Probationary Policy

Version	1.2
Approving Body	Trust Board
Date ratified	July 2024
Date issued	July 2024
Review date	30th September 2026
Owner	Director of Resources
Applies to	All Trust Schools, all Trust staff

Version	Date	Reason
1.0	October 2020	To establish a Trust wide policy
1.1	October 2023	Periodic review
1.2	July 2024	To reflect the introduction of Teacher probationary periods

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1 Trust Induction and Probation - Guidance & checklists for Teachers.docx

1. Trust Induction (& the Probationary Period Support Staff) - Guidance & checklists.docx

1. Introduction

1.1 It is the Trust's policy to operate probationary periods for all new employees.

1.2 This policy allows both the employee and Trust to assess objectively whether or not the employee is suitable for the role. The Trust believes that the use of probationary periods increases the likelihood that new employees will perform effectively in their employment.

1.3 The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that all new employees are properly monitored during their probationary period. The Headteacher may delegate some or all of the tasks under this policy to an appropriate manager.

1.4 If any problems arise, the Headteacher should address these promptly and in accordance with the policy. The employee should be made aware that some aspects of their performance or conduct is unsatisfactory. This will help prevent the problem from escalating and hopefully lead to sufficient improvements.

2. Length of probation

2.1 The length of the probationary period applicable to an employee will be as set out in the contract of employment of that employee.

3. Extending probationary periods

3.1 Six months should be an adequate period of time to effectively assess an employee's suitability for the role. In exceptional circumstances, the Trust may decide to extend an employee's period of probation. This will be limited to one extension and the total period of probation will be no longer than 9 months.

3.2 An extension may be implemented in circumstances where:

(a) The employee's performance, conduct or attendance during probation has not been entirely satisfactory, but some improvement has taken place and it is thought likely that an extension to the probationary period may lead to satisfactory improvement.

(b) The employee has been absent from the workplace for an extended period during the probation.

3.3 If an extension to the probationary period is agreed, the Trust will confirm the terms of the extension in writing to the employee, including:

(a) the length of the extension and the date on which the extended period of probation will be reviewed and when it will end;

(b) the reason for the extension and, if the reason is unsatisfactory performance, details of how and why performance has fallen short of the required standards;

(c) the performance standards or objectives that the employee is required to achieve by the end of the extended period of probation;

(d) any support, for example further training, that will be provided during the extended period of probation; and

(e) a statement that, if the employee does not meet fully the required standards by the end of the extended period of probation, their employment will be terminated.

4. Terms of employment during the probationary period

4.1 During the probationary period, employees will be subject to all the terms and conditions of their

contracts of employment with the exception of those terms noted below. During the probationary period, attendance, conduct, capability issues will be managed under this policy rather than the standard school HR policies.

4.2 The amount of notice that an employee must give to the Trust if they wish to resign, and the amount of notice that the Trust must give to the employee of dismissal are different during probation. During probation, either party may terminate the employee's contract of employment by giving one week's notice unless otherwise varied by the contract. In the event that the Trust decides to terminate the employee's employment, their employment will come to an end immediately and the employee will receive pay in lieu of the notice together with any outstanding holiday pay.

4.3 Once the probationary period has been completed, the notice periods will be as defined in the employee's contract of employment.

5. Line managers' responsibilities

5.1 Under this policy, the Headteacher has responsibility for monitoring a new employee's performance, conduct, attendance and progress during the probationary period and should ensure that the employee is properly informed at the start of their employment about what is expected of them during probation, for example the required targets or standards of performance, and for putting in place a plan to support the successful start to any new role.

6. Reviews during probation

6.1 The employee's performance, capability, conduct, attendance and suitability for the role will be reviewed in accordance with the Trust's Induction & Probation guidance.

Probation review meeting templates and outcome letters are accessible via Google documents templates gallery under HR.

Headteachers/line managers will ensure completed probation review forms are shared with the person responsible for maintaining staff HR e-files for record keeping.

6.2 During an employee's probation, the designated manager should provide regular feedback to the employee about their performance and progress, and, should there be any problem areas, raise these with the employee as soon as possible with a view to resolving them. They are also responsible for providing guidance and support and for identifying and arranging any necessary support, training or coaching that is relevant to the role.

7. Irregularities discovered during the probationary period

7.1 If, during an employee's probation, it is suspected or established that the employee does not have the qualifications, experience or knowledge that they claimed to have at the time of recruitment, the matter will be discussed with the employee to establish the facts. If the evidence suggests that the employee misrepresented their abilities in any way, the Trust will terminate the employment.

8. End of probation

8.1 The employee's performance, capability, conduct, attendance and suitability for the role will be reviewed in accordance with the Trust's Induction Process document and the outcome will be communicated using the relevant proforma letter.

9. Termination of employment

9.1 Ordinarily it is the Trust's policy to allow the employee to complete the designated period of probation rather than terminating employment before the probation has come to an end. This is to give the employee a full opportunity to come up to the required standards. If, however, there is clear

evidence prior to the end of the period of probation that suggests the employee is wholly unsuitable for the role, the employment may be terminated early.

Performance

9.2 If an employee's performance while on probation has been unsatisfactory despite support, and it is thought unlikely that further training or support would lead to a satisfactory level of improvement, the employment will be terminated at the end of the period of probation. Where the concerns are considered serious and have not improved despite support, then the employment may be terminated prior to the end of the period of probation or at an earlier point if appropriate.

