



Byron College

Teaching Standards & Professional Development: Policies on Appraisal, Discipline and Dismissal of Staff

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Introduction

Byron College endeavours at all times to recruit appropriately qualified staff who can contribute to the development of the School and satisfy the high standards expected of a Byron College employee. The Heads of School have the duty to evaluate the standards of teaching and learning and to ensure proper standards of professional performance are established and maintained throughout the school.

Throughout their working tenure at Byron College the performance of all teaching staff is monitored and reviewed against the DfE Teaching Standards: www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards

It is the Board's intention that the quality of the recruitment process, the availability of support teachers, the ongoing appraisal and monitoring of performance make it unlikely that a formal capability procedure would be initiated. However, the statement of the Capability Procedures are included in the event of serious concerns remaining about a teacher's performance that the appraisal process has been unable to address.

Purpose

This policy sets out a framework for a clear and consistent assessment of the overall performance of teachers, and for supporting their development within the control of the School's plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of teachers. It also sets out the arrangements that apply when teachers fall below the levels of competence that are expected of them.

The policy is divided into:

- Section A – Appraisal / Performance Management
- Section B – Capability Procedure

Section A – Appraisal / Performance Management

Appraisal at Byron College is a thorough yet supportive and developmental process referring to the Ofsted outline for judging lessons and the DfE Teaching Standards. This process is designed to ensure that all teachers have the skills and the support they need to carry out their role effectively.

Byron College's appraisal scheme incorporating classroom and task observation enables teachers to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop as teachers.

Those involved in the process:

- carry out the role with professionalism, integrity and courtesy;
- evaluate objectively;

- report accurately and fairly;
- respect the confidentiality of the information gained.

The appraisal period

This may vary from case to case considering different issues and categories of teaching staff.

Appointing appraisers

The Heads of School are appraised by the Board of Directors.

The Heads of School decide who appraises other teachers, this normally involves middle and senior leaders.

Setting objectives

The Heads of School's objectives are set by the Board of Directors.

Objectives for each teacher are set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of the appraisal period. Objectives set for teachers should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound and always appropriate to the teacher's role and level of experience.

The appraiser and teacher seek to agree the objectives but, if that is not possible, the appraiser determines the objectives. These objectives may be revised if circumstances change.

The objectives set for each teacher, if achieved, contribute to the School's plans for improving the School's educational provisions and performance and improving the education of pupils in Byron College.

The objectives and targets agreed by the Heads of School and the Board at the beginning of each academic year are an integral part of the objectives set by each member of staff.

Each teacher is informed of the standards against which their performance is appraised and the duration of the assessment period.

The Heads of School or Board of Directors may consider whether certain teachers are assessed against other sets of standards relevant to their case.

Reviewing Performance

Observation

Byron College believes that observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities are imperative to identifying strengths and areas for further development. Observations also provide essential information that informs School improvement.

Observations are carried out in a supportive fashion (the Heads of School are responsible for providing staff with documentation that clarifies how classroom observation is conducted).

The amount and form of classroom observation depends on the individual circumstances of the teacher and the overall needs of the School.

The Heads of School or middle leaders with the responsibility of teaching standards may observe lessons on a regular basis and also conduct 'learning walks' to check that high standards of professional performance are maintained.

While information gathered during the appraisal process may be used, as appropriate, for a variety of purposes including informing school self-evaluation and school improvement strategies, the Heads of School may also collect such evidence as their professional judgement dictates which may include additional lesson observations.

Teachers (including the Heads of School), who have responsibilities outside the classroom, should also expect for their performance to be observed and assessed.

Monitoring may also other forms, for example, it may have a focus on the standards attained by the children, the impact of programmes of study on learning or on pupil behaviour. The monitoring might also involve: work scrutiny; analysis of assessment results; or an examination of lesson planning records. AS

mentioned previously, other forms of additional monitoring may include 'learning walks' or 'drop in' visits to classes.

Development and Support

The School intends that appraisal is supportive and informs process which informs continuing professional development (CPD) creating a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching skills.

Improvement priorities are continually reassessed, to which CPD is closely linked. Any process reflects the development needs and priorities of individual teachers.

Feedback

Oral feedback is given as soon as possible after any observation and no later than the end of the following working day. It will be given in a suitable, private environment.

Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention. Where there are concerns about any aspects of a teacher's performance the appraiser will meet the teacher formally to:

- Give clear feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns.
- Give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns
- Agree appropriate support with clear expectations to help address specific concerns
- Make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress
- Explain the implications and process if no – or insufficient – improvement is made.

Written feedback is provided within five working days of the observation taking place. If issues emerged from an observation that were not part of the focus of the observation as recorded in the planning and review statement these should also be covered in the written feedback and the appropriate action taken. The written record of feedback also includes the date on which the observation took place, the lesson/task observed and the length of the observation.

