

GUIDANCE ON PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

*This guidance is intended for
Governors, Headteachers,
Support Staff line-managers,
Support Staff in schools*

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GUIDANCE NOTE ON PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

Good arrangements should be made in each school for the performance management (PM) and professional development (PD) of all support staff. Although performance management for support staff in schools is not statutory, many schools already have arrangements in place and recognise that a clear, consistent and structured process for all support staff is good practice which benefits both staff and pupils within an effective school.

The process recommended in this guidance note is similar to the revised statutory regulations for the performance management of teachers which came into effect in September 2007. It is hoped that schools will find it helpful to use a similar process for all staff.

Principles of Performance Management and Professional Development

Support staff should be entitled to PM and PD processes relevant to their roles and work within the school. This includes working to objectives which recognise their contribution to pupil progress and the development of professional practice. Objectives can be linked to National Standards and supported by available qualifications at various levels. They should be set in the context of, and specifically linked to, current school priorities.

Headteachers have a duty to ensure that PM procedures and processes are applied fairly and consistently and with regard to equality of opportunity.

Benefits of PM & PD for Support Staff in Schools

Support staff should take an active role in their PM and PD. This can be facilitated through a non-bureaucratic, streamlined and flexible process that provides clarity of purpose. Developing professional practice benefits pupils as well as support staff because:

- Good, professional practice is promoted, developed, established and maintained.
- An ongoing dialogue is created through the annual performance management cycle.
- The impact on advancing pupil learning is measured.
- Professional development is identified and planned.
- Whole school CPD is managed and individual career aspirations discussed.
- Entitlement to effective and relevant professional development is clear and sustained.
- Familiarity with national standards supports the national aim to qualify the school workforce.
- National standards offer a performance model that is objective, measurable and standardised across the country. They foster equality of experience and

entitlement.

- Work / life balance is promoted and enabled.
- PM & PD encourage teamwork and support for colleagues.
- Support staff see that their contribution to the work of the school is valued and acknowledged.

Key elements

Performance management is a process for assessing overall performance in the context of the individual's job description and for identifying professional development in the context of the school's improvement plan.

National occupational and professional standards define knowledge and skills at each career stage. Professional development opportunities support individuals to achieve objectives and further their career progression.

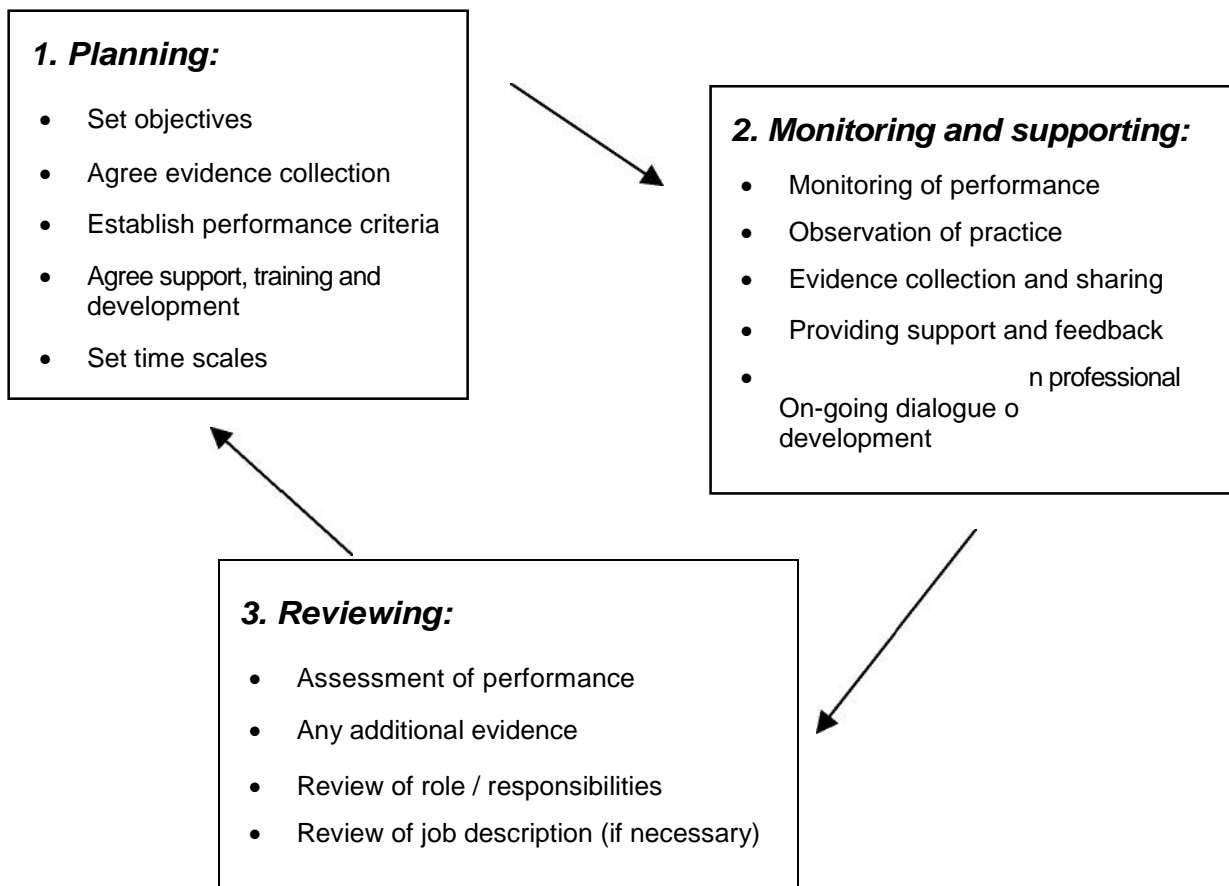
This means that:

