

## Appraisal & Capability Policy

### Appraisal / Performance Management

#### In the Main school

Evaluation of staff performance should be an ongoing process with regular Appraisal and/or Performance Review offering an opportunity for staff to evaluate whether their performance meets the requirements of the School and, if it does not, what action may need to be taken to address this. This Policy describes the procedure in place at the Iona School to ensure that effective documented staff performance evaluations are undertaken on a regular basis.

#### Teachers deepen their understanding of Steiner Waldorf Education through

- attending the weekly Pedagogical Meeting and College meetings
- informal discussions with colleagues
- formal conversations with a mentor
- private study
- attending the study evening for parents which is held half-termly

#### Other training and development needs are met through

- attendance at termly staff training days (Inset Days)
- attendance at the Teachers' Meetings which are held prior to the beginning of each term

#### The professional and spiritual development of teachers is also helped through

- meeting with colleagues at 08.25 each morning to say the Teachers' Verse
- working privately with the Teachers' Meditation given by Rudolf Steiner
- engaging in private study and meditation
- participating in study at College meetings
- speaking the appropriate verse given by Rudolf Steiner with the children each morning

#### In addition to the opportunities provided within the school we also expect staff to

- engage in CPD
- encouraging to attend courses and conferences provided by SWSF
- ensuring they attend training courses provided by the local authority other agencies e.g. First Aid, Fire Safety, Child Protection and Safeguarding

#### Mentoring

Since the Iona School has relatively few teachers, mentoring is arranged by the College of Teachers so that senior teachers who reduce their teaching load or retire, will be available to support new teachers. These groupings are not exclusive. Experience has shown that many helpful conversations take place between colleagues informally and these form an important part of the ongoing dialogue between colleagues, parents and pupils which is the foundation of a healthy learning environment.

## Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

In order to help the College identify professional training needs, all teachers and staff are expected to complete a CPD form each year. This form will be included in the appraisal conversation with a designated member of College or Management Team.

### How Appraisal will benefit the staff member

- Opportunity to look at your role and responsibilities, where you are now and where you would like to go.
- This could include training opportunities
- To reflect on, analyse and evaluate own practice
- Supports the setting of personal goals and a chance to review, change or adapt recent or past actions Promotes confidence and safe working practices
- Provides an opportunity to agree actions for both parties
- Allows disagreements to be recorded and solutions explored

### Appraisal is Supportive

- It is a time to be listen to each other, value, motivate and empower staff their work and ongoing commitment
- Get staff involved in decision-making and problem solving
- Can be used to reduce stress and explore staff feelings
- Will support staff to manage work effectively
- Any issues can be discussed including issues related to health and safety, safeguarding and caseload

### The purpose of appraisal is:-

- To provide a regular 'safe space' for staff to be supported and reflect upon their work and all areas affecting their health wellbeing
- To assess staff suitability to work with young children, review any changes regarding the Staff disclosure and DBS check
- To develop understanding and skills within your work and direct to training is appropriate
- To be praised or constructively challenged as appropriate
- To clarify priorities
- To monitor and reflect on personal performance and caseload; including individual cases, identify strengths and improve practice
- To recognise and resolve potential and existing problems
- To discuss how personal factors are affecting work and provide support
- An opportunity to moderate, observe practice and review judgements to ensure accurate and consistent assessment of children's developmental milestones/concerns about children

### Performance Evaluation of Teachers

The performance of a teacher may be reflected most accurately in the performance of his/her pupils, so it is reasonable to use the academic (or other) achievements of individual pupils, or of an entire class, as a measurement of the performance of a teacher. However, the effect of varying individual abilities, pupils with special needs, extended absence, family circumstances and many other factors which may skew the performance of a class or individual should be taken into account in as reasonable and objective a way as possible.

## **Appraisal by Colleagues**

Collegial work is a vital aspect of a Steiner Waldorf School. To help foster the necessary trust and to gain insight into one another's work, teachers are encouraged to visit lessons given by their colleagues. To observe colleagues and be observed in return will also strengthen the carrying of the school by the whole group of teachers and add weight to discussions about particular classes and pupils in our pedagogical meetings. This process also informs decisions about study themes in the study meetings.

It is the responsibility of the College of Teachers to arrange the necessary cover to enable these visits to take place. These observations by colleagues will be used in appraisal meetings, as appropriate.

## **Capability**

### **Underperformance, managing the early stages.**

In many cases of under-performance an informal discussion at an early stage should be enough to address the issue. The School business manager will be informed at this stage and will work with leaders and staff to ensure that the correct steps are followed within HR guidance.

