



Probationary Period Policy Support Staff

1 September 2022



Version Control

Current version	Previous version	Summary of changes made
1 Sep 22	23 Nov 18	Model letters removed. Clarification that decisions should be confirmed in writing. Clarification that Governing body meetings should be quorate.
23 Nov 18	November 2010	Sections renumbered. Formatting of paragraphs, headings and appendices standardised.

CONTENTS

		Page Nos
1.	Introduction	3
2.	Background	3
3.	Application/Scope of Procedure	3
4.	Appointments	4
5.	Monitoring	4
6.	Procedure for Conducting Probationary Period Review Meetings	4
7.	Right to Representation	7
8.	Extension to a Probationary Period	7
9.	Right of Appeal	
10.	Appendix 1 – Improvement Plan	

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 These guidelines have been produced to assist Head Teachers and Governors to monitor and assess the performance and/or capabilities of new entrants during their probationary period.
- 1.2 The aim of the probationary period is to ensure that all employees of the school can meet the basic requirements of the job and perform to the standards expected.
- 1.3 The procedure reflects the school's commitment to the IIP process (*where applicable*) and aims to ensure all employees can meet the standards of the school, and where not, adequate support and training is given to assist the employee.
- 1.4 This involves the Head Teacher/Line Manager making clear what is expected, the use of clearly understandable targets, and the provision of adequate training to support the new entrant in meeting the requirements of the post and the standards expected by the school.
- 1.5 If despite the support given, the employee is still unable to meet the standards required it may be necessary to terminate their employment.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Whilst the former 'Purple' Book and Local Conditions of Service for APT & C and Manual & Craft Workers provided for probationary periods for certain categories of new entrants to the School/Authority, these provisions do not appear in the 'Green' Book or Teachers Pay & Conditions.

3. APPLICATION/SCOPE OF PROCEDURE

- 3.1 The School has made it a local Condition of Service that a 6-month probationary period is served by **all new entrants to the school**, regardless of previous local government service. This Policy is to be run in conjunction with the IIP initiative; (*where applicable*) therefore all employees should continue to receive personal development planning.
- 3.2 The Procedure is designed to assist Head Teachers and Line Managers to manage correctly the 6-month probationary period of all new entrants with a view to the successful completion of the probationary period, and confirmation of continued employment.
- 3.3 The Procedure is intended to ensure that Head Teachers and Line Managers manage and monitor the probationary period and understand when and where to refer the matter to another relevant Procedure, for example if it is a matter of misconduct.
- 3.4 It should also be noted that this Procedure does not apply to:
 - Termination by reason of redundancy
 - Resignation by the employee or other termination by mutual consent

4. APPOINTMENTS

- 4.1 Details of the length of the probationary period must be included in the employee's appointment letter and subsequent Statement of Particulars.
- 4.2 On appointment, the employee should be made aware that they must serve the probationary period as previously stated, and that during this period their Head Teachers and Line Managers will monitor their performance.

5. MONITORING

- 5.1 It is the Head Teacher/Line Managers responsibility to monitor all new entrants' performance on an ongoing basis, and to formally interview all employees at months 2, 4 and 6.
- 5.2 A written record must be kept of these meetings and the record should be signed as an agreed record by both parties and kept on the employee's personal file. This record should reflect both the positive achievements made, together with an action plan for dealing with the areas which fall below the expected standards.
- 5.3 A proforma is available from your School's HR Adviser, however Head Teachers and Line Managers may wish to modify this to reflect the needs of the school. The Procedure is detailed below.

6. PROCEDURE FOR CONDUCTING PROBATIONARY PERIOD REVIEW MEETINGS

- 6.1 The Head Teacher/Line Manager is responsible for explaining to the new entrant at the commencement of employment the standards expected by the school and the levels to be achieved by months 2, 4 and 6 and what assistance and training will be given during the probationary period to ensure the employee meets the required standards.
- 6.2 If the outcome of each review period, i.e., at months 2 and 4 are satisfactory and the appropriate standards have been met and maintained the employee should be advised of this, together with a reminder of the targets for the next 2 months at a Probationary Period Review Meeting with the Head Teacher/Line Manager.
- 6.3 At the final review meeting, subject to satisfactory completion of the probationary period, the employee should be congratulated on successfully completing their probationary period, and informed that their employment is confirmed, and this should be confirmed in writing by the school.
- 6.4 The School expects that Head Teacher/Line Manager will assist, mentor, coach and develop the probationer during the 6 months period. However, on occasions the monitoring may highlight problems and show progress to be unsatisfactory. The matter should then be dealt with by the Head Teacher/Line Manager using the following procedure: -
 - (i) If problems are highlighted at any time during the probationary period a meeting should be called with the employee and the procedure invoked.

(ii) Normally, the period given for improvement will be no more than 6 months after the date of commencement of employment (in exceptional circumstances this period could be extended). The frequency of review meetings during this period will be every 2 months. In extreme cases where there is likely to be a risk to the school, staff, or pupils, then the period given for improvement will be no more than 4 weeks.

