



# Lydiate Learning Trust

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## **Appraising Staff Performance Policy**

Lydiate Learning Trust adopted this policy on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

This policy will be reviewed in one year at Board level.

### **Purpose**

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of staff, including the Executive Headteacher, Headteachers, and for supporting their development within the context of the school's improvement plan, and the standards expected of teachers and support staff. It also sets out the transition arrangements that will apply when teachers and support staff fall below the levels of competence that are expected of them.

### **Application of the Policy**

The policy, which covers appraisal, applies to the Executive Headteacher, Headteacher(s) and to all staff employed by the school, except those on contracts of less than one term.

### **Appraisal**

Appraisal in this school will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all staff have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It will help to ensure that staff are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop as teachers.

### **The Appraisal Process**

The appraisal period for teachers and support staff will run for twelve months from September to September.

Staff who are employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of the period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when staff begin or end employment with Deyes High School or when teachers change post within our school.

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## Appointing Appraisers

The Executive Headteacher will be appraised by the Board of the Lydiate Learning Trust. The Headteachers will be appraised by the Executive Headteacher and Governing Body, and may be supported by an external adviser, if required who has been appointed by the Governing Body for that purpose.

In the Trust, the task of appraising the Headteacher, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to the Executive Headteacher supported by a sub group consisting of three members of the Governing Body.

The Headteachers of each school will decide who will appraise other staff. Any appraiser will have access to appropriate training and development in the role.

## Setting Objectives

The Executive Headteacher's objectives will be set, and agreed, by the Board of Directors. The Headteacher's objectives will be set by the Executive Headteacher and relevant Governing Body.

## **Teachers**

Objectives for each teacher will be set before or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. These will be reasonable in number. The objectives set for each teacher, will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience. The appraiser and appraisee will seek to agree the objectives, but if that is not possible, the appraiser will determine the objectives. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change that are beyond the control of the teacher/appraiser.

The objectives agreed with each appraisee will, if achieved, contribute to the school's plans for improving the school's educational provision and performance and improving the education of pupils at the school. This will be ensured by, amongst other things, quality assuring all objectives against the school improvement plan.

Before, or as soon as possible after, the start of each appraisal period, each teacher will be informed of the teachers standards against which that teacher's performance and corresponding impact on students' learning in that appraisal period will be assessed. With the exception of those who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding and maintaining Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status, all teachers must be assessed against the set of standards contained in the document called 'Teachers' Standards' published in July 2011. The Headteacher will need to consider whether certain

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teachers should also be assessed against other sets of standards published by the Secretary of State that are relevant to them, e.g. Leadership, etc.

For teachers who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding QTLS status, it is for the governing body or Headteacher to decide which standards are most appropriate. Such teachers may be assessed against the Teachers' Standards, against any other sets of standards issued by the Secretary of State, against any other professional standards relevant to their performance or any combination of those three.

## Support Staff

The objectives set will be rigorous, challenging, achievable, time-bound, fair and equitable in relation to staff with similar roles/responsibilities and experience. They will have regard to what can reasonably be expected of anyone in that position given the desirability of the reviewee being able to achieve a satisfactory balance between the time required to discharge his/her professional duties. They shall also take account of any professional aspirations of the reviewee. They should be such that, if they are achieved, they will contribute to improving the progress of pupils at the school. The reviewer and reviewee will seek to agree the objectives but where a joint determination cannot be made the reviewer will make the determination. Though performance management is an assessment of overall performance of staff, objectives cannot cover the full range of roles/responsibilities undertaken. Objectives will, therefore, focus on the priorities for an individual for the cycle. At the review stage it will be assumed that those aspects of the roles/responsibilities not covered by the objectives or any amendment to the statement which may have been necessary in accordance with the provisions of the regulations have been carried out satisfactorily.

## Reviewing Performance

### Teachers

#### Observation

The Lydiate Learning Trust believes that observation of classroom practice, and other responsibilities, is important both as a way of assessing teachers' performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development they may have and for gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion. (Please see the Lydiate Learning Trust Classroom Protocol)

Teacher's performance will be regularly observed. The amount and type of classroom observation will depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the school. In addition

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to formal observation, Headteachers or other leaders may ‘drop in’ in order to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained. The length and frequency of ‘drop in’ observations will vary depending on specific circumstances.

## **Development and Support**

Appraisal is a supportive process that will be used to inform continuing professional development. The Trust wishes to encourage a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers as identified by the audit against teachers’ standards.

## **Feedback**

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light.