When progress is reviewed, if the appraiser is satisfied that the teacher has made, or is making, sufficient improvement then the appraisal process continues as normal – with remaining issues being addressed through that process.

Transition to capability

If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress, the teacher will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and their performance will be managed under the capability procedure.

These procedures are to be detailed in Section B of this policy.

Annual Assessment

Whilst this assessment is the end point of the annual appraisal process performance and development priorities are addressed and reviewed on a regular basis throughout the year in interim meetings.

The teacher receives, at the end of each appraisal period, a written appraisal report.

The appraisal report will include:

- Details of the teacher's objectives for the appraisal period in question
- An assessment of the teacher's role and responsibilities against their objectives and the relevant standards
- An assessment of the teacher's professional development needs and an identification of any action that should be taken
- A recommendation on pay where it is relevant.

The assessment of performance and professional development needs informs the planning process for the next school year and appraisal period.

Section B – The Capability Procedure

This fair and efficient procedure applies only to teachers or the Heads of School about whose performance there are serious concerns and the appraisal process has been unable to address.

When an individual is invited to a formal capability meeting then five working days notice will be provided.

The notification will contain sufficient information about the concerns over performance AND their possible consequences.

The notification should allow the teacher sufficient time to prepare to answer the case and, as such, copies of any written evidence must be included and the teacher advised as to their right to be accompanied by a companion.

Formal Capability Meeting

This meeting is intended to establish the facts. It will be conducted by the Chair of Governors (for Head Teacher capability meetings) or the Head Teacher (for other teachers).

The meeting allows the teacher to respond to concerns about their performance and to make relevant representations. This may provide new information or a different context to what has already been collected as information or evidence.

The person conducting the meeting may decide there are insufficient grounds for pursuing the capability issue and that the appraisal process remains the most appropriate way to address remaining concerns. In this case the capability meeting ends. The meeting may be adjourned if the person conducting the meeting feels that further investigation is needed or that more time is needed to consider additional information.

When the meeting continues the following principles should be followed as this meeting could lead to a formal warning being issued:

- Identify the standards expected of teachers that are not being met
- Give clear guidance on the improved standard of performance needed to ensure that the teacher can be removed from formal capability procedures
- Explain any support that will be available to help the teacher improve their performance
- Set out the timetable for improvement and explain how performance will be monitored and reviewed. The timetable should be reasonable and appropriate
- Warn the teacher formally that failure to improve within the set period could lead to dismissal. In serious cases this warning could be a final written warning.

Notes will be taken of formal meetings and a copy sent to the member of staff. Where a warning is issued the teacher will be informed in writing of the matters covered above; be given information on the timing and handling of the review and the time limits for appeal.

A performance monitoring and review period will follow the formal capability meeting.

Formal monitoring, evaluation, guidance and support will continue during this period.

The member of staff will be invited to a formal review meeting, unless they have issued with a final written warning, in which case they will be invited to a decision meeting.

Formal Review Meeting

If the person conducting the meeting is satisfied that the teacher has made sufficient improvement then the capability procedure will close and the appraisal process will start again.

In other cases:

- When it is considered that some progress has been made and that more is likely it may be appropriate to extend the monitoring and review period
- If no, or insufficient improvement has been made then the teacher will receive a final written warning.
- Notes will be taken of formal meetings and a copy sent to the member of staff.

The final written warning will mirror any previous warnings that have been issued. Where a final warning is issued the staff member will be informed that failure to achieve an acceptable standard of performance within the set timescale may result in dismissal. Information about further monitoring will be provided as are details of how and when to appeal.

The decision will be invited in a Decision meeting.

Decision meeting

If an acceptable standard of performance has been achieved during the further monitoring and review period then the capability procedure will close and the appraisal process will restart.

If performance remains satisfactory a recommendation to the Board of Directors will be made that the teacher should be dismissed or required to close working at the School.

At Byron College the Board of Directors is the employer and has not delegated the power to dismiss to the Head of School. That authority has been delegated to the Head acting with one or more of the Governors.

The teacher will be informed as soon as possible of the reasons for the dismissal, the data on which the employment contract will end, the appropriate period of notice and the right of appeal.

Appeal

If a teacher feels that a decision to dismiss them, or any other action taken against them, is wrong or unjust they may appeal in writing against the decision within 5 days of the decision, setting out at the same time the grounds for appeal.

The appeal will be heard without unreasonable delay; will be dealt with impartially and wherever possible by managers or governors who have not previously been involved in the case.

The teacher will be informed in writing of the results of the appeal hearing as soon as possible.

In addition to the safeguards provided to employees by the approved appraisal and capability policy Byron College is committed to not depriving any employee of the legal and financial protection afforded to them by local legislation.

Gross Misconduct

In cases of gross misconduct e.g. an incident related to Child Protection and safeguarding, a separate process is followed in accordance to all appropriate regulations.