(iii) Month 2 - First Review Meeting

- (a) The employee should normally be given notice, of at least 48 hours of a meeting with the Head Teacher/Line Manager and be advised of their right to be represented. The Head Teacher/Line Manager should write to the employee and state the issues he/she is going to discuss at the meeting.
- (b) The Head Teacher/Line Manager should begin the meeting by outlining the problem as he/she sees it, remind the employee of the standards required and seek to confirm with the employee's agreement that there is a shortfall.
- (c) The Head Teacher/Line Manager must listen to any reasons given or statements made by the employee and be prepared to adjourn the meeting, if necessary, to investigate any points raised. It is important that the employee is given the opportunity to explain anything that may be affecting their employment.
- (d) At the end of the meeting, the Head Teacher/Line Manager is responsible for:
 - Confirming the decision in writing to the employee and any action points made.
 - Set up a probationary period monitor with the employee with a timetable for improvement. at which time the table at Appendix 1 may be used.
 - It is important that the Head Teacher/Line Manager monitors performance against the plan on a regular basis in order to:
 - provide support and guidance to the employee in a pre-programmed manner, hopefully to assist them to improve
 - to be aware of/and document problem areas for further discussion.
 - Should an opinion be needed from the Occupational Health, the Head Teacher/Line Manager should also refer to this in the letter to the employee. It is important that Occupational Health is provided with a thorough and accurate account of the problem.
 - Inform the employee that their performance is below standard and advise them that failure to improve their performance could ultimately lead to termination of their employment under their probationary period should they continue to fail to meet the standard required.

(iv) Month 4 - Second Review Meeting

- (a) If the employee continues to remain below standard, or is seriously below the standard required, the employee should be advised; normally with at least 48 hours notice that a meeting is to be held to discuss the issues. The issues to be addressed should be outlined and the employee advised of their right to be represented.
- (b) The Head Teacher/Line Manager should state the problem to the employee and remind them of what is required. The Head Teacher/Line Manager will need to listen to what the employee has to say (as in 5.5, it is important that due account is taken of any medical information which the employee has provided and a referral made to the Occupational Health, if appropriate). The Head Teacher/Line Manager should be prepared to adjourn the meeting, if necessary, to investigate any points raised by the employee.
- (c) At the end of the meeting the Head Teacher/Line Manager is responsible for:
 - Confirming the discussion and action points.
 - Setting up a final probationary period Monitor with the employee, with a timetable set for improvement
 - Informing the employee of what will happen if they continue to fail to meet the standard required.
 - Confirming the decision in writing to the employee and any action points made.
- (v) Where at the completion of the final period allowed for improvement, there has not been acceptable progress, the Head Teacher/Line Manager will confirm the intention to recommend to the Governing Body that employment is terminated under the probationary period.
- (vi) The Head Teacher will call a quorate meeting of the full Governing body and will present their recommendation including any supporting evidence.
- (vi) The Governing Body may determine either that:
 - no further action be taken.
 - there be a further opportunity to improve performance, together with any specific recommendations.
 - Contract of Employment be terminated with the required period of notice.
- (vii) The employee will be notified of the Governors decision in writing.

7. RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION

- 7.1 At Review Meetings, where the outcome is expected to be satisfactory, based on the previous 2 months monitoring, it would not normally be necessary to have Trade Union presence.
- 7.2 However, where the progress is unsatisfactory and/or the outcome of the meeting is in question the Head Teacher/Line Manager should be accompanied. This may be either your Schools Senior HR Adviser or a Governor to ensure a record of the meeting and outcome is made.
- 7.3 The Head Teacher/Line Manager should ensure the employee has the opportunity to be accompanied at the meeting either by their Trade Union Representative or by a colleague. This person should be employed by the school.

8. EXTENSION TO A PROBATIONARY PERIOD

- 8.1 From time to time, the circumstances of the individual's case may mean that they are not able to give full attendance during the probationary period. Whilst this may be of no concern in the normal course of events, i.e. pre-booked annual leave, the Head Teacher/Line Manager on occasion may feel it necessary to extend the probationary period to account for the period of absence; this should be for no more than 3 months. Any such extensions can only be made after consultation with a Schools Senior HR Adviser.

9. RIGHT OF APPEAL

- 9.1 For those employees whose employment is terminated as a direct consequence of their probationary period no right of appeal exists.
- 9.2 If termination is on the grounds of a disciplinary offence, then right to appeal exists under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.
- 9.3 All employees have the right if they so wish to take the matter through the Grievance Procedure.

Appendix 1

SPECIFIC WORK ISSUES WHICH REQUIRE DISCUSSION BETWEEN HEAD TEACHER/LINE MANAGER AND EMPLOYEE

<u>Areas of Concern</u> ie: Performance Time Keeping Conduct Sickness Absence			
Standards Required			
Agreed Action to Meet Requirements			
Timescale for Improvement			
<u>Support Required</u> ie: Training Requirements			