NORTHAMPTON SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

Respect for Self | Respect for Others | Respect for Learning

# Professional Review and Professional Improvement (Teacher Appraisal Policy)

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| **Approval Body:** | Finance, Risk & Audit Committee |
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| **Version:** | V2 |

| Version | Date | Updates |
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| **V2** | **October 2026** | Updates to align with new Professional Review framework. |
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| **Associated Policies** | • Capability Policy<br>• Teachers' Pay Policy |

| 1 | Policy Statement |
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| 1.1 | Teacher Appraisal (referred to as Professional Review and Professional Improvement at Northampton School for Girls) is an important vehicle for the clear and consistent assessment of a teacher's performance against the Teachers' Standards and the priorities in the School Improvement Plan. It is a forum for teachers to reflect on their performance as a teacher and to evaluate their contribution to student progress and to the school as a whole. |
| 1.2 | It is also a formative process that supports teachers with their wellbeing, developmental and professional needs and aspirations. |
| 1.3 | At Northampton School for Girls (NSG), we work together to ensure that all students achieve their potential through the highest quality of education. To do this effectively, we recognise that self-evaluation, along with quality feedback, and instructional coaching, as part of the Professional Review and Professional Improvement process, is essential. |
| 1.4 | Professional Review and Professional Improvement at NSG combines instructional coaching with wider professional reflection and development. Each teacher will be allocated a Professional Coach, who supports the overall review process, and an Instructional Coach, who supports the development of classroom practice. These roles have distinct responsibilities but may be undertaken by the same person where appropriate.<br><br>Instructional Coaching**:** Involves identifying a precise area for pedagogical development, agreeing actionable steps, engaging in deliberate practice and reviewing progress through observation and feedback. Coaching activity and feedback will be recorded on Steplab.<br><br>Professional Coaching: Three reviews per year will provide opportunities to reflect on strengths and achievements, review progress, agree professional and personal development targets, discuss wellbeing and career aspirations and identify appropriate support. |
| 1.5 | It is expected that all teachers will approach Professional Review and Professional Improvement seriously, with integrity, and, if they so wish, as an opportunity for pay and career progression. Where teachers are eligible for pay progression, the information in the Professional Review and Professional Improvement documents, covering the two-year period prior to the receipt of the request for assessment, will be the basis by which a decision is made. |
| 1.6 | To quality assure the Professional Review and Professional Improvement process, all teachers, both reviewers and reviewees, will receive training in the operation of the Professional Review and Professional Improvement process, instructional coaching and, where relevant, the process for applying for pay progression. |
| **2.** | **Who does this policy apply to?** |
| 2.1 | This policy applies to all teaching staff employed by Northampton School for Girls, including:<br><br>• Teachers employed on a permanent contract<br>• Teachers employed in a fixed term contract<br>• Teachers employed on a part time basis<br>• Teachers employed through a supply agency |
| **3.** | **Who is responsible for carrying out this policy?** |
| 3.1 | • All teachers<br>• All TLR holders<br>• All members of the senior leadership team<br>• Governing Board |
| **4.** | **What are the principles behind this policy?** |