Feedback will highlight strengths as well as areas that require attention. Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher’s performance the appraiser will meet the teacher formally to:

- give feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
- agree any support (e.g. coaching; mentoring, structured observations etc.) that will be provided to help address the specific concerns;
- make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress (it may be appropriate to revise objectives, and it will be necessary to allow sufficient time for improvement. The amount of time is up to the school but should reflect the seriousness of the concerns);
- explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made.

## **Support Staff**

At the end of the cycle, assessment of performance against an objective will be on the basis of the performance criteria set at the beginning of the cycle. Good progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective, even if the performance criteria have not been met in full, will be assessed favourably. The individual school’s CPD programme will be informed by the training and development needs identified in the reviewees’ planning and review statements. The governing body will ensure in

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budget planning that, as far as possible, appropriate resources are made available in the school budget for appropriate training and support agreed. In respect of competing demands on the school budget, a decision on relative priority will be taken with regard to the extent to which: (a) the CPD identified is essential for a reviewee to meet their objectives; and (b) the extent to which the training and support will help the school to achieve its priorities. The school’s priorities will have precedence. Staff should not be held accountable for failing to make good progress towards meeting their performance criteria where the support recorded in the planning statement has not been provided.

## **Transition to Capability**

### **Teachers**

If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress the teacher will be notified verbally followed by written notification 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. The capability procedures will be conducted as detailed in the associated policy “Capability Procedure for Staff”.

### **Support Staff**

If the appraiser is not satisfied with the progress of the member of support staff they should inform the business manager and the member of staff will be notified verbally followed by written notification that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the capability procedure. They will be invited to a formal capability meeting. The capability procedures will be conducted as detailed in the associated policy “Capability Procedure for Staff”.

## **Annual Assessment**

### **Teachers**

Each teacher’s performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the Headteacher, the Governing Body may consult an external adviser. 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 year in interim meetings which will take place twice yearly.

The teacher will receive, as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period, and have the opportunity to comment on, a written appraisal report. In the Lydiate Learning Trust school teachers will receive their written appraisal reports by 31 October (31 December for the Headteacher). The appraisal report will include:

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- details of the teacher’s objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- an assessment of the teacher’s performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards;
- an assessment of the teacher’s training and development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- a determination of the teacher’s training and development needs and the actions that will be taken to address them;
- a recommendation on pay where relevant

The assessment for performance and of training and development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period.

### **Support Staff**

Each member of Support Staff’s performance will be formally assessed in respect of each appraisal period. 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 year.

The process for appraisal involves Staff evaluating their own performance by completing a Staff preparation sheet and the Line Manager evaluating performance by completing a Line Manager’s preparation sheet. The performance review sheet is completed at the performance review meeting.

### **General Principals Underlying the Policy**

#### **Confidentiality**

The appraisal process will be treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Executive Headteacher, Headteacher(s) and Governing Body to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. Where the Headteacher has delegated the responsibility for appraisal to other teachers – the Headteacher/Senior Leadership Team members’ role will be one of moderation/quality assurance, i.e. the Headteacher or appropriate colleague/s will review all teachers objectives and written appraisal records in order to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers. The Head teacher will also be made aware of any pay recommendations that have been made. It is the Finance Director or Business Manager’s responsibility to moderate and quality assure support staff appraisal to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers.

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### Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The Board of the Lydiate Learning Trust and individual school Governing Bodies are committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation.

### Definitions

Unless otherwise indicated, all references to 'teacher' include the Headteacher and Executive Headteacher.

### Delegation

Normal Rules Apply in respect of the delegation of functions by the Board, Governing Bodies of Schools and the Executive Headteacher and Headteachers.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

The Board of the Lydiate Learning Trust, Governing Bodies of individual schools, Executive Headteacher and Headteacher(s) will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's appraisal arrangements.

### Retention of Records

The individual Governing Bodies of each school and Headteacher will ensure that all written appraisal records are retained in a secure place for six years and then destroyed.

### Appeals

All staff may chose to exercise an individual right of appeal against the implementation/operation of the school's Appraisal Policy and this would be via the Trust's Grievance Procedure.

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## Appendix A: Classroom Observation Protocol

This protocol supports the following agreed policies:

- Appraisal Policy
- School Self-Evaluation Policy

### Introduction

Classroom observation across schools within the Lydiate Learning Trust is one of a repertoire of strategies which help staff and the schools as a whole, to:

1. Gather information about the core work of learning and teaching.
2. Develop as an individual
3. Provides appropriate CPD and professional development strategies
4. Develops teams working within faculties, departments or other groupings.

