

# Probationary Policy and Toolkit for School Support Staff



This policy is not intended for use by non-maintained schools. If extracts are used they should be attributed.



Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools can adapt and adopt this policy or use an alternative.



This policy is for use by Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. Governing Bodies are asked to adopt this policy. Should a Governing Body wish to adopt an alternative policy please ensure that a copy is supplied providing assurance that it is legally compliant.

<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning>

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***On adoption of this Policy, the School's Governing Body may delegate the responsibility for chairing any Probationary Meetings which may result in dismissal of a member of the School Support Staff, to the Headteacher of the School.***

***Note: It is recommended that the delegated responsibility to dismiss is only in relation to Probationary Meetings***

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy provides schools with advice and guidance on how to manage the probationary period for School Support Staff. The policy should be adopted by Governing Bodies.
- 1.2 When an employee first joins a school, the initial few months of their employment are key. Employees will form an opinion of the school at an early stage, and it is widely recognised that more people leave during this period of time than any other.
- 1.3 The probationary period enables the employee to assess the role and allows the "probationary reviewer" (senior member of school staff who is appointed to monitor a probationary period, (usually the employee's Line Manager) to assess the employee's suitability in the role and their potential. During the probationary period it is essential that the reviewer provides support and guidance as well as giving a new employee the opportunity to ask questions and discuss any issues they may have.
- 1.4 In the majority of cases, induction/probationary periods are positive experiences, and this is mainly as a result of lines of communication between the reviewer and the employee being consistently open.
- 1.5 In order to ensure that the time is used effectively, and all new employees are treated equitably, the school has adopted this Probationary Policy. Any issues related to performance/conduct that occur during the probationary period will be managed under this Policy and it is essential that performance/conduct issues that manifest themselves during a probationary period are addressed without delay.

## **2.0 Scope**

- 2.1 This Policy apply to all support staff within the school.
- 2.2 This Policy apply to schools where Milton Keynes Council is the employer and where the school has adopted this Policy.
- 2.3 The probationary period is six months, excluding school closure periods for "term time only" employees, regardless of any previous local government or school service, for full time and part time staff. This period may be extended, if necessary, or shortened if an employee's conduct or performance proves to be unsatisfactory.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **3.1 Probationary Reviewer/Line Manager Responsibilities:**

- Ensuring effective implementation and awareness of the probationary procedure
- Explaining the expected standard of performance/conduct and managing the probation period. Ensuring that review dates are set and that the employee receives regular feedback.

Ensure that the new employee participates in the school induction programme and relevant mandatory training.

- Arranging additional meetings between the probationary assessment meetings; this may be through 1:1 and ad hoc meetings, reviewers should make every attempt to be available for new employees during the probationary period.

### **3.2 Employee Responsibilities:**

- Demonstrate the standards expected by the School in relation to performance, conduct and attendance, raise any difficulties with the reviewer and undertake any training required to satisfy the role. Participate in the school induction programme and relevant mandatory training.

## **4.0 Probationary Assessments - Support**

4.1 The reviewer will meet with the new employee in the first week of their employment to set out the standards and assessment criteria that will be used to evaluate their performance during the probationary period. This will include agreeing objectives and a programme of induction and relevant training. Any development needs which were identified at recruitment should also be taken into account.

4.2 The new employee should be advised that there will be 3 probationary review meetings during the 6-month probation period – 8 weeks, 16 weeks and 24 weeks.

4.3 The purpose of the probation assessment meetings will be to review how the job is progressing, highlights, any problems, training needs and any school-related issues which are not clear and how the employee feels about the job.

4.4 During the probationary period and at each probationary assessment, consideration could be given to the following options, as any one of them may be appropriate to support the employee in reaching the required standard of performance:

### **4.5 Point of Contact**

It is useful to assign the new employee to a “point of contact” or “buddy”, this may be a member of staff within the team who would be able to provide the new employee with basic information about the department/facilities and answer any questions they may have.

### **4.6 Appointing a Mentoring**

Mentoring allows the transmission of knowledge, skills and experience in a supportive and challenging environment. Mentoring relationships are when a more experienced colleague uses their greater knowledge and understanding of the work or workplace to support the development of a more junior or inexperienced member of staff.