- there is an ongoing dialogue related to the role and responsibilities of the individual
- evidence of performance is shared
- a formal opportunity is available to raise issues and concerns as either party can request a meeting
- individuals can prepare for the events
- confidentiality is assured.

These events should have sufficient work time set aside. Schools need to build an annual cycle - similar to that provided for teachers, but perhaps at a different time of the year, for example, term 5 or 6 for the planning and review meeting with an ongoing dialogue over the rest of the cycle. One way of ensuring the dialogue, more formally, would be through a six month review.

Performance management requires two main elements:

1. Review and planning meeting
2. Ongoing support, development and monitoring



The Performance Management Process

The headteacher will identify a reviewer for each member of support staff, this will normally be the individual's line manager.

If an individual has more than one line manager the head teacher will determine which line manager will be best placed to manage and review the individual's performance. Where the member of staff is of the opinion that the person to identified as the reviewer is unsuitable for professional reasons, she/he may ask the headteacher to consider replacing the reviewer. Any such request should be in writing and must state the reasons for the request.

Planning and reviewing performance (1 & 3) would normally take place in a single meeting. The outcomes of the review of the previous cycle and planning for the next cycle would be recorded on a straightforward planning and review document. For a new member of staff, only the planning aspect will apply with perhaps a discussion of recent experiences including induction to working in the school.

The Planning and Review meeting

This meeting should be planned, and confirmed five days in advance. Time during working hours should be set aside - an hour is sufficient in most cases.

Support staff should play an active part in the meeting making sure they put forward their views about their performance and future development.

Guidance for Support Staff

Preparing for the review of the last cycle:

- a. ensure you have copies of all the documents you need
- b. reflect on your achievements based on your last plan
- c. identify any issues that have affected your performance
- d. assess the benefits of CPD and the impact on practice

Preparing for the next cycle:

- a. consider what you would like to achieve next
- b. consider national standards and relevant knowledge and experience required to meet these
- c. identify professional development and aspirations

Guidance for Reviewers

Preparing for the review of the last cycle:

- a. ensure you have copies of all the documents you need
- b. check the planning element to ensure all aspects have been addressed
- c. identify any issues that may be relevant.

Preparing for the next cycle:

- a. consider the improvement objectives for the school
- b. be familiar with national standards and relevant knowledge and experience required to meet these
- c. consult with colleagues and other professionals about possible objectives for the member of support staff and support to be provided
- d. consult with other line managers, where there are more than one.

Planning for the next cycle:

Discuss relevant duties and standards; there is no need for all aspects of the job description to be reviewed unless these have changed significantly. Plans should be realistic and manageable and enable work/life balance. Plans should cover:

- a. objectives for the member of support staff within the context of the support role in the school
- b. arrangements for monitoring and observing performance
- c. any other evidence that will be taken into account
- d. the performance criteria for each of the objectives
- e. the support that will be provided to help the member of support staff to meet the performance criteria
- f. the timescale for the achievement of objectives
- g. training and development needs and actions which will be taken to address these.

Setting objectives

The reviewer is responsible for ensuring rigour when setting objectives. The objectives should focus on school priorities, be time bound, challenging but achievable and reflect the need for a satisfactory work/life balance.

Objectives should refer to the relevant National Occupational Standards or the Professional Standards for Higher Level Teaching Assistants.

Objectives should reflect the aspirations and experience of the individual, as well as the context of the role. If an objective requires a longer time span than that offered by the PM cycle, then milestones toward the objective need to be set in the current cycle. Support staff cannot be held accountable for progress towards objectives in cases where promised support has not been forthcoming.

