

The new appraisal system for teachers (including Headteachers) from September 2012 – A briefing for LNIs

Background

- Remember, many of the Heads did come to one or the three sessions I ran on the new appraisal regulation in the summer term.
- There is also an additional 'catch-up' session for those who missed these on 27 September at 1.30-4.00 in Conference Room 2. There are a few places left but these should be booked through the normal BPSI web-site.
- However, in the summer sessions I may have given the impression that I thought the "assessment" against new teacher standards required under the 2012 regulations would need to be a full audit each year. More recent advice suggests that this assessment, whilst important, should not become a major piece of work in its own right. I have attached a copy of a brief DfE document, "Teachers' Standards; Myths and Facts." I have highlighted for you the 5th example myth they cite that talks about this.

Schools need:

- A new policy for appraisal of teachers. There is a model one from the DfE that links appraisal to capability and others from unions which largely do not.
- The reviewers will need to inform each teacher at the start of the 2012-13 planning cycle (i.e. the setting of objectives) that their performance at the end of the cycle will be assessed against progress made on the objectives AND performance generally against the appropriate standards (likely to be the new ones).
- In order to set objectives appropriately, reviewers should know what the new standards say.
- To ensure that Headteachers report to the Governing Body each year over the general arrangements for appraisal, confirming that it continues to happen annually and that it draws on a profile of each teacher's professional needs, school priorities and the aspirations for career development in each case. It should also include information regarding the areas for practice development that had been identified through appraisal. It should not be worded however in a way that compromises individual confidentiality of appraisal documents or the outcomes from the appraisal process for individual teachers.

Timings

- If schools are reviewing performance against the objectives set last year, then practice is no different in autumn 2012.
- Setting new objectives should be completed this term and it would be sensible to aim at doing this by 31 October for teachers and by 31 December for Headteachers so that pay statements* can be updated if necessary and issued by those dates.

This year's appraisal meetings

- Reviews should be focussed on progress made in meeting objectives set last year. There is no requirement that the additional assessment against standards should be conducted in any formal sense or recorded as part of this in 2012.
- My advice is that planning for 2012-13 should involve a review of the teacher's known development needs and the school priorities out of which will come the new objectives. This sounds like the reviewer *is* making an assessment but it falls somewhat short of that which is expected in future cycles where annually there will need to be a summary written statement

about each teacher's performance and practice in relation to the standards. If this model is used as transition practice in 2012-13 then the reviewer could indicate to the teacher, both at the meeting and in the appraisal planning statement, which of the relevant standards their objective(s) fall under.

Standards to be used

- The new standards (came into force on 1 September 2012) apply to all teachers at whatever stage of their career (including Heads).
- Despite proposals made by the Independent Review of Teachers' Standards that the existing standards for Post-Threshold teachers, ASTs and Excellent teachers should be discontinued, they have not been yet.
- Therefore the standards for these groups of teachers can be used for appraising performance in the 2012-13 cycle alongside the new standards for all teachers, if schools wish to use them. If they do, they must make clear at the outset, which standards they will be using in each teacher's case.

Headteacher appraisal

- The process described above is mirrored, as appropriate, in the Headteacher's appraisal
- It continues to be the responsibility of the Governing Body to delegate to a group of governors the task of appraising the Head, as in the past.
- Governing Bodies still have to appoint a suitable person to act as external adviser in the process of appraising the Head.

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