Classroom observation across schools within the Lydiate Learning Trust should always be carried out sensitively and professionally and should involve staff in consultation about the purposes and format of the exercise so that everyone involved is clear and fully informed about their role in the activity.

### Purposes of classroom observation

1. To improve learning and teaching as part of individual staff member, subject department, faculty, whole school self-evaluation procedures.
2. To give teachers the opportunity to reflect on and discuss their practice with each other and with school management
3. To share and celebrate success and good practice.
4. To promote a collegiate approach to developing learning and teaching
5. To allow everyone to have a better understanding of the work and professional practice of teachers.
6. To contribute to standards and quality reporting, including evidence for OFSTED.
7. To contribute to the process of professional review and development, as appropriate.

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8. To contribute to the process of professional development at the request of the member of staff.

## Principles of classroom observation

1. It will be strictly within the context of learning and teaching.
2. The purpose, method and timing of the visit will be subject to prior consultation, and may be linked to the school or department improvement plan, to issues raised in an OFSTED report, to exploring alternative ways to deliver a topic, to supporting a colleague, to diagnosing or working out a solution to a problem.
3. It will take place only after consultation/discussion between the observer and the class teacher, and other senior managers as appropriate, with the expectations being clearly agreed.
4. It will be followed soon after, ideally within 24 hours by a meeting between the observer and the class teacher in order to discuss the observation process. Both parties should endeavour to meet this deadline.
5. All observations will take place in normal teaching time.
6. It may be undertaken by staff members in the school, peers or external visitors e.g. OFSTED, HMI, evaluation supporters depending on the purpose of the observation.
7. It will be on a strictly professional basis, reinforcing the mutually respectful relationship with professional colleagues and with students.
8. It will involve a general process of classroom interaction involving the observer, the class teacher and any other staff present.
9. The agreed school department/faculty observation pro forma should be used and should not be carried out as a 'crit lesson' or based on a checklist. Brief notes may be kept, but should be done unobtrusively, and should not impede the observer's engagement with the learning and teaching process.
10. An individual teacher is free to request that all general lesson observations be unannounced if they so wish.

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\*When the observation is used as part of the monitoring process of Learning and Teaching a written record, as appropriate, should be produced by the observer, giving the class teacher the opportunity to record his/her comments on the process. Where there is disagreement, this should be recorded and referred to the direct line manager. The observer, in this case must have the relevant and appropriate skills to observe.

Within these principles all observers should demonstrate professionalism, integrity, courtesy and objectivity in the conduct of observation activities.

### Important points to note

- Classroom observation as described in this protocol should be part of the normal professional support and quality assurance processes which are part and parcel of the relationship between any class teacher and his/her manager(s). As such, it should be non-threatening and flexible.
- There will be times annually when a ‘broad brush’ view of a specific aspect will be taken, through a series of short classroom observations. A written record may be made of the overall evaluation, and not necessarily of the brief classroom observations, unless specific individual requests are made. Feedback should be provided which may be to individuals or to the whole school community.
- A teacher’s observation record will be confidential to his/her immediate manager, and the senior management of the school.
- Personalising the observation process will lead to targeted and tailored staff development and training. Teaching and learning approaches will then reflect the core values and qualities of the school.
- Whilst observations can be conducted by one individual there is often great value in two professionals discussing the evidence that they can provide.
- Additionally, it could be considered good practice to ensure that aspiring school leaders and other senior leaders have the opportunity to develop their skills alongside a more experienced colleague.
- Observations should include no more than two observers in a classroom at any one time unless prior agreement is secured.

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- The planned curriculum (the learning pedagogy) should not be adjusted to accommodate the needs of the observation.
- The number and length of observations must be proportionate to the teacher’s need
- It is in the teacher’s best interest to prepare a plan and a seating plan for the observer and submit relevant student profiles and data.

Observations & Evidence Protocol to support the School Appraisal Policy

The Lydiate Learning Trust recognises that lesson observations play a part in the gathering of evidence for the appraisal process for individual teachers and also in the gathering of evidence to evaluate the quality of Teaching & Learning across the school.

Teacher Appraisal requires the appraiser to make a judgement of teacher’s progress towards agreed objectives and also the totality of their performance against relevant standards.

Evidence may come predominantly, but not exclusively, from the following sources:

- Scrutiny of student work
- Lesson Observation
- Student Voice Panels
- Themed Learning Walk Observations.