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| Professional Review must: | |
| 4.1 | • Judiciously balance accountability and fairness<br>• Be seen to be transparent and based on trust and confidentiality<br>• Champion equality, diversity and inclusion<br>• Assess teacher effectiveness with accuracy, consistency and validity, and identify the next steps for professional development<br>• Include effective target setting leading to the highest quality of education<br>• Support progress towards targets for high quality teaching with feedback, coaching and deliberate practice Have a positive impact on student learning, progress and outcomes<br>• Support staff in their efforts to improve the quality of education, ensuring that the work of staff is recognised and valued<br>• Support professional development that secures high levels of expertise and progress towards career aspirations<br>• Lead to job satisfaction, wellbeing, recruitment and retention<br>• Support highly effective implementation of teaching and learning responsibilities (TLR)<br>• Be an integral part of school improvement planning and strategic aims<br>• Link to the School Improvement Plan so that the objectives set support progress towards the current year's improvement priorities<br>• Be explored by the reviewer to check for alignment of the reviewee's objectives with the school's improvement priorities<br>• Be manageable and be given appropriate priority by all involved so that the time and resources diverted to it have impact |
| We will implement our Professional Review and Professional Improvement arrangements on the basis of: | |
| 4.2 | i. **Fairness**: We all need to be aware of the potential for unconscious discrimination and to avoid assumptions about individuals based on stereotypes; and<br>ii. **Equal Opportunity:** All teachers should be encouraged and supported to achieve their potential through a cycle of agreeing objectives, having their performance assessed, receiving feedback and undertaking development<br>iii. **Workload and Wellbeing**: Evidence gathering for assessing performance against appraisal targets should require a reasonable and manageable amount of time. This should be managed within the school's data gathering and monitoring and evaluation calendar and CPD provision |
| **5.** | **Procedures (standards)** |
| The Teachers' Standards | |
| 5.1 | The Teachers' Standards will inform self-evaluation, professional dialogue and the review of practice, taking into account the teacher's role, responsibilities and career stage. Teachers will complete the School's agreed self-evaluation activity at the beginning of the annual cycle and it will include their Professional Review and Professional Improvement document. This will help inform the initial discussion with their Instructional Coach and subsequent target setting discussion with their Professional Coach.<br><br>Self-evaluation will identify strengths, development needs and professional aspirations as well as supporting focused professional learning and proportionate evidence gathering. This provides criteria against which teachers can assess themselves according to the expectations of someone at their career stage under each of the Teachers' Standards. The criteria for each career stage are delineated by pay scales. The toolkit includes the expectations for teachers on, or working towards, the Upper Pay Scale. This will ensure that evaluations are consistent with what should reasonably be expected of a teacher in the relevant role and at the relevant stage of their career. |
| Pay Progression | |
| 5.2 | Applications to access the upper pay range, and progression within it, will be considered in accordance with the school's current Teachers' Pay Policy and the applicable School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document. Where required, the teacher will complete the UPS evidence section of the annual review document. The Professional Coach will provide an evidence-based statement and recommendation. Decisions will be made through the arrangements specified in the Teachers' Pay Policy. |

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| | Eligibility, assessment criteria, evidence periods, application deadlines and appeal arrangements will be governed by the Teachers' Pay Policy. |
| Roles and Responsibilities | |
| 5.3 | At Northampton School for girls, Professional Review and Professional Improvement is a shared responsibility. |
| 5.4 | **The Governing Body has a strategic role. Responsibilities include:**<br>• Agreeing the Professional Review and Professional Improvement Policy<br>• Monitoring the implementation of the policy |
| 5.5 | **The Headteacher (or delegated member of SLT):**<br>• Drafts the Professional Review and Professional Improvement Policy in consultation with staff<br>• Is responsible for implementing the agreed Professional Review and Professional Improvement Policy<br>• Ensures that reviewers carry out their responsibilities<br>• Ensures that all teachers have Professional Review and Professional Improvement coaching conversations where the previous year is reviewed, feedback is given and targets are set<br>• Monitors the Professional Review and Professional Improvement process |
| 5.6 | **The Professional Coach:**<br>• Conducts three professional meetings at the calendared points in the annual cycle<br>• Supports the teacher to agree and review Target 2 and 3, taking account of school priorities, their role, professional aspirations and wellbeing<br>• Reviews the teacher's engagement with instructional coaching and their reflection on progress towards Target 1, using relevant Steplab information<br>• Helps identify appropriate professional development, support and resources<br>• Completes the mid-year and end of year coaching review statements and ensures that the review documentation is complete<br>• Supports eligible teachers to present evidence for upper pay range applications or progression and makes recommendations in accordance with the Teachers' Pay Policy |
| 5.7 | **The Instructional Coach:**<br>• Discusses the teacher's self-evaluation and agrees a precise pedagogical focus for Target 1<br>• Conducts instructional coaching conversations and associated observations in accordance with the published annual coaching cycle<br>• Provides focused feedback, agrees actionable next steps and supports deliberate practice<br>• Records coaching activity and feedback on Steplab<br>• Supports the teacher to reflect on changes in classroom practice and their impact on students |
| 5.8 | NSG is committed to ensuring that appropriate time is given for coaching and review. |
| 5.9 | **The Teacher:**<br>• Completes the agreed self-evaluation and includes it in the annual review document<br>• Participates in instructional coaching, engages in deliberate practice and reflects on feedback and progress<br>• Agrees three targets with the relevant coach and records the actions, intended impact and support required<br>• Keeps the review document up to date and completes the review statements for Target 1<br>• Discusses progress towards Target 2 and 3, including implementation, impact, barriers and any adjustments needed<br>• Submits requests for external professional development through the School's CPD request process following Review 1<br>• Completes the UPS evidence section where applicable under the Teachers' Pay Policy<br>• Reviews the completed documentation, records any comments and signs it at the end of Review 3 |
| 5.10 | **Responsibility for Reviews** |

