



**Federation of
Westminster Special Schools
& Bi-Borough Inclusion Service**

APPRAISAL POLICY

**Approved by Full Governing Board: February 2026
Next review: February 2027**

Policy for appraising performance

The Governing Board of the Federation of Westminster Special Schools adopted this policy in February 2026. It will be reviewed annually. This policy is based on that of Westminster City Council and adapted to take account of the specific arrangements of the Federation of Westminster Special Schools.

Purpose

This policy sets out the framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of all Federation staff, including school leaders, and for supporting their development within the context of the Federation, BIS and schools' plans for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers.

Application of the policy

The policy covers appraisal, applies to all staff employed by the Federation or Westminster City Council except those on contracts of less than one term, those undergoing induction (eg ECTs) and those who are subject to capability procedures.

The policy should always be applied in a way that is robust whilst minimising the impact on workload for teachers, line managers, school leaders and the Governing Board

Appraisal

Appraisal in the Federation will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all staff have or fully develop the skills and access to support they need to carry out their roles effectively. It will help to ensure that all staff are able to continue to develop and improve their professional practice and to develop their careers.

The appraisal period

The appraisal period will run for twelve months" from September to July. 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 and an individual staff members objectives should take account of the length of contract. There is flexibility to have a longer or shorter appraisal period when staff begin or end employment with the Federation or when unattached teachers change post within the same authority.

Appointing appraisers

The School Headteachers and Head of BIS will be appraised by the Governing Board supported by a suitably skilled and/or experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the Governing Board for that purpose. The Headteachers Standards 2020 will be used.

In the Federation the task of appraising the school leader, including the setting of objectives, will be delegated to a sub-group consisting of three of the Governing Board

The School Headteacher/Head of BIS will decide who will appraise all other staff.

Setting objectives

In the Federation the headteacher of each school/Head of BIS objectives will be set by the Governing Board after consultation with the external adviser. The Governing Board have a duty to have regard to the work-life balance of the Federation leaders and objectives will reflect this.

Objectives for each staff member will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The Federation leaders have a duty to have regard to the work-life balance of staff and objectives will reflect this. The objectives set for each staff member will be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound and will be appropriate to the their 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. The appraisee can record their disagreement on the appraisal statement and this will be taken into account at the appraisal review.

Objectives should be revised if circumstances change, such as but not limited to a member of staff going on maternity leave, or undergoing surgery/medical treatment, to take account of the anticipated absence and to allow the member of staff to meet reduced and attainable targets.

The objectives set for each staff member will, if achieved, contribute to the Federation and schools' plans for improving the school's educational provision and performance and improving the education of Children & Young People (CYP) at that school.

Objectives should also have a strong focus on effective professional development to ensure that staff stay up to date with the latest methodologies, technologies, and educational research.

Before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period, all staff will be informed of the standards against which their performance 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 and TA standards.

For teachers who are qualified teachers by virtue of holding QTLS status, it is for the Governing Board or Federation leader decide which standards are most appropriate.

Teachers' performance is assessed against their objectives, and the relevant standards. The appraiser will need to set out what they will take into account when making judgements as to whether teachers have met their objectives and the relevant

standards. Evidence used in the performance management process must relate directly to objectives and should be agreed in advance and be readily available from day-to-day practice. Numerical targets should not be set if it is beyond the teacher's control to achieve them.

This might but does not have to include:

- improvements in specific elements of practice, such as behaviour management, development of pedagogy or providing feedback,
- impact on effectiveness of teachers or other staff,
- wider contribution to the work of the school.

For other Federation staff, these will be set against acceptable/appropriate standards for their role.

Reviewing performance

The Federation leaders will set out what evidence they will take into account when making judgements about performance and whether they have met the relevant standards and their individual objectives. This evidence will be decided upon when the objectives are being set at the beginning of the appraisal process.

The Federation believes that a range of different methods should be utilised, in a supportive fashion, to assess staff members performance.

It is important to the Federation that methods of assessing performance do not add to workload.

Development and support

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. The Federation wishes to encourage a culture in which all staff take responsibility for improving their practice through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to Federation and school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individuals and their roles.

Feedback

Staff members will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation or other relevant activities has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that require further development.

Assessment against Teachers' Standards

Teachers' performance will be assessed against the relevant teacher standards to a level that is consistent with what should reasonably be expected of a teacher in the relevant role and at the relevant stage of their career. Federation leaders and other appraisers should use their professional judgement when appraising teachers' performance. It is not necessary for schools to adopt rigid models that seek to set out exactly what the relevant standards mean for teachers at different stages in their careers and teachers should not be expected routinely to provide evidence that they meet all the standards.

Other roles will be assessed against the set standards for that role using the guidance and criteria issued by Westminster City Council .