### **4.7 Coaching**

Coaching develops a person's skills and knowledge so that their job performance improves and focuses on specific skills and goals. However, it should be noted that this is a skilled activity which should be delivered by a trained coach.

### **4.8 Provision of Suitable Training and Development**

This can be implemented where the employee's skills are lacking in a specific area. Training may be necessary where it is obvious that the employee has not received appropriate training or that the employee has difficulty in carrying out a particular task or using technology. If there is doubt about what might be appropriate training in the specific circumstances, then please contact your HR provider at the earliest opportunity.

#### 4.9 **Management and/or Peer Support**

This may take the form of closer supervision and may be necessary where the employee has been working on their own and has problems interpreting tasks or problems with timescales. Peer support may be appropriate with colleagues at the same level helping the employee understand what is required of the role and providing guidance, advice and a sounding board for the employee during their period of improvement.

#### 4.10 **Counselling**

This may be appropriate where the employee has a personal problem which is impacting on their performance at work. Please speak to your HR Provider for details of Counselling Services.

### 5.0 **First Assessment Meeting (eight weeks)**

5.1 The reviewer will meet with the employee and assess the employee's performance against the objectives that have previously been agreed. The limited time that the employee has been in post and any training and development needs that are yet to be met should be taken into consideration during the meeting.

5.2 If the employee's performance has reached or exceeded the standard expected in line with the agreed objectives, the **Probationary Assessment Form - Appendix 1** should be completed to reflect that fact, this will be the case in the majority of Probationary Assessments.

5.3 If there are areas for improvement, the reviewer must inform the employee that their performance is falling short of expectations and give him/her the opportunity to improve. The reviewer must offer any additional support measures to be put in place. The employee should be encouraged to respond to any issues and discuss any additional support or training required.

5.4 If there is evidence to suggest that performance or conduct is consistently below the standard expected and there are signs to suggest that this will not improve, it is possible to move to the dismissal phase at any stage in the probationary period. **Refer to 10.0 – Dismissal Recommendation.**

5.5 The reviewer should state clearly, in writing, by using **Appendix 2 – Probationary Performance Improvement Plan Template**, in what way the performance is falling short of expectations and what is expected of the employee to bring their performance up to standard.

5.6 This will involve:

- Discussing the areas that need improvement
- Explaining the standards required
- Devising an improvement plan which sets objectives and identifies any additional support, training or guidance needed
- Setting the date for the next assessment meeting
- Advising the employee that failure to meet the required standards may result in recommendation that their employment is terminated

5.7 A Probationary Assessment Form must be completed, and the conclusions of the meeting should be included. A copy of this should be given to the employee and a copy retained by the reviewer; this can be used as a reference for the second probationary assessment meeting. Please refer to **Appendix 1 - Probationary Assessment Form**.

5.8 It is not necessary to wait until the Second Assessment Meeting (sixteen weeks) before the reviewer next meets with the employee. It is essential that additional meetings take place; this could be through 1:1 meetings and ad hoc meetings.

5.9 The reviewer must seek advice from the school's HR provider, if, after this first assessment meeting, an employee is not performing satisfactorily.

## **6.0 Second Assessment Meeting (sixteen weeks)**

- 6.1 As with the First Assessment Meeting, if the employee's performance has reached or has exceeded the standard expected in line with the agreed objectives, the **Probationary Assessment Form - Appendix 1** should be completed to reflect that fact.
- 6.2 However, if, following appropriate support and guidance there are still areas for improvement where performance is not satisfactory, or if, since the First Assessment Meeting, concerns have been raised regarding performance, this must be discussed and recorded, using **Appendix 2 - Probationary Performance Improvement Plan Template**, and the reviewer should state clearly, in writing, how the performance is falling short of expectations, provide evidence of this and give him/her the opportunity to improve. Please refer to First Assessment Meeting notes for details of what this may involve. The employee must be encouraged to respond to any issues and discuss any further support or training that may be required.
- 6.3 If there is evidence to suggest that performance or conduct is consistently below the standard expected and there are signs to suggest that this will not improve, it is possible to move to the dismissal phase at any stage in the probationary period. **Refer to 10.0 – Dismissal Recommendation.**
- 6.4 A Probationary Assessment Form must be completed, and the conclusions of the meeting should be included. A copy of this written record should be given to the employee and a copy retained by the reviewer; this can be used as a reference for the third probationary review meeting. Please refer to **Appendix 1 - Probationary Assessment Form.**
- 6.5 Between the Second and Third Assessment Meeting, it is essential that additional meetings take place; this could be through 1:1 and ad hoc meetings.
- 6.6 You must seek advice from the school's HR provider, if, after this second assessment meeting, there are concerns with regard to an employee's performance.

