



Professional Development Policy for Learning Support Assistants

INTRODUCTION

Every member of staff at Greenside School are entitled to objective and constructive feedback on their professional practice and some will, at times, need support to develop areas of weakness.

The Professional Development policy for Learning Support Assistants at Greenside school embraces appraisal and Performance management. The policy and practice at Greenside seeks to recognise and value strengths and achievements as well as enabling effective support for colleagues in developing their practice and expertise so that they can be even more effective.

The commitment of Learning Support Assistants at Greenside school is a key factor in enabling pupil achievement, progress and success. To help each Learning support Assistant perform their role effectively and to recognise their contribution and achievements, every member of staff requires a rigorous and constructive annual appraisal process linked to individual development planning.

This policy and its accompanying procedures seek to ensure that Learning Support Assistants feel the annual appraisal made of them is fair and consistent and that they are properly supported in their professional development. It complies with statutory regulations whilst offering flexibility to tailor the policy and procedures to meet their differing individual needs.

2 Application of the policy

The policy applies to all members of Learning Support Assistants employed by the school, except those on contracts of less than one term and those who are subject to the school's capability policy.

3. Performance Development Learning Support Assistants

3.1 At Greenside School appraisal and performance management is regarded to be at the heart of the planning for professional development.

The process should be a supportive and developmental designed to ensure that all Learning Support Assistants have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It will help to ensure that staff are able to continue to improve their professional practice and to develop.

3.2 The Performance Development period

The Performance development period will run for twelve months from 1 September to 31 August.

- 3.2.1 The annual audit/assessment for Learning Support Assistants will be completed no later than 30th November in each appraisal period.
- 3.2.2 Learning Support Assistants employed on a fixed term contract of less than one year will have their performance managed in accordance with the principles underpinning this policy. The length of the period will be determined by the duration of their contract.

3.3 Appointment of leaders in performance development for Learning Support Assistants

- 3.3.1 At Greenside the leaders of performance development for Learning support assistants is:
 - The head teacher;
 - Assistant Headteachers.
 - Teachers and Tutors who have a clear line management overview of the persons work.

3.4 Setting Objectives

- 3.4.1 Objectives for each member of Learning Support Assistants will be set before, or as soon as practicable after, the start of each appraisal period. The objectives set for each individual will take account of the following:
 - Greenside School Assistant Attributes check-list (see appendix 1)
 - the individual's job description;
- 3.4.2 It is the shared responsibility of both the person leading the process of professional development and the Learning Support Assistant to identify at least one aspect of their practice that should be developed. This should be stated as a clear goal, using the phrase: "My practice would be even better if....."
- 3.4.3 Each Learning Support Assistant will receive at least one goal and not more than 3.
- 3.4.4 The Professional Development Leader and Learning Support Assistant should review practice using the Greenside Attributes prior to a professional dialogue meeting. Teachers and tutors should provide a comment and or example for each of the areas (Attitude; School Communication; Team Work; Professionalism; Contribution to Pupils Learning)
- 3.4.5 The purpose of the professional dialogue meeting is to consider, share and appreciate strengths in practice as well as identifying aspects for further development. This should be in terms of changes that the Learning Support Assistant can make to their practice in order to further pupils learning.
- 3.4.6 The teacher / tutor will record draft goal(s) and share this with their Head of Department.

- 3.4.7 The Head of department will discuss the draft goal(s) with the teacher / tutor. They will consider professional development requirements, including possible training requirements.
- 3.4.11 The goal(s) and professional development requirements will be shared with the Head, who will arrange to meet with each Learning Support Assistant to share these by 10th December.

3.5 Professional Development Opportunities

3.5.1. Observation

Observation of practice is important both as a way of assessing staff performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development. All observation will be carried out in a supportive fashion and appropriate and timely oral and/or written feedback will be given.

3.5.2 Training and workshops

Professional development will be linked to school improvement priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual staff.

Following the review of goals and issues identified at the Professional Dialogue meetings, Heads of Department will arrange a series of workshops. These will be of at least one hour as will be held on a Wednesday evening after school. Colleagues will receive at least 3 months' notice of these events. The workshops will be led by teachers and tutors at Greenside or visiting specialists.

Specific training courses may be arranged for individuals relating to needs / priorities identified at professional dialogue meetings.

Whole school training may also be arranged as a result of areas identified as priority areas.

3.5.3 Feedback

Staff will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will include discussion with the member of staff, will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention and will determine any appropriate action required.

- 3.5.4 Where there are concerns about any aspects of the individual's performance, these will be addressed in conjunction with the Head or a senior member of staff in line with Hertfordshire County Council procedures.

3.7. Annual Review of Professional Development

- 3.7.1. In the second part of the summer term a further professional dialogue meetings will be held between the teacher / tutor and Learning Support Assistant. Progress in achieving the goal(s) will be discussed; this will be shared with the Head of Department.

- 3.7.2. The Head of Department will prepare a brief summary which is shared with The Head. The Head will meet with each Learning Support Assistant to discuss this report.

3.8 Confidentiality

Access to the written goal(s) will normally be limited to the Learning Support Assistant, the teacher / tutor, the head teacher and nominated member of the senior management team.

3.9. Equality and consistency

3.9.1 The head teacher will have overall responsibility for the quality assurance of the Professional Development process for Learning Support Assistants across the school and may delegate this responsibility to a member of the senior leadership team or other senior/middle manager.

3.9.2 The head teacher will be responsible for reporting annually to the Governing Body on any relevant issues, including those of underperformance, arising from the annual review cycle and on any action required to address those issues. The report will enable governors to receive an overall general report of the process but will not include specific details relating to individual members of staff.

3.9.3 The Governing Body is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation.

APPENDIX I:

Attributes	Comment and or Example
Attitude	
Demonstrates energy and enthusiasm	
Is positive	
Is helpful	
Is considerate and professional	
Is flexible	
Demonstrates respect for each child	
Takes initiative and displays common sense	
Is patient	
School Communication (adult to adult)	
Listens	
Asks for clarity if unsure	
Respects appropriate channels of communication	
Team work	
Respects colleagues	
Works well as part of a team	
Is tactful	
Is considerate	
Contributes to all aspects of class activities	
Professionalism	
Is punctual	
Respects confidentiality	
Open to new ideas and approaches	
Positive attitude to training and professional development	
Open to constructive advice, support and criticism	

Contribution to Pupils Learning (including adult to pupil communication)	Comment and or Example
Uses a range of appropriate strategies to enable pupils to learn and achieve	
Excellent relationships with pupils	
Understands the individual needs of every pupil (eg understands and follows sensory diets, intensive interaction, principles of Herts. Steps).	
Enables engagement & motivation	
Facilitates pupils to be independent	
Good use of signing	
Able to use ICT to support learning and achievement	
Makes good use of PECs and other communication tools	

APPENDIX 2

Learning Support Assistant Goal.

(At least one, no more than 3).

“My practice would be even better if I”

APPENDIX 3

SUMMARY

- Prior to Professional dialogue meeting teacher and assistant consider the Greenside attributes form, Teacher / tutor makes comment and / or example for each section.
- Professional dialogue meetings to have been held by 30th Nov
- At least 1 and not more than 3 goal(s) set:

(My practice would be even better if.....)

- Teacher/tutor shares goal(s) with Head of Department
- Head of Dept shares goal(s) with the Head
- Dave to meet each assistant to discuss goal(s) by 10th Dec.
- Summary of professional development needs discussed by SMT, workshops and training planned for Spring and Summer terms.