Observation

Observation of an individual at work should not be undertaken for its own sake but should have a clear focus. There should be no observations for performance management purposes in addition to those agreed in the planning and review meeting. Observations should be multi-purpose to inform school improvement. Observation may be undertaken by someone other than the reviewer, providing that they have appropriate professional expertise. For example, support staff undertaking vocational qualifications (SWiS or NVQ) will have reports of observations related to these particular standards.

Line managers should ensure that all those who act as observers have adequate preparation time and the relevant skills to carry out the observation and to provide constructive oral and written feedback and support. Verbal feedback should be given soon after the observation and time should be allocated for this task. The observation should be supportive and developmental and should be reflected in a short written report which meets the needs of the individual and the school. Support staff may make and record their comments as well.

Other evidence

Other evidence may relate to activities and individuals and should have direct relevance to the support staff role. Evidence collected for vocational and professional qualifications will be very useful as this evidence is linked to national standards for the different support staff roles. Contributions to the professional development of others (for example, mentoring and coaching) should be acknowledged.

Performance criteria

Performance criteria should indicate what success would look like at the end of the cycle. They should provide clarity about the basis for assessment of progress towards objectives.

Performance criteria should take into account the job description, the relevant occupational or professional standards and the context of the role as part of the school workforce.

It is important to ensure that performance criteria have regard for equal opportunities. Objectives need to be appropriate, relevant and should not be directly or indirectly discriminatory.

Support, training and development

As PM is a developmental process, a key part of the discussion must relate to the support that may be required to meet the performance criteria and how these needs will be met. This support may take a number of forms and should be agreed by both parties.

Recording plans and reviews

At the end of the planning and review meeting, the reviewer should summarise the points that have been discussed. Both parties should agree the content and wording. The record should be a fair summary of what took place at the meeting.

The reviewer should provide a draft within five working days and the reviewee may request changes and make written comments on the draft. A final record should be available ten working days after the meeting and this should be signed by both parties. The member of support staff will be given a copy and the original will be passed on to the headteacher for retention. A copy of the training and development section should also be given to the person responsible for planning the training and development of support staff at the school.

The five and ten day period can be extended for those who do not work every day or are absent from work during this period.

Performance management planning and review documents should be retained in the school for a minimum period of six years.

Confidentiality

The performance management process and the recording documents, in particular, should be treated with strict confidentiality at all times. Only the reviewee's line manager or, where she/he has more than one, each of her/his line managers will be provided with access to the reviewee's plan.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is recommended that the school adopts the same procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of the performance management of support staff as for teachers, i.e. the governing body should be responsible for monitoring the operation and outcomes of performance management arrangements and that the headteacher should include the performance management of support staff in his/her annual report to the governing body.

Appendix 1

SUPPORT STAFF - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *My meeting cannot be fitted into my work time. Will I be expected to do this in my own time?*

No - Performance management should take place during working time. Arrangements should be made to release you from your duties.

2. *I have more than one role in the school - which one will be discussed and reviewed?*

Your job as a whole will be reviewed by your line manager. If you have more than one line manager, the headteacher will decide who is best placed to manage and review your performance.

3. *I work for a few hours only - do I need to have performance management?*

If it is the school policy, then, yes.

4. *I am on a short term contract - do I need to have performance management?*

Not if your contract is less than two terms (4 months).

5. *Can I choose who I would like to carry out my PM review and plan?*

No, the headteacher will decide who is best-placed to carry out your review. If you consider that the person identified as your reviewer is unsuitable for professional reasons you should make a written request to the headteacher for the reviewer to be replaced, stating your reasons.

6. *What will I gain from the PM process?*

You will have dedicated time to discuss your role and responsibilities and this is invaluable. Performance management offers an opportunity to reflect on your work and to plan for your professional development. There is also scope to discuss your personal and professional aspirations.

7. *Is performance management relevant when I only work 1:1 as support for a pupil with SEN?*

Yes - because you are a member of staff and entitled to performance management and professional development. The work that you do contributes to the progress of the pupil and the success of the school. In the future you may want to change your role or work towards a qualification. Performance management gives you an opportunity to discuss your professional aspirations.

8. *Is PM offered to voluntary workers in schools?*

No, performance management is just for employees.

9. *Will my pay be related to my performance?*

Your pay grade is related to the duties in your job description and is determined through the job evaluation process. You will normally move up the points within your grade, one each year, until you reach the top of the grade. Any change in pay will directly relate to a change in duties.

10. *Will it matter that I am paid differently for my different roles?*

No - because your performance is being managed and not your pay.