## **7.0 Third Assessment Meeting (twenty-four weeks)**

- 7.1 The purpose of this meeting is to review performance, conduct, timekeeping, sickness absence and attendance. Constructive feedback should be given to the employee highlighting both achievements and any areas where they are falling short. Reviewers must always provide examples.
- 7.2 At the 24-week assessment meeting, three outcomes are possible, and the reviewer will make the decision to:
- confirm the appointment
  - extend the probationary period
  - recommend that the appointment is not confirmed
- 7.3 The reviewer should continue to offer support or assistance during the whole of the probation period up to the date of confirmation in post or decision to dismiss.

## **8.0 Confirming the Appointment**

- 8.1 If the employee demonstrates that all aspects of their performance are satisfactory, the reviewer should complete Appendix 1 - Probationary Assessment Form recommending confirmation of employment and, if the Headteacher supports it, the employee should be issued with a letter reflecting this. Refer to **Appendix 6 or 7 – Satisfactory Completion of Probation.** Following the successful completion of the probationary period, a separate meeting should be arranged to

agree objectives as part of the annual appraisal process and the performance related pay arrangements.

## **9.0 Extending the Probation Period**

9.1 In some circumstances it may be necessary to extend the probation period beyond the 6-month period. These circumstances may include:

- it has not been possible to fully assess performance due to the employee's sickness or other authorised absence
- there are concerns regarding performance, conduct, attendance or timekeeping but the reviewer has evidence to suggest that it is likely to improve with an extension to the probation period

9.2 In these circumstances the probationary period can be extended, usually for up to a maximum of one month. During this time, it is essential that further regular assessments take place and progress is noted and discussed with the employee. The School's HR provider must be notified of the situation and the Headteacher must issue a letter to the employee confirming the extension of the probationary period. **Refer to Appendix 3 – Letter to Extend Probation.**

9.3 If, at the end of the extended probation period, the employee's performance reaches the required standard, the Headteacher will confirm to the employee that they have successfully completed their probationary period. The reviewer should complete the Probationary Assessment Form and a letter confirming their employment will be sent to the employee. **Refer to Appendix 6 or 7 – Satisfactory Completion of Probation.**

9.3.1 However, if the employee's performance does not reach the required standard, **please refer to 10.0 below.**

9.4 It is important that the school's HR provider is informed of the situation as early as possible

## **10.0 Dismissal Recommendation**

10.1 It should be noted that if there is enough evidence to suggest that a probationer's performance, conduct, attendance, absence or timekeeping is consistently below the standard expected and that this will not improve, it is possible to move to dismissal at any stage in the probation period. In these circumstances, the reviewer should advise the employee that they will be making a recommendation to the Headteacher that their contract is terminated.

10.2 Reviewers, who are in this situation, should seek advice from the school's HR provider.

10.3 Following the recommendation, the employee should be invited to attend a meeting with the Head Teacher (who will have delegated responsibility to dismiss). In the meeting, the reviewer will recommend that the employee's contract of employment be terminated, present the reasons to substantiate this recommendation and the employee will be given the opportunity to put forward their interpretation of the circumstances.

10.4 It should be noted that in cases of **misconduct**, and prior to the meeting taking place, the reviewer should undertake a fact-finding exercise to establish the circumstances of the issue. This will enable the reviewer to present the information that he/she has uncovered and for the employee to respond.

10.5 In some schools, the reviewer may be the Headteacher, in which case the recommendation to dismiss will need to be made to the Governing Body Hearings' committee who will chair the dismissal meeting.