Informal Support

Except in the most serious cases of persistent failures to meet job expectations and appropriate standards, resulting in negative consequences on the CYP and organisation, staff members should not ordinarily be placed in capability procedures without first undergoing a period of informal support as part of the appraisal process. Where there are concerns about any aspects of the staff members performance the appraiser will meet the staff member to:

- inform the staff member that they are going to be receiving informal support due to performance concerns;
- give clear and specific feedback to the staff member about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the staff member the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
- set clear objectives and timescales for required improvement;
- agree any support (e.g. coaching, mentoring, structured observations), that will be provided to help address those 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 – e.g. commencement of capability procedure.

There should be a clear relationship between the issue, the objectives set, and the planned documented programme of support put in place. The line manager/appraiser should partner with the staff member in a collaborative manner to establish objectives and timelines, taking into account the staff member's circumstances. This may include any medical conditions, well-being support needs, or disabilities protected by equality legislation.

Informal support should be provided for a reasonable period to allow for performance improvement. In the Federation this will generally be for a minimum period of 6 weeks.

However, the duration will be determined based on the specific circumstances, with appropriate support in place to facilitate improvement. The appraiser should meet with the staff member regularly to assess progress and ensure the agreed-upon support is being provided.

When progress is reviewed, after the agreed upon period, if the appraiser is satisfied that the member of staff 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.

Transition to capability

If a member of staff demonstrates serious underperformance or has not responded to support provided within the informal support process, they 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. Advice should be sought as appropriate from our HR provider.

Disciplinary procedures will only be triggered by factors related to misconduct or breach of professional standards. The Federation should be careful not to conflate these procedures but, if appropriate to the circumstances, they can run concurrently.

Annual assessment

Each staff members' performance will be assessed in respect of each appraisal period. In assessing the performance of the School Headteacher/Head of BIS, the Governing Board must consult the 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.

The staff member will receive as soon as practicable following the end of each appraisal period and have the opportunity to comment on the appraisal paperwork. The appraisal paperwork will include

- details of the staff member's objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- an assessment of the staff member's performance of their role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards;
- an assessment of the staff member's professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- details of a discussion on wellbeing and workload and career progression/aspirations;
- a recommendation on pay where that is relevant;

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

Appendix 1: Headteacher appraisal document

Headteacher /Head of BIS Appraisal

Headteacher Name

Objectives agreed for September to July

Date of Appraisal Review/ Setting Key Objectives	
External Adviser	
Appointed Governors in attendance	

Objective 1				
Excellence Standard and related objective	Actions	Success Criteria	Impact	Impact on pupils
Leadership and management				

Evaluation and Evidence Interim Review (should include data evidence of achievement)
Governors Evaluation Interim Review
Evaluation and Evidence End of Year Review (should include additional data evidence of achievement)
Governors Evaluation End of Year Review (including notes from interim review)

Objective 2

Excellence Standard and related objective	Action	Success Criteria	Impact	Pupil Impact
Quality of education				

<p>Evaluation and Evidence Interim Review (Should include additional data and evidence of achievement)</p>
<p>Governors Evaluation Interim Review</p>

Evaluation and Evidence End of year review (Should include additional data evidence of achievement)
Governors Evaluation End of Year Review (including notes from interim review)

Objective 3

Excellence Standard and objective	Actions	Success Criteria	Impact	Pupil Impact

Evaluation and Evidence Interim Review (Should include additional data evidence of achievement)

Governors Evaluation Interim Review

Evaluation and Evidence End of Year Review (should include additional data evidence of achievement)

Governors Evaluation End of Year Review (Including notes from Interim Review)

Other success:

Training, Support and Development (CPD)

Appendix 2: Teachers appraisal document:

Teacher Appraisal Statement

Teacher's name:	Post held: Teacher
Name of line manager/appraiser:	Post held:
Date of planning meeting:	Date of review:
Wishes to apply for Upper Pay Range? Yes/No	JD reviewed?

Objective	Success criteria	Evidence including lesson observations	Training and development	Teacher standards will meet
CYP Progress:				

Mid-year review (date):

End of year review (date):

Objective	Success criteria	Evidence including lesson observations	Training and development needs	Teacher standards will meet
Whole School priority:	•			

Mid-year review (date):

End of year review (date):

Objective	Success criteria	Evidence including lesson observations	Training and development needs	Teacher standards will meet
Leadership:				

Mid-year review (date):

End of year review (date):

Review meeting and initial recommendation on pay

Outcomes from training and development

Teacher's comments

Recommendation for pay progression

Teacher's signature:
Date:

Line manager's signature:

Appendix 3: Support staff appraisal document

Appraisee's Name

Appraiser's Name:

Appraisee's Signature:

Appraiser's Signature:

Meeting Date: Review Date:

Individual Objectives	Actions	Support/Training and Development needs	Impact measures/success criteria
1.			
2.	*		
3.			

Mid year check in	1. 2. 3.
Final appraisal:	1. 2. 3.
Areas of particular strength	
Areas to be developed (to include possible support and resources)	

Employee comments:	
Review of current pay scale and any opportunity for pay progression that may be available to the appraisee in their current role	
Discussion around any further career aspirations or training	