



Probationary Period (Support Staff) Policy

Approved by Governing Body:

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Reviewed by SLT on: Dec 2022

Next review due by: Sept 2025

Dissemination of the Policy: All staff and Governors, School Website

History of policy changes

Date	Version	Change	Origin of change e.g. change in legislation, request by TU	Changed by
Dec 22		New GCC model policy		AP

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 All new support staff will be appointed subject to satisfactory completion of a probationary period.
- 1.2 This policy includes details of how progress is monitored, the use of extensions and where necessary, the termination of employment.
- 1.3 It applies to 'green book' support staff including those with previous continuous local government service.
- 1.4 It is a specified period of time when employment started with the school or a new role during which the individual's performance, attendance and conduct is assessed. It also provides the employee with the opportunity to become familiar with the main duties of the post and to demonstrate that they meet the required standards of performance, attendance and conduct.
- 1.5 Continued employment will be confirmed if the probationary period is satisfactorily completed.

2.0 Length of the probation period

- 2.1 The probation period is normally the first six months service with the school.
- 2.2 Governors have the discretion to apply a longer period where this is considered appropriate to the requirements of the job.
- 2.3 The employment contract will state the length of the probation period.

3.0 Changing jobs within the school and the probation period

- 3.1 If an individual is appointed to a new role after applying through the standard recruitment process they will normally have a probationary period applied to the role. This is because the new role is likely to require new skills particularly if it is a promotion or a move to a new team and the probationary period provides the employee and the appointing team with an additional level of support to enable them to successfully achieve the requirements of the role.
- 3.2 If an individual is appointed to a new role as part of a restructure or other change programme and it requires different or new skills and / or experience, managers have the discretion to extend the statutory trial period of four weeks. This is to provide them with the additional support and training required to enable them to successfully achieve the requirements of the role. The right to a redundancy payment is only preserved if the trial period is extended for training reasons.

4.0 Probation period review intervals

- 4.1 The manager/Headteacher will complete probationary reviews at six, 12 and 18 weeks. If the individual's performance, attendance and conduct are satisfactory, a final probationary review will be completed at 26 weeks. For each review, the manager should meet with the employee to discuss their performance at work and both the employee and manager

should complete the Probationary Period Review form. The completed final review form should be signed by both parties and a copy forwarded to the Business Manager.

5.0 Completing the probation period

5.1 The manager/ Headteacher will complete the final probationary review and confirm it is satisfactory. The employee will also receive written confirmation from the school.

6.0 Extending the probation period

6.1 The Headteacher can consider extending the probationary period and if so, they will tell the employee in advance of the review meeting. An individual is entitled to bring a workplace colleague or trade union representative to that meeting. The Headteacher will explain the reasons for the extension. It may be that the employee needs further training or support to meet the required standards of the post and the Headteacher considers the individual will be able to make the necessary improvements within the period of extension.

6.2 The employee will receive written confirmation of the extension, explaining how long the extension is for and the reason.

7.0 Terminating the employment contract in the probation period

7.1 If the manager/ Headteacher considers that an extension is not appropriate and the employment cannot continue they should arrange a meeting with the individual to discuss the situation which may result in termination of the employment. The employee is entitled to be accompanied by a workplace colleague or trade union representative at such a meeting.

7.2 Following this meeting, the individual will be notified in writing and given the appropriate notice to end the contract.

7.3 If the employee has two years continuous service with the school when they were appointed to the post in which they are now subject to a probationary period and the Headteacher considers that this has not been successful, the individual will be managed through the formal stage of the capability procedure. If the outcome of the capability procedure is dismissal, the Headteacher will endeavour to re-deploy within the school where possible but there will be no pay protection if the post found for redeployment is at a lower grade.

7.4 If the individual started employment before all of the pre-recruitment checks, in particular the DBS clearance, were completed, the progress of the checks will be monitored during the probationary period. During this period the individual will be fully supervised at all times until the relevant DBS or other checks including criminal record checks have been cleared. If the individual is considered to be obstructing the progress of such checks or if there is some other substantial reason why these have not been returned as satisfactory, consideration will be given to terminating the employment under the probation policy.

8.0 Appealing the decision to end employment in the probation period

8.1 The employee must write to the Chair of Governors (copying the Headteacher) within 5 working days of the date they received notification to end the contract. The individual

must set out in sufficient detail the reason(s) for appeal to enable the school to respond (i.e. detailing why they consider the decision to fail the probationary period to be unreasonable).

- 8.2 An appeal hearing will be arranged with an appeals panel of three governors that have had no direct involvement in the case already. The individual has the right to be represented at the appeal hearing by a trade union representative or work colleague.
- 8.3 The final bundle of paperwork (employer's and employee's) should be with the governors' panel at least 3 working days before the hearing.
- 8.4 The appeal can result in one of three decisions:
 - 8.4.1 To confirm the dismissal on the grounds of failed probation and non confirmation of appointment.
 - 8.4.2 To extend the probationary period for a further agreed period if it is believed that this will result in a successful outcome.
 - 8.4.3 To confirm the probationary period has been successfully completed.
- 8.5 The decision of the chair is final and the individual should receive written confirmation within three working days of the decision.
- 8.6 If the probationary period is extended as a result of the appeal hearing, an action plan should be drawn up between the individual and the manager/ Headteacher and it is up to both parties to ensure it is followed. It may include some specific recommendations from the chair of the appeal hearing.
- 8.7 If at the end of any agreed extension, the Headteacher still considers that the employee is unsuitable to continue in employment with the school, they can confirm the contract is ended with appropriate notice. In this situation there is no further right to appeal against the dismissal.