers who elect to do so submit their applications to progress from the main to the upper pay range, alongside relevant evidence (by 31 October)

Head teachers ensure moderation of initial recommendations (where the Principal has not undertaken the assessment themselves).

The Director of Primary/Secondary Education will moderate all pay recommendations to ensure fairness across the Trust.

Principals put forward pay progression recommendations for teachers on the Upper Pay Range and Leadership Group to the Academy Council Pay Committee for agreement, and account to the Committee for the effective operation of links between pay and performance.

Principals put forward individual recommendations with regard to movement between the main and upper pay ranges to the Academy Council Pay Committee for agreement, and account to the Committee for the effective operation of links between pay and performance.

The Chief Executive Officer put's individual pay progression recommendations to the Pay Committee of the Trustees for agreement (with regard to Principal's progression within their existing range) and account to the Committee for the effective operation of links between pay and performance.

Teachers on the Upper Pay Range or Leadership Group are notified of the decision of the Academy Council Pay Committee with regard to their progression within their existing range and given the opportunity to appeal against the decision (by 31 December)

Teachers are notified of the decision of the Academy Council Pay Committee with regard to their application to progress from the main to the upper pay range and given the opportunity to appeal against the decision (by 31 December)

All Teachers are given a written statement setting out their salary and any other financial benefits to which they are entitled (by 31 December)

Performance is monitored as set out in the appraisal policy

### **January-May**

Performance is monitored as set out in the appraisal policy