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| | The Headteacher will be appraised by a sub-group of the Governing Body, supported by a suitably skilled and experienced external adviser who has been appointed by the Governing Body for that purpose. The Headteacher decides who shall act as reviewer for each teacher on the basis of responsibilities for learning in the school, a judgement about who has the best overview of the teacher's work and the ability to provide support to staff. An updated list of reviewers is created each year and shared with staff accordingly. |
| 5.11 | **Professional Review Process**<br>The annual cycle is made up of three professional review meetings with the Professional Coach and seven instructional coaching conversations with the Instructional Coach.<br><br>The first instructional coaching conversation will establish the coaching relationship, discuss self-evaluation and identify an initial area for development. No observation is required. Subsequent instructional coaching conversations will normally include a short observation, feedback recorded on Steplab and a feedback discussion, in accordance with the annual coaching calendar. |
| 5.12 | **Review 1** establishes and records the targets, planned actions, intended impact and support required. |
| 5.13 | **Review 2** considers progress, implementation of any adjustments needed. |
| 5.14 | **Review 3** evaluates progress and impact and completes the annual review and sign-off. |
| 5.15 | The annual Professional Review and Professional Improvement document will be the formal record of self-evaluation, agreed targets, actions, review statements and final sign-off. Steplab will hold the instructional coaching activity and feedback supporting Target 1.<br><br>At Review 1, the targets and associated planning sections will be completed.<br><br>At Reviews 2 and 3, the teacher will complete the relevant Target 1 reflection, and the Professional Coach will complete the mid-year and end-of-year statements, drawing on discussion of all three targets. |
| 5.16 | The teacher and Professional Coach will sign the completed document at the end of Review 3. Teachers may record comments, including any disagreement, alongside the review record.<br><br>Submission arrangements and deadlines will be published annually. Deadlines for pay applications and supporting evidence will be specified separately in accordance with the Teachers' Pay Policy. |
| Objective and Target Setting | |
| 5.17 | Target setting in itself is unlikely to deliver improved performance of individuals. The Professional Review and Professional Improvement process has been informed by evidenced based best practice and, as such, teachers will be supported to achieve their targets and professional aims through regular, structured coaching conversations. |
| 5.18 | Target setting will be informed by the School Improvement Plan. Innovation and creativity will be encouraged, but only when they help to deliver the identified goals of the school. This supports work life balance. Targets will prioritise improving Quality of Education and outcomes through disciplined teaching and learning and a high-quality knowledge rich curriculum. Targets will be linked to career maps and will support career aspirations. |
| 5.19 | The targets set will be aspirational, achievable, time-bound, fair and equitable; and will have regard to what can reasonably be expected of any teacher given the desire to achieve a satisfactory work/life balance. |
| 5.20 | During the Professional Review and Professional Improvement meetings, the self-evaluation tool will be used to facilitate coaching conversations on the progress made against last year's targets and current targets as well as identifying the next steps for improvement. These will be based on any of the criteria that have been identified. In instances where there have been no criteria coded as red or amber, reviewees should look to the criteria in the next career stage. Good progress towards the achievement of a challenging objective, even if it has not been met in full, will be recognised. |
| 5.21 | The Professional Review cycle is annual, but on occasions it may be appropriate to set objectives that will cover a period of more than one cycle. |