11. Who will use the PM documents and for what will they be used?

The record of your planning and review meeting will be treated as confidential. Only the headteacher and your line manager, or managers if you have more than one, will have access to your plan. These records will enable your school to ensure that you receive the support and training you require to be effective in your role.

12. What can I do to prepare myself for performance management?

It would be helpful to take a few moments to remind yourself of your objectives, to think about your role and your performance in relation to your responsibilities. This does not have to be a formal activity, it is more about reflecting and evaluating your practice. Give yourself some time to think about the process and to focus your thoughts about your work. You could use a break or a quiet moment at any time before your review and planning meeting - but don't leave it too late or you may miss the opportunity to discuss the issues that are important to you and your job.

Appendix 2

EXAMPLES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Support for Pupils

- Working with individuals, small groups and larger groups
- Working with pupils of differing ability
- Presenting an assembly, musical performance or other event in collaboration with pupils
- Negotiating targets and evaluating work alongside pupils
- Mentoring individual pupils
- Working with pupils on school councils
- Working with pupils preparing a school year book
- Getting feedback from pupils
- Integrating the use of pupil websites and on-line communities into teaching
- Using e-mail/video conferencing between pupils in teaching
- Integrating the use of pupil websites and on-line communities into teaching
- Using e-mail/video conferencing between pupils in teaching

Support for the Teacher

- Carrying out action research in the classroom/school with a teacher
- Sharing responsibility for a group of pupils on an off-site visit
- Participating in staff conferences on individual pupils
- Analysing class and examination work
- Delivering learning in partnership with teachers
- Working with other colleagues to organise a display
- Observation of pupils
- Developing behaviour management skills
- Developing specialist knowledge and expertise

Support for the School

- Serving as a governor
- Serving on committees/working parties
- Becoming a union representative
- Working on extra-curricular activities
- Leading a special initiative in school
- Developing specialist knowledge and skills – e.g. supporting pupils with medical condition

Support for the Curriculum

- Developing skills across a wide age and ability range
- Contributing to school-based INSET
- Working with other professionals – educational psychologists
- Attending relevant courses, conferences and workshops
- Seeking accreditation (e.g.NVQ, SWiS, HLTA status)
- Rotation of jobs/roles
- Working with other professionals – educational psychologists
- Networking and sharing with colleagues from another school
- Developing the use ICT
- Collaborating with visiting teachers

Support for Staff to develop their understanding and skills

- Visiting and seeing other schools in action
- Shadowing a colleague
- Observing and working with visiting expert
- Shared observation with mentor
- Watching a colleague presenting an assembly
- Observing colleagues working with pupils
- Gaining experience of interviewing
- Being reviewed
- Inviting your peers to observe you

SUPPORT STAFF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - Individual Plan

Name of Reviewee: _____

Job Title: _____

Name of Reviewer: _____

Team: _____

Date of Review: _____

Performance management objectives for the year ahead

Objectives for the coming year	Action steps What tasks will I carry out to achieve this?	Timescale Date by which task will be completed	Success criteria How will I know when this is achieved?
1.			
2.			
3.			

Observation of work (for classroom based staff)

Class / group / work to be observed	Term in which observation will take place	Focus of observation	Observer

Other sources of evidence for assessing objectives / contributing to overall performance (for both classroom and other support staff)

What / who?	When / where?	Questions to ask?

Reviewer's signature: _____ Date: _____

Reviewee's comments (optional)

Reviewee's signature: _____ Date: _____

SUPPORT STAFF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - Training and Development Annex

A copy of this Annex must be given to the person responsible for planning training and development within the school.

Name of Reviewee: _____ Name of Reviewer: _____

Team: _____ Date of Review: _____

Support for personal development and professional aspirations

Support can take many forms, examples include observation of the work of a colleague, mentoring by a colleague, external training, internal training, job-shadowing. Please provide as much detail as possible here, such as name of identified mentor, title, date and cost of appropriate course, etc.

Support required for meeting objectives	Timescale
1.	
2.	
3.	
Support required for development of professional aspirations	

Reviewer's signature: _____ Date: _____

Reviewee's signature: _____ Date: _____

SUPPORT STAFF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT - Review Statement

Name of Reviewee: _____

Job Title: _____

Name of Reviewer: _____

Team: _____

Date of Review: _____

To what extent have individual objectives been achieved?

Objective	Review of objectives including comments to support assessment Please note any factors outside reviewee's control		Assessment (Exceeded, Met, Partly Met, Not Met)
	Interim review – if appropriate	Annual review	
1.			
2.			
3.			

Other achievements in the last year

Agreed action(s)

Reviewer's comments:

Reviewee's comments (optional)

Reviewer's signature: _____

Date: _____

Reviewee's signature: _____

Date: _____