For appraisal purposes the observations conducted as part of departmental inspections will be used to evaluate progress towards agreed objectives unless the appraiser requests an additional 60 minute observation. This will be agreed as part of the target setting process.

The school also has a published cycle of observations to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning across the school. These observations are usually graded under the existing OFSTED Inspection Framework. These observations will usually be announced and will usually be for approximately 30 minutes.

It may be the case that a teacher teaches across more than one Faculty, and therefore a second observation to gather evidence to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in the second subject may be deemed necessary.

The school also conducts “Themed Learning Walks” or “typicality walks”. These arise from areas for development highlighted in the self-evaluation process and may involve visits to a number of classrooms of no more than 20 minutes to focus on one aspect of the school’s practice rather than on the performance of any one teacher (e.g. Literacy, behaviour for learning), tracking a child/

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groups of children etc.

## NQT's & I.T.T

As a school we would aim to support all NQT's and trainees as far as is possible and one of the strategies deployed may be to welcome NQT's and trainees into our classrooms to observe and participate.

In addition observations are a very important part of the statutory induction process for NQT's themselves.

## Ofsted

As part of an Ofsted classroom observation is used to gain evidence to inform inspectors' judgements on the quality of teaching and learning provided by the school. This is a statutory requirement and such observations are outside the scope of this protocol.

Classroom observations which fall within the protocol, however, should not be scheduled to take place in the ten days after an Ofsted observation.

During an Ofsted inspection, the Head teacher of the Trust school or member of the senior leadership team will usually be invited to undertake at least two 'joint observations' with a member of the inspection team. The purpose of these joint observations is to assess the quality of the Head teacher's/senior leadership member's observation and evaluation skills, rather than the quality of the teacher's teaching. Feedback on the lesson itself is given by the inspector and observer who will also give the Head teacher/ senior leadership team member feedback on the accuracy of their judgements.

## Peer Observation

Peer observation involves a teacher observing another teacher's practice. It is developmental. It involves teachers learning from each other. It offers first-hand experience and direct evidence about what happens in other classrooms. It is a practical and powerful way to support teachers' practice and knowledge about teaching and learning.

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Peer observation works best when colleagues choose to work together on a voluntary basis, identifying and focusing on the issues they have agreed to address. It is a professional development activity.

## Governor Visits

Governor visits are different from informal and formal observations of lessons, as they are not statutorily required or professionally generated, therefore they do not fall within this classroom observation protocol.

Governors of the Trust schools may wish to visit classrooms to become familiar with the school or to observe specific aspects of the curriculum. Such visits should always be by prior arrangement and follow procedures agreed and specified by the Head teacher and the governing body following consultation with the teaching staff. Such procedures should specify that governor visits are not observations, but visits. Governors should not evaluate the work of teachers. No report by a governor evaluating the work of a teacher, or teachers, should be presented to the governing body.

## Drop-ins

Trust school drop-ins will be undertaken by the Headteacher supported by the leadership team and assigned Heads of Faculty/ Department as and when appropriate. They will focus on a strand associated with School Improvement priorities e.g. observation of a group in a specific year. Generic prior notice will be issued to staff in advance.

A “drop in” will not be in excess of 15 minutes and forms part of the Headteacher’s statutory accountability for standards of teaching & learning.

## Other Leadership Visits to Lessons

There will be other occasions in the school year when those with leadership responsibilities are present in lessons. The principle objective of these visits is to enable leaders to understand for themselves what is going on in classrooms and to identify any ways in which the curriculum or everyday support procedures can be improved.

Because these are not formal lesson observations, no written feedback will be given, and therefore no evidence from them will be used to inform performance review.

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If any aspect of classroom practice seen during leadership visits gives cause for concern, the teacher will be informed so that, if necessary, further investigation may be undertaken or additional lesson observations arranged. If this further investigation leads to a decision that a national standard is not met at the appropriate career stage, a special support arrangement will apply.

### **Provision of additional support where observations deem learning to be inadequate or satisfactory**

The Lydiate Learning Trust aims to consistently deliver lessons in which the learning and progress is always outstanding. However, we accept that on occasions this may be good. In situations where this is not evident the following support could apply:

- The appointment of a support partner from the Senior Leadership Team
- The development of an appropriate support package that targets main areas for development support could include:
- Focussed observations of outstanding practice within, or beyond, the faculty in which the teacher works
- Support with designing appropriate learning activities
- Attendance at training appropriate to need
- Coaching and shared experience

(NB This is not an exhaustive list and the Lydiate Learning Trust aims to provide support that is specifically tailored to need.)

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