- 10.6 Please contact your HR Provider for advice in relation to what documentation may need to be issued with the invitation letter (**See Appendix 4 – Invitation to Probationary Meeting**).
- 10.7 The employee should be informed that they may be accompanied at the meeting by a work colleague or a trade union representative. A representative from the school's HR provider will also be present to give advice to the Headteacher.
- 10.8 Following an adjournment to consider all of the evidence presented, the employee will be notified verbally of the outcome at the conclusion of the meeting. This will be confirmed in writing within 5 working days of the meeting.
- 10.9 As with all dismissals, it is **essential** that the letter confirming the dismissal is sent by and on behalf of Milton Keynes Council.
- 10.10 To ensure that this takes place, the Headteacher who has delegated responsibility to dismiss, must **immediately** email the draft dismissal letter to HR Department ([hrsupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:hrsupport@milton-keynes.gov.uk)), who will arrange for this to be transferred onto Milton Keynes Council headed paper and issued to the employee on behalf of the council - **Refer to Appendix 5 – Dismissal Letter**. The school will receive a copy of this letter.
- 10.11 It should be noted that in order that the 5 working day timeframe is met, it is essential that the dismissal letter is received in HR Department within two days of the meeting taking place.
- 10.12 The Headteacher must also notify their payroll provider of the dismissal, in line with the school's with normal leaver process.
- 10.13 The employee will receive appropriate contractual notice to terminate the contract. The only exception to this would be in cases of summary dismissal for gross misconduct, where any employee, including those not on a period of probation, would not be entitled to notice or pay in lieu of notice. For further information on this point, please speak to your HR provider.
- 11.0 Appeals against Dismissal**
- 11.1 The employee can appeal against the decision to dismiss. They should appeal to the Head Teacher who made the original decision and must appeal in writing (email or letter) within three working days of receiving the verbal outcome.
- 11.2 They should give details of the grounds of their appeal in the email/letter. The appeal will be heard within 5 working days at an agreed time and place and the appeal meeting will be attended by the Head Teacher who made the original decision, the reviewer, a representative from the school's HR provider, a notetaker and will heard by the Governing Body Appeal Committee.
- 11.3 At the Appeal Meeting, three outcomes are possible as follows:
- Extend the review period – up to a maximum one month
  - Uphold the original decision
  - Confirm the employment and reinstate the employee
- 11.4 The employee may be accompanied at the appeal meeting by a trade union representative or a workplace colleague and, at the conclusion of the appeal meeting, will be informed of the decision in writing.
- 11.5 Following an adjournment to consider all the evidence, the employee will be notified of the outcome verbally at the end of the appeal meeting. This will be confirmed in writing within 5 working days of the appeal meeting. (**Refer to Appendix 8 – Appeal Outcome Letter**).

## **12.0 Employee Support**

- 12.1 Please speak to your HR provider regarding support options available.
- 12.2 If there are any concerns about the most appropriate course of action to take at any stage of the probationary process, the school's HR provider should be contacted.

## **13.0 Data Protection**

- 13.1 Any data collected and processed as part of employing and managing employee's is held securely. It is accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing that specific procedure, process or activity.
- 13.2 Records are retained and destroyed in accordance with the organisations Retention Schedule.
- 13.3 Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the Data Protection Policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which may be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure

## Appendix 1 - Probationary Assessment Form

|                      |                  |
|----------------------|------------------|
| <b>Name:</b>         |                  |
| <b>Post Title:</b>   | <b>School:</b>   |
| <b>Date Started:</b> | <b>Reviewer:</b> |

Probationary employees should be formally assessed at eight, sixteen and twenty-four weeks. This form should be completed fully and both the probationary reviewer and the employee should sign the overall assessment boxes below. A copy of the completed form should be given to the employee and a copy should be retained on file.

|                               |
|-------------------------------|
| <b>Agreed Objectives/Date</b> |
|                               |
|                               |
|                               |
|                               |
|                               |

