



# BECAUSE YOU'RE WORTH IT

IT'S A CONTROVERSIAL DEVELOPMENT, BUT AS DENISE INWOOD EXPLAINS, WITH A CLEAR, 'NO SURPRISE' APPROACH PERFORMANCE-RELATED PAY CAN WORK FOR THE BENEFIT OF SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS ALIKE...

With the first performance-related pay (PRP) awards due in September 2014, it is now more important than ever for schools to implement robust, fair and transparent review processes, featuring clear criteria and an agreed evidence base. 'No surprise' pay reviews are achievable if the policy is approved by all and expectations are shared – a culture of professional engagement and open dialogue is essential.

With an estimated 79% of a school's total budget spent on staffing, it makes sense to ensure its greatest financial outlay presents the greatest value for money.

Contrary to the views portrayed in the media, I believe that PRP speaks positively about the status of teaching, ensuring the focus on decisions about pay and promotion are based on objective evidence and a consideration of the impact that a teacher is having on very specific aspects of school improvement. PRP linked to specifically negotiated and agreed targets, with clear success criteria and evidence, gives teachers a very strong steer on their priorities for that year. It also clarifies the evidence base they need to achieve it. Ultimately, it will help schools make better use of public money, ensure that students get the best return on their school's investment in staff and, crucially, improve outcomes. Here are a few points to consider:

- Be transparent – set clear performance targets and, where appropriate, link them to national Teachers' Standards.
- Agree and publish protocols and timetables that are shared and explicit.
- Involve staff in discussions about the protocols and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
- Agree robust objectives that reflect the level



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Former Assistant Head Teacher Denise Inwood is Managing Director of BlueSky, creators of BlueSky Education, the leading online performance management, self-evaluation and CPD solution for schools ([blueskyeducation.co.uk](http://blueskyeducation.co.uk)).

of challenge appropriate for that individual's position.

- Agree in advance the evidence to be gathered by the reviewer – for example, lesson observations – and that it is measured and specific.
- Familiarise all staff with the protocols and procedures that will be applied if appropriate progress is not made – for example, intervention strategies that are agreed and understood by all.
- Ensure that the training and development programme effectively meets the needs of individuals and groups of staff and that impact measures are established in advance of support being provided.
- Be consistent and fair – ensure that reviewees and reviewers conform to the same protocols, timetables and expectations and that time is made available on an agreed 'needs basis' for ongoing dialogue and discussions regarding progress.
- Make professional development / coaching available to all – if staff are to meet their objectives, they will need support, training and coaching.
- Train new reviewers appropriately once school protocols and procedures are in place and ensure that reviewees understand the aforementioned points.

- Use systems that ensure consistency from everyone – for example online solutions, to ensure that the process and workforce measurements are reliable across all staff.

The future is bright. Those schools that master the performance-related pay process effectively will be in a strong position to create and develop a very positive and committed workforce – with each member understanding and being rewarded for the important role they play in enabling the organisation as a whole to improve outcomes and results.

## Out with the old...

*In August 2013 the DfE announced its plans to introduce performance-related pay in the teaching profession. The main changes to the existing system are:*

1. Removing pay progression based on length of service and instead linking all pay progression to performance.
2. Giving schools the option of increasing individual teachers' pay at different rates, based on their performance.
3. Replacing the current threshold test for progression from the main to the upper scales.
4. Introducing a pay range with new, simpler criteria.
5. Discontinuing the current Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) and Excellent Teacher (ET) designations and creating a new pay range for leading practitioners whose primary purpose is to model and lead the improvement of teaching skills.
6. Giving schools more freedom to determine starting salaries of teachers new to the school.
7. Removing any obligation on schools to match a teacher's existing salary when recruiting.