When a line manager becomes concerned about an individual's performance, attitude or behaviour, then this should be addressed with the individual as quickly as possible. This is because there is a presumption that the conduct is mostly in the control of the employee, and that with some support they should be able to improve this. It is vital that you consider;

- Have I made it clear what is expected of the individual and does s/he have a common understanding of these expectations? If there is any doubt as to whether expectations have been made clear, address this first.
- Have I been providing appropriate feedback on performance?
- What support has been provided and what else might be available? E.g. training, guidance, equipment, flexible working arrangements, etc.
- Are there any underlying issues/ factors that may be impacting on the individual's ability to perform effectively? E.g. underlying health or personal issues, interrelationship difficulties etc. If any are identified they will need further exploration and consideration in some circumstances. It is vital you discuss this with the school manager as they may hold important confidential information that will effect this process

The aim of managing under-performance is to help the individual to improve and to meet the agreed standards. This can be done via the performance evaluation process / Appraisal.

## **The Performance Evaluation Process / Appraisal**

The performance evaluation process may be described thus:

1. A non-subjective standard comprising formal aims and objectives needs to be set and agreed, against which performance may be measured.
2. The aims and objectives comprising the performance standard should follow the SMART principle of being **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**ime-limited.
3. The process describing how the ongoing evaluation is to be undertaken needs to be documented and understood by all concerned.

4. Although the evaluation process will be ongoing, there must be a point at which the results are collated and communicated to the staff member involved: this is termed the 'Appraisal' or 'Performance Review'.
5. Generally, there will be one of two outcomes of the appraisal or performance review: either the staff member has met the standards set, or not. It may well be that there are 'grey' areas, where some aims and objectives have not been met fully or have been only partially met, for various reasons. In these cases an evaluation will be made by the school manager within the overall framework of the identified performance criteria.
6. If the staff member is found to have met the required standards, then no action is necessary.
7. **In the event of the required standards not having been met**, the following process will be implemented:
  - The staff member will be informed that he / she has not met the required standards, this should be done with understanding and clarity.
  - The staff member will be given the opportunity to discuss their under-performance and to offer any explanation or extenuating circumstances;
  - Areas for improvement should be made clear, with information concerning help and support available to achieve such improvement, e.g. training, mentoring, peer support, etc. An improvement action plan should be agreed and documented;
  - A date should be set for the next appraisal or performance review. This may be set for any time in the future dependent on the nature of the work being reviewed, but should allow a reasonable period for the staff member's performance to improve. The process then begins again from (5) above. A minimum of 6 weeks to see improvements will always be set.
8. If a second or subsequent appraisal or performance review finds no improvement in an area previously indicated as one in which improved performance was necessary, the staff member may become subject to disciplinary action. This must be then referred to the school business manager to carry out the correct HR procedure (see capability procedure).
9. Poor performance should always be addressed as a staff training and support issue in the first instance but can result in disciplinary action and eventual dismissal if any particular staff member cannot, with all appropriate support, meet the required standards of their job.
10. If a staff member carries out an act of gross misconduct, you must refer to the disciplinary and dismissal policy.

### Exceptions

Not all aspects of staff member's work have to be evaluated by the above process: there may be times when issues of personal or professional conduct can be considered to be worthy of immediate disciplinary action. However, these would have to be seen to be serious, with immediate and obvious negative consequences for the school, its staff or its pupils and to have been carried out by the employee in a knowing or negligent way. This last factor could possibly – but not necessarily - exclude genuine accidents with negative results but where negligence does not appear to have been present. This will be referred to the school business manager

**Summary**

- The process must be clear to all staff and must be applied consistently and fairly to everyone.
- Staff members should know that their performance is being evaluated and should be offered as much support as possible to help both their personal and professional development during the process.
- If a staff member's performance is considered to be below required standards, they must be told this clearly and at the earliest possible opportunity. The necessary remedial action should be identified (e.g. special training, peer support, etc.) and the consequences of future poor performance should be clearly stated.
- Recording of all aspects of the process and any associated discussions and decisions is vital.

Disciplinary action should only be taken when all other reasonable steps to address poor performance have been tried and are seen not to have been effective.

**Issue date**

This policy takes effect from April 2021.

**Review date**


This policy will be reviewed (and if necessary revised with the approval of the School Management Team) every three years.

**Review date**

This policy will be reviewed and revised by the school manager on an annual basis.

**Endorsement**

Full endorsement to this policy is given by:

Name: Mr Martin Taylor  
Position: Iona School Trustee  
Signed:   
Date: 06/10/2021