## First Probationary Assessment Meeting (Eight Weeks)

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Reviewer must<br/>Identify Areas where<br/>Performance<br/>Exceeds Standard<br/>Expected</b> | <b>Reviewer must<br/>identify Areas where<br/>Employee has<br/>“Achieved Required<br/>Standard”</b> | <b>Reviewer must<br/>identify Areas where<br/>Employee’s<br/>Performance<br/>“Requires<br/>Improvement to<br/>Meet Required<br/>Standard”</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Performance</b><br>(Reviewer should<br>comment fully on the<br>employee’s<br>performance, which<br>should include<br>assessment against the<br>Role Profile, Person<br>Specification and<br>agreed Objectives)         |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Personal</b><br>(Reviewer should<br>comment on employee’s<br>enthusiasm, interest,<br>initiative, self-<br>motivation)                                                                                                 |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Attendance/Reliability/<br/>Punctuality</b><br>(Reviewer should<br>comment on and specify<br>the number of days<br>absent<br>e.g. Timekeeping<br>Reliability<br>Sickness<br>Other absences<br>Since coming into post). |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Relationship with<br/>Others</b><br>(Reviewer should<br>comment on<br>relationships with other<br>colleagues/<br>parents/pupils/<br>governors/ other<br>professionals etc.)                                            |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Any Other Comments</b><br>Reviewer should<br>comment on any<br>support provided,<br>remedial action, targets,<br>training that may be<br>necessary, also any<br>potential for<br>development.                          |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                               |

|                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Detail any Areas which Require Improvement</b>                                       |
| <b>Outline Any Plans to Improve Performance</b>                                         |
| <b>Outline the Employee's Views on the Job, Work Environment and Working Conditions</b> |
| <b>Overall First Assessment</b>                                                         |

## Second Probationary Assessment Meeting (Sixteen Weeks)

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Reviewer must<br/>Identify Areas where<br/>Performance<br/>Exceeds Standard<br/>Expected</b> | <b>Reviewer must<br/>identify Areas where<br/>Employee has<br/>“Achieved Required<br/>Standard”</b> | <b>Reviewer must<br/>identify Areas where<br/>Employee’s<br/>Performance<br/>“Requires<br/>Improvement to<br/>Meet Required<br/>Standard”</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Performance</b><br>(Reviewer should<br>comment fully on the<br>employee’s<br>performance, which<br>should include<br>assessment against the<br>Role Profile, Person<br>Specification and<br>agreed Objectives)                     |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Personal</b><br>(Reviewer should<br>comment on employee’s<br>enthusiasm, interest,<br>initiative, self-<br>motivation)                                                                                                             |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Attendance/<br/>Reliability/<br/>Punctuality</b><br>(Reviewer should<br>comment on and specify<br>the number of days<br>absent due to:<br>e.g. Timekeeping<br>Reliability<br>Sickness<br>Other absences<br>Since coming into post) |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Relationship with<br/>Others</b><br>(Reviewer should<br>comment on<br>relationships with other<br>colleagues/<br>parents/pupils/<br>governors/ other<br>professionals etc.)                                                        |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Any Other Comments</b><br>Reviewer should<br>comment on any<br>support provided,<br>remedial action, targets,<br>training that may be<br>necessary, also any<br>potential for<br>development                                       |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                               |

|                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Detail any Areas which Require Improvement</b>                                       |
| <b>Outline Any Plans to Improve Performance</b>                                         |
| <b>Outline the Employee's Views on the Job, Work Environment and Working Conditions</b> |
| <b>Overall Second Assessment</b>                                                        |

### Third Probationary Assessment Meeting (Twenty Four Weeks)

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Reviewer must Identify Areas where Performance Exceeds Standard Expected</b> | <b>Reviewer must identify Areas where Employee has “Achieved Required Standard”</b> | <b>Reviewer must identify Areas where Employee’s Performance “Requires Improvement to Meet Required Standard”</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Performance</b><br>(Reviewer should comment fully on the employee’s performance, which should include assessment against the Role Profile, Person Specification and agreed Objectives)                         |                                                                                 |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Personal</b><br>(Reviewer should comment on employee’s enthusiasm, interest, initiative, self-motivation)                                                                                                      |                                                                                 |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Attendance/ Reliability/ Punctuality</b><br>(Reviewer should comment and specify the number of days absent due to<br>E.g.<br>Timekeeping<br>Reliability<br>Sickness,<br>Other absences since coming into post) |                                                                                 |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Relationship with Others</b><br>(Reviewer should comment on relationships with other colleagues/ parents/pupils/ governors/ other professionals etc.)                                                          |                                                                                 |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                   |

|                                                                                                                                                                             |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Any Other Comments</b><br>Reviewer should comment on any support provided, remedial action, targets, training that may be necessary, also any potential for development. |  |  |  |
| <b>Detail any Areas which Require Improvement</b>                                                                                                                           |  |  |  |
| <b>Outline Any Plans to Improve Performance</b>                                                                                                                             |  |  |  |
| <b>Outline the Employee's Views on the Job, Work Environment and Working Conditions</b>                                                                                     |  |  |  |
| <b>Overall Third Assessment</b>                                                                                                                                             |  |  |  |

