



Probation Policy

Date: January 2025

Review date: January 2027

Approved by Advisory Board: January 2025

Linked with other policies:

- Performance Management
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Capability Policy for teaching staff

Signed:

S. Day

Version Control

| Version | Date of review/change(s) | Page and paragraphs affected | Summary of update |
|------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| New policy | March 2023 | | |
| | May 2023 | | Policy and Probation review form now applicable for all staff |
| No changes | February 2024 | | |
| No changes | January 2025 | | |

1. Procedure and management guidance on assessing performance

1.1 Appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of a probationary period. All new appointments to the School are subject to a probationary period of **two terms** (or specified shorter period for temporary or fixed-term employees). If employment commences part way through a term, the probationary period will run until the end of the second full term.

1.2 Through the implementation of this procedure, the Directors will be mindful of the employer obligation to seek to maintain and protect the mental health and wellbeing of all staff as far as is reasonably practicable.

1.3 It is the policy of the school that performance during the probationary period is actively managed and assessed in order to make a decision to either confirm the appointment or not, before the expiry of the probationary period and to ensure that an open, fair and consistent approach is followed.

1.4 At the end of the probationary period in most cases, the employee will have proved satisfactory and the employment should be confirmed

1.5 However, in some cases there will be cause for concern about the employee's progress and capability. It is essential that the job performance and progress of all probationers are monitored regularly and reviewed during this two-term period and their training and development needs taken into account.

1.6 Problems need to be identified, and the employee must be made aware of the Headteacher's concerns, at an early stage. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the probationer must be given the necessary support and training, and time to improve, before termination of employment is considered as an option, as outlined in the Schools' Probation policy.

1.7 At the end of this period, taking into account any supportive measures as required, if the probation has been:

- Satisfactory: the appointment will need to be confirmed by the Headteacher, and authorised by them accordingly.
- Unsatisfactory: the appointment will be terminated.

1.8 In addition to performance capability and attendance, issues of conduct and discipline also need to be considered in the probationary period (including any extension of the probation if applicable).

2. Probation evaluation form

2.1 A Probation evaluation form should be completed for all probationers

2.2 It is important that issues are addressed as they arise with appropriate support and guidance being put in place as early as possible. Where issues with performance are identified, a monthly review cycle for the remainder of the probationary period would be appropriate.

2.3 The formal review, including completion of the probation evaluation form, is a means of assessing and feeding back on performance and progress. The form incorporates a first formal assessment, which should be undertaken within the first three months of employment but the Headteacher should not wait until the two-term review before raising concerns which have been identified earlier.

2.4 A final formal review and decision would need to take place before the end of the two-term probationary period. This would take into account any concerns identified before, at or after the interim review and any subsequent progress made.

2.5 The form is completed by the Headteacher and discussed with the employee in question. As it is an open process, it is important that the employee reads and understands the Headteacher's comments; there is also space on the form for the employee's own comments. If the employee feels that they are struggling or have any problems, then it is important that this is raised with the Headteacher as soon as possible. Headteachers should encourage this, especially as some new employees may naturally find this difficult.

2.6 If there are identified problems/issues, then action plans must be formulated, and set out on the form. The employee must know what is expected of them and that appropriate support and training is given, together with an agreed timescale for reaching the required standard.

- It should be made clear to the employee at this stage that, if the required improvement does not occur, then their appointment will not be confirmed and their employment will be terminated.
- Depending on the issues, it may be appropriate for the Headteacher to consult with their HR provider at this stage for further notice. If there are still issues/problems at the time of the final review, advice will need to be sought from the HR provider in advance of a decision being made to terminate employment.
- The Headteacher should write to the employee in advance of the final review meeting, detailing the unresolved issues/problems and any action, support or training, which has been implemented to address these. The letter should give the employee five school days' notice of the meeting to allow sufficient time to prepare.
- The purpose of the meeting is to explore the unresolved concerns regarding performance and allow the employee the opportunity to respond to these. The employee may be accompanied at the meeting by a Trade Union representative, companion or colleague.
- Following the meeting the Headteacher should confirm the outcome to the employee and their right of appeal in writing.

3. Notice periods

3.1 If the employment is terminated, the employee is entitled to their normal notice period as specified in their contract/conditions of service, on full pay. Notice must be given and expire before the end of the two-term period.

3.2 In order to expedite the process and in recognition of different notice periods, it would be usual to pay in lieu of notice.

4. Data Protection

The school processes any personal data collected during the probationary period in accordance with its data protection policy. Any data collected is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of operating the probationary period. Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the school's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedure.

Probation evaluation form

If the appointment is confirmed, it needs to be authorised by the Headteacher.

| Employee personal details | |
|--|---------------------|
| Mr <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs <input type="checkbox"/> Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Ms <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> | Full Name: |
| Post title: | Date appointed: / / |

| Assessment – Parts A & B | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Details of work areas: | Part A: Mid-term review comments | Part B: Final review comments |
| 1. Knowledge of work/routine | | |
| 2. Ability to organise work and time | | |
| 3. Ability to set priorities | | |
| 4. Ability to liaise and co-operate with colleagues | | |
| 5. Rapport and empathy with clients/customers | | |

| Assessment – Parts A & B | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Details of work areas: | Part A: Mid-term review comments | Part B: Final review comments |
| 6. Ability to use appropriate resources | | |
| 7. Understanding of the role of the department/school | | |
| 8. Details of sick leave since appointment (include reasons for absence) | | |
| 9. Punctuality | | |
| 10. Other(s) as applicable (please state) | | |

| Part A (Three months) Summary of assessment (to be completed by Headteacher) | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| | |
| Action points (as applicable): | Timescales for improvement: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • | |
| Headteacher name: | Date: / / |
| Signature: | |

| Part A (Three months) Employee's comments | |
|---|-----------|
| | |
| Employee signature: | Date: / / |

| Part B (Final review within 2 full term period) Summary of assessment (to be completed by Line manager/Headteacher/Principal) | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| | |
| Action points (as applicable): | Timescales for improvement: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • • | |
| Line manager/Headteacher/Principal name: | Date: / / |
| Signature: | |

| Part B (Final review) Employee's comments | |
|---|-----------|
| | |
| Employee signature: | Date: / / |

| Part C Decision | |
|---|-----------|
| I confirm that (name) has reached an acceptable standard during their probationary period and their employment can be confirmed. | |
| Headteacher name: | Date: / / |
| Signature: | |
| OR | |
| I confirm that (name) has not reached an acceptable standard during their probationary period and that their employment cannot be confirmed for the following reasons: | |
| Headteacher name: | Date: / / |
| Signature: | |



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ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL

Directors: Mrs J Gardiner and Mrs R Smith
Headteacher: Ms S Dangerfield

ADDRESSEE ONLY

[Insert employees name]

[Insert employees address]

[Date]

Appointment as [insert post title] – probationary period

Dear [insert employee name],

Following the completion of your two-term probation on [insert date] and assessment of your work during that period, I am pleased to inform you that your appointment as a [insert post title] can be confirmed.

I wish you continued success with your post at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Headteacher