Conduct

9.3 If an employee's conduct while on probation has been unsatisfactory despite support, and it is thought unlikely that further training or support would lead to a satisfactory level of improvement, the employment will be terminated at the end of the period of probation or at an earlier point if appropriate.

Attendance

9.4 If an employee's attendance while on probation has been unsatisfactory despite support, and it is thought unlikely that further or support or reasonable adjustments would lead to a satisfactory level of improvement, the employment will be terminated at the end of the period of probation or at an earlier point if appropriate.

9.5 Where a decision is taken to terminate the employee's employment, a meeting will be held with the employee to inform them of the reason for the termination. The Trust will write to the employee confirming the termination and the reason for it. The employee will be given an opportunity to appeal the decision.

10. Appeals against Termination of employment

10.1 Should an employee wish to appeal against a decision to terminate their employment they must write to the Headteacher within 5 working days of the decision to terminate the employment being communicated to them. The employee must state the grounds of their appeal in full. An appeal meeting will then be arranged with either the Headteacher (if not involved in the original decision to dismiss) or another senior manager in the Trust. The outcome of an appeal meeting will be confirmed in writing; this will make it clear that there is no further internal right of appeal.

11. Confidentiality and data protection

11.1 It is the aim of the Trust to deal with matters under this policy sensitively and with due respect for the privacy of any individuals involved. All employees must treat any information communicated to them in connection with the process as confidential.

11.2 During any action under this policy, the Trust will collect, process and store personal data in accordance with our data protection policy. The data will be held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of actions taken under the policy. Records will be kept in accordance with the requirements of the **Data Protection Legislation** (being (i) the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (unless and until the GDPR is no longer directly applicable in the UK) and any national implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time, in the UK and then (ii) any successor legislation to the GDPR or the Data Protection Act 1998, including the Data Protection Act 2018).

12. Review of policy

12.1 This policy is reviewed and amended every 3 years by the Trust. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.

Appendix 1

Equality Impact Assessment/ Analysis (EIA)

Step 1: Scoping and Identifying the Aims

School/Service	People Department
Title of Change:	Probationary Policy
What are you completing this EIA for?	Policy
Is this a new or existing activity or change?	Existing
What are the main aims / objectives of the changes? What is the context for this EIA? e.g., policy, practice, service, curriculum proposal or project? Why is the activity/change needed? E.g., The policy or practice affect different "protected groups" differently?, enhancing of services, education	Ensure policy is still relevant and the most current legislation is being adhered to.
Name/s of people and Date undertaking analysis:	Shani Davies, Director People & Culture
Who will be affected by this activity/change? eg pupils/students, service users, employees, wider community	All Staff in scope of this policy
Does it relate to an area with known inequalities? E.g., access to service for disabled people, pupils/students, vulnerable pupils/students, SEND, racist bullying etc.	
EIA Schedule When will the EIA be reviewed?	

Step 2: Assessing the Impact

Detail any positive or negative impacts of this document /policy on pupils/students and staff in the box below. If there is no impact, please select "not applicable"

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)	NA	Action to address negative impact: *(e.g. adjustment to the policy)*
Sex consider issues for: men and women, non-binary.	Y			
Gender reassignment E.g. privacy of data and harassment	Y			
Disability e.g., attitudes, physical, social barriers, visible and non-immediately visible disabilities, neurodivergence, learning disability	Y			
Age e.g., consider all ages but there may be some issues that relate for example to older people/younger people	Y			
Sexual Orientation **consider** heterosexual as well as lesbian, gay and bisexual (and other sexual orientations)	Y			

Pregnancy and maternity e.g., childcare, working arrangements, part time working	Y			
Marriage and civil partnership	Y			
Religion or belief consider religions, beliefs, or no belief	Y			
Ethnicity / Race e.g., language barriers, different ethnic groups/nationalities	Y			
Socio-economic factors e.g., resident status – socio economic/low-income groups, migrants, carers, impacts on children and families (please state)	Y			
Mental health e.g. short term, long term, acute, fluctuating mental health conditions, impacts	Y			

If you answer yes to any of the following, you MUST complete the evidence column explaining what information you have considered which has led you to reach this decision.

Assessment Questions	Yes / No	Please document evidence / any mitigations
In consideration of your document development, did you consult with others, for example, external organisations, employees, pupils/students, carers or community groups?	Yes	Staff and Trade Unions
Have you taken into consideration any regulations, professional standards?	Yes	Employments Right Act 2025, Worker protection Act 2023, KCSIE, ACAS, CIPD, Burgundy Book, Green Book

Step 3: Review, Risk and Action Plans

Low – No major change	Medium - Adjust the policy	High – Stop and remove
The activity is robust and there is no potential for discrimination, and you have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance and foster relations between groups.	This involves taking steps to remove barriers or to better advance equality. It can mean introducing measures to mitigate the potential effect.	If there are adverse effects that are not justified and cannot be mitigated, you will want to consider stopping the policy/project altogether. If the activity shows unlawful discrimination, it must be removed or changed.

How would you rate the overall level of impact / risk to the school / service / Trust if no action was taken?	Low	Medium	High
	x☐	☐	☐
What action needs to be taken to reduce or eliminate the negative impact?	N/A		
Who will be responsible for monitoring and regular review of the document / policy / change?	Director People & Culture		

Step 4: Authorisation and sign off

I am satisfied that all available evidence has been accurately assessed for any potential impact on pupils/students and employees with protected characteristics in the scope of this project / change / policy / procedure / practice / activity. Mitigation, where appropriate has been identified and dealt with accordingly.

Equality Assessor:	***Shani Davies***	***Date:***	*08/04/26*