**Summary of Employee's Overall Performance**

|                                                                                       |            |           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| <b>Is it recommended that the Employee's Appointment is to be Confirmed?</b>          | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
| <b>If no, please give details of the outstanding issues below</b>                     |            |           |
| <b>Is it recommended that the Employee's Probationary Period be Extended to Allow</b> | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |

|                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                     |                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Time for Improvement</b>                                                                                                                                                       |                                                     |                                                         |
| <b>If Yes, Specify the Date on Which it is Recommended that the Employee Will Complete the Extended Period and Specify the Improvement Required and How This Will be Achieved</b> |                                                     |                                                         |
| <b>Extended Probationary Period Completion Date (if applicable)</b>                                                                                                               |                                                     |                                                         |
| <b>Employee's signature</b>                                                                                                                                                       |                                                     |                                                         |
| <b>Reviewer's signature</b>                                                                                                                                                       |                                                     |                                                         |
| <b>Headteacher Signature</b>                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Employment Confirmed (Please indicate below)</b> | <b>Employment Not Confirmed (Please indicate below)</b> |
| .....                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                     |                                                         |
| <b>Date</b>                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                     |                                                         |

## Appendix 2 – Probationary - Performance Improvement Plan Template

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Employee Name: | Reviewer: |
|----------------|-----------|

| Objective                                                    | Measure of Achievement                                                                  | Timescale                                          | Support Required           | Outcome                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| E.g. To ensure that all Safeguarding procedures are followed | E.g. Reports have been completed and the Safeguarding Officer has processed the reports | E.g. Immediately following a safeguarding incident | E.g. Safeguarding training | Describe whether the objective has been met, to what degree and whether the outcome is satisfactory and meets required standards |
|                                                              |                                                                                         |                                                    |                            |                                                                                                                                  |
|                                                              |                                                                                         |                                                    |                            |                                                                                                                                  |
|                                                              |                                                                                         |                                                    |                            |                                                                                                                                  |
|                                                              |                                                                                         |                                                    |                            |                                                                                                                                  |
|                                                              |                                                                                         |                                                    |                            |                                                                                                                                  |

All objectives should be SMART objectives:

1. Specific – Objectives should specify what they want to achieve.
2. Measurable – You should be able to measure whether they are meeting the objectives or not.
3. Achievable - Are the objectives you set, achievable and attainable?
4. Realistic – Can you realistically achieve the objectives with the resources you have?
5. Time – When do you want to achieve the set objectives?

|                                            |       |                  |       |    |
|--------------------------------------------|-------|------------------|-------|----|
| Proposed Dates of Interim Review Meetings: | 1.    | 2.               | 3.    | 4. |
| Signed Employee:                           | Date: | Signed Reviewer: | Date: |    |

## Appendix 3 – Letter to Extend Probation

[PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL]  
[NAME]  
[ADDRESS]

[DATE]

Dear [NAME]

Further to our Probation Assessment Meeting held on [DATE], I am writing to you in connection with your probationary period.

As you are aware, during the course of your probationary period, it was necessary for [NAME, JOB TITLE] to speak to you on [DATE/S] in connection with your performance/conduct/attendance, which was viewed as unsatisfactory. You were subsequently given the opportunity to improve your performance through the introduction of specific objectives and measurement criteria related to your role, in addition you were provided with coaching/training as follows: [provide details of any coaching/training which was provided].

Despite this support, it is clear that your performance has still not met the standard required and has fallen short as follows: [PROVIDE DETAILS OF HOW AND WHY PERFORMANCE HAS FALLEN SHORT].