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| 5.22 | Teachers will agree three targets:<br><br>**Target 1 – Instructional coaching and classroom practice**: A focused pedagogical target developed through the Steplab instructional coaching cycle. Progress will be considered through engagement with coaching, deliberate practice, feedback and evidence of changes in practice and student learning.<br><br>**Target 2 – Professional development linked to improvement priorities**: A professional target selected from the agreed SIP-aligned development areas connected to an identified school or departmental priority. The target will specify the intended outcome, actions, implementation arrangements and measures of impact.<br><br>**Target 3 – Bespoke personal development:** A personalised target agreed through professional dialogue. It may relate to wellbeing, career aspirations, leadership, a teaching and learning responsibility, pastoral work or wider professional contribution. It should be meaningful, achievable and appropriate to the teacher's role and circumstances.<br><br>Workload, wellbeing and the support required to achieve the targets will be considered at each professional review meeting. Target 2 and 3 should have distinct purposes and avoid unnecessary duplication. |
| 5.53 | We observe the following principles when discussing objectives:<br>• The reviewer should ensure that the teacher understands what his or her objectives involve, is in a position to achieve them, knows what they need to do to achieve them and understands when and how they will be reviewed<br>• Objectives are written clearly and concisely and are measurable<br>• Objectives focus on issues/matters over which a teacher has direct influence/control and take into account fully the wider socio- economic, cultural and other external influences on pupils. |
| 5.24 | The reviewer should finalise and record the objectives on the self-evaluation tool that will apply for the review period. These should be jointly agreed. If there are any differences of opinion about the objectives, the teacher may add comments to the written record of objectives. |
| Evidencing Professional Review Performance | |
| 5.25 | Monitoring and evaluation will be used to gather information for school self-evaluation. Classroom observation in the form of, lesson observations, learning walks, book scrutinies and student voice are the methods by which best practice may be identified. Any evidence gathered about the quality of teaching will follow the monitoring and evaluation protocol (see appendix 6). The school will endeavor to facilitate Continued Professional Development (CPD) in line with Professional Review and Professional Improvement targets so that professional learning can be accessed and implemented. It will be down to reviewees to measure and evidence the impact of this.<br><br>Evidence should be proportionate and drawn wherever possible from normal professional activity. Relevant evidence may include Steplab records, coaching feedback, deliberate practice, examples of changed classroom practice, curriculum or assessment work, student work and professional reflection.<br><br>Teachers should summarise relevant learning and impact in the review document without duplicating detailed records already held on Steplab. Participation in coaching is evidence of engagement and consideration of progress will also include how learning has been applied and what impact is evident.<br><br>Where engagement is partial or has not yet begun, the reasons, support required and next steps will be discussed and recorded. Agreed alternative arrangements will be recognised. |
| Managing Underperformance | |
| 5.25 | Good leadership and management, combined with clear expectations, openness and appropriate support will go a long way towards identifying and handling weaknesses in performance. NSG's ethos of Respect forms the basis of any decisions made regarding the underperformance of teachers. In the case of underperformance, teachers will be supported to improve and a range of training and development opportunities will be offered to them. For this reason, at Northampton School for Girls, the policies on |

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| | disciplinary or capability will remain separate to the policy on Professional Review and Professional Improvement. The disciplinary and capability policies adopted by the Governing Board of NSG, will continue to be used when the Headteacher decides it is necessary. |
| Confidentiality | |
| 5.26 | The review documentation is confidential and documents will be kept electronically. The principles and provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will be followed at all times by those who have access to the documents (i.e. no information of a personal or confidential nature will be passed to a third party without the agreement of the individual). Review statements will be kept for a minimum of six years. |
| Training and Development | |
| 5.27 | Each year, training on conducting Professional Review and Professional Improvement and instructional coaching will be offered to all staff, for both reviewees and reviewers. Support for those eligible for pay progression will also be offered each year. |
| **6.** | **Policy Review** |
| 6.1 | This policy will be monitored annually and reviewed at least every three years, or earlier where changes to legislation, the Teachers' Pay Policy or the school's professional review arrangements require it. The annual review document and coaching calendar will be checked before each cycle to ensure that they remain consistent with this policy. |