However, as discussed, there may be a prospect of improvement and as an outcome from your Third Probationary Assessment Meeting, it has been decided that your probationary period will be extended by [NUMBER] [WEEKS/MONTH] until [DATE].

You will be expected to meet the objectives that have previously been agreed. We also came to an understanding at the above meeting that you would attempt to improve your performance and that further training would be provided to support you [provide details of any further training which will be provided]. [NAME] has continued to monitor your performance during the extension period and your progress will be formally reviewed at the end of the extended probationary period.

If agreed targets are not met either during or by the end of your extended probationary period, [NAME] will be recommending to me that your employment is not confirmed.

If you require any further help or support, please do not hesitate to ask.

Yours sincerely,

[NAME]  
[HEADTEACHER]

## Appendix 4 – Invite to Probationary Meeting

**PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

[NAME AND ADDRESS]

[DATE]

Dear [NAME]

### **[Name of School] - Probationary Assessment Meeting**

Following your third probationary review on [DATE], [and the further four week extended probationary period to give you a further opportunity to achieve the targets set (INCLUDE IF NECESSARY)], your probationary reviewer, [NAME], has indicated that [HE/SHE] does not consider that you have satisfactorily completed your probationary period and has recommended that your appointment with the school should not be confirmed.

Before a decision is made about whether or not to accept this recommendation, you are invited to attend a probationary assessment meeting. This will take place at [TIME] on [DATE] at the [VENUE].

[REVIEWER] will present the case as to why HE/SHE is not recommending confirmation of your appointment. [HEADTEACHER] or [THE HEARINGS COMMITTEE comprising XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX] will consider any evidence or information you want to present before making a decision. [NAME], HR Advisor (Schools), will be present in an advisory capacity. You have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a trade union representative or work colleague. A member of the Governor Services team will be present to take notes of the meeting [TO BE INCLUDED IF RELEVANT]

If you wish to submit any written information you should submit your documents to me by **midday on [DATE] at the latest** for circulation to those attending the meeting.

If you do not wish to attend the meeting you may wish to provide a written submission to be considered in your absence.

Enclosed with this letter are documents that have been prepared for consideration, together with the Probationary Policy for School Support Staff.

You should be aware that, regrettably, the outcome of the meeting may be that your appointment cannot be confirmed and your employment with the school will be terminated.

I do appreciate that this is a very difficult situation for you and if I can help in any way or you have any queries regarding this letter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

[NAME]  
[SCHOOL]

Copy to:       Headteacher  
                  [NAME], HR Advisor (Schools)

## **Appendix No.5 – Dismissal Letter**

## PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

[NAME]  
[ADDRESS]

[DATE]

Dear [NAME]

I am writing to confirm the outcome of the probationary meeting held at [VENUE] on [DATE] under Probationary Policy for School Support Staff. I chaired the meeting with [NAME], HR Representative, present in an advisory capacity. [NAME OF PROBATIONARY REVIEWER] presented details/documents of the performance/conduct/attendance issues and [NAME] was present to take notes. You were accompanied by [NAME].

At the probationary meeting, the supporting information relating to the performance issues were carefully considered and I can confirm, I have based my decision on the following:

[THE CHAIR SHOULD INCLUDE DETAILS OF HIS/HER CONCLUSIONS]

Taking the above into consideration and, in line with the Probationary Policy, you have not been successful in completing your probationary period and your employment with Milton Keynes Council and XXXX School will be terminated.

Your dismissal will take effect on, [DATE], and you will receive [GIVE DETAILS OF NOTICE PAYABLE] pay in lieu of your notice period. This will be paid to you in the [MONTH] payroll run. Your P45 will be sent to you in due course.

Any untaken holiday entitlement will be calculated and you will be paid this outstanding holiday pay at the same time. (It is important that the contract status is checked i.e. Term time or 52 weeks, if you are unsure, please speak to your HR provider).

This letter also confirms that all school property previously in your possession should be returned. You will need to contact [NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER] to make arrangements for this to take place.

For the avoidance of doubt, school property includes books, documents, papers (including copies), stationery, keys, equipment, laptop, tablet, mobile telephones and ID cards and any other materials containing information in any format relating to the business of the school, its pupils, parents and other professionals.

You have the right to appeal against the dismissal as follows:

1. By raising any concerns about the process which led to your dismissal or
2. If you feel that the reasons for dismissal were not reasonable

You should appeal to me as Chair of the original probationary meeting, in writing, (email will suffice) stating the grounds for your appeal within three working days of the decision taken at this meeting.

Yours sincerely,

[NAME]

[On Behalf of Milton Keynes Council]

## **APPENDIX 6 – Satisfactory Completion of Probation – Fixed Term Contract**

**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL  
NAME AND ADDRESS**

Date

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Probationary Period**

I am pleased to inform you that you have successfully completed your probationary period; your appointment with [XXXXXXXXXXXX] School can now be confirmed.

In accordance with your contract of employment, your fixed term contract will end no later than [DATE] or [ON COMPLETION OF THE TASK/RETURN TO WORK OF THE SUBSTANTIVE POST HOLDER] whichever comes first.

I wish you well for the future in your career with [XXXXXXXXXXXX] School.

Yours sincerely

**[NAME]  
[HEADTEACHER]**

**APPENDIX 7 – Satisfactory Completion of Probation – Permanent Contract**

**PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL  
NAME AND ADDRESS**

Date

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Probationary Period**

I am pleased to inform you that you have successfully completed your probationary period, and your appointment with [XXXXXXXXXXXXXX] School can now be confirmed.

I wish you well in your future career with [XXXXXXXXXX] School

Yours sincerely

**[NAME]  
[HEADTEACHER]**

**Appendix No.8 – Probationary Meeting - Outcome Letter – (Misconduct)**

## PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

[NAME]  
[ADDRESS]

[DATE]

Dear [NAME]

I am writing to confirm the outcome of the probationary meeting held on [DATE] under the Probationary Policy for School Support Staff. I chaired the meeting with [NAME] HR Representative, present in an advisory capacity. [NAME OF REVIEWER] presented details/documents of the misconduct and [NAME] was present to take notes. You were accompanied by [NAME].

The following allegations were considered:

[PROVIDE DETAILS OF ALLEGATIONS]

At the probationary meeting, the supporting information related to the misconduct issues was carefully considered and I am pleased to confirm that I have decided that no formal disciplinary action will be taken against you. I have based my decision on the following:

[THE CHAIR SHOULD INCLUDE DETAILS OF HIS/HER CONCLUSIONS]

However, it was agreed at the meeting that you should, nevertheless, make every effort to improve your conduct in School, and, in particular, as discussed, you now need to improve your conduct in the following ways: [insert details].

Your conduct will continue to be monitored on an ongoing basis and I must also advise you that a repeat of similar misconduct, or any other instance of misconduct of any kind, may lead to formal disciplinary action being initiated against you.

[OR]

At the probationary meeting, the supporting information related to the misconduct issues was carefully considered and, I have based my decision on the following:

[THE CHAIR SHOULD INCLUDE DETAILS OF HIS/HER CONCLUSIONS]

Taking the above into consideration, and in line with the Probationary Policy, the above is regarded as gross misconduct. In the circumstances, I have decided that the appropriate action is that you be summarily dismissed.

Your last day of employment is [DATE]. You will receive any salary due to you up to and including [DATE], (you are not entitled to receive any notice pay) together with your P45 in due course.

Any untaken holiday entitlement will be calculated and you will be paid this outstanding holiday pay at the same time. (It is important that the contract status is checked i.e. Term time or 52 weeks, if you are unsure, please speak to your HR provider).

This letter also confirms that all school property previously in your possession should be returned. You will need to contact [NAME AND TELEPHONE NUMBER] to make arrangements for this to take place.

For the avoidance of doubt, school property includes books, documents, papers (including copies), stationery, equipment, keys, laptop, tablet, mobile telephones and ID cards and any other materials containing information in any format relating to the business of the school, its pupils, parents and other professionals.

You have the right to appeal against the dismissal as follows:

1. By raising any concerns about the process which led to your dismissal or
2. If you feel that the reasons for dismissal were not reasonable

You should appeal to me as Chair of the original probationary meeting, stating the grounds for your appeal within three working days of receiving the verbal outcome.

Yours sincerely,

[NAME]

[On Behalf of Milton Keynes Council]

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<https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning>

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