CARWARDEN HOUSE SCHOOL

PROBATIONARY PERIOD POLICY

Reviewed by SBM: February 2025

Approved by HT: February 2025

Date of next review: February 2028

Introduction

This policy is intended to outline the way in which the Academy will assist an employee to settle into their new role. This probationary period will, other than in exceptional circumstances, apply only to new recruits and will not apply on an internal change of role.

This policy and procedures apply to all employees of the Academy only (which will be referred to as "you**"** in this policy). It does not form part of the terms and conditions of any employee's employment and is not intended to have contractual effect. However, it reflects our current practices and employees are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with its content.

It is our policy to require all new members of teaching and support staff to undertake a period of probation when they commence employment. The applicable probationary period to your employment is outlined in your contract of employment.

Aims of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to ensure that new members of staff know what is expected of them as part of their probationary period and that those with responsibility for managing the probation process are provided with guidance to ensure that any appropriate support (if/when necessary) is provided to employees to assist them in performing effectively in their role.

This guidance is intended to support those with responsibility for managing staff to ensure that that all new members of staff are treated consistently and fairly and to ensure there is a structured approach to assessment/performance management during the early stages of employment.

The purpose of the Probationary Period

The probationary period operates in conjunction with the induction and initial training offered to new employees and allows both you and the Headteacher to assess objectively whether you are suitable for the role.

The use of probationary periods is intended as a constructive process to allow you to understand the:

- Academy, your own role and how these fit together; and
- expectations, standards, behaviours and job tasks required for your role and how to fulfil these.

During your probationary period, your performance will be supported and monitored by your Line Manager, who will report to the SLT.

1. STRUCTURING THE PROBATIONARY PERIOD

At your induction meeting, a schedule for probationary review meetings will be confirmed. There will usually be a review meeting halfway into your probationary

period and at the end of the initial probationary period. These probationary review meetings do not preclude interim, informal meetings also being arranged. We encourage a close working relationship between a probationary employee and their Line Manager.

During your initial probationary meeting, your Line Manager will:

- make clear the expectations and objectives that are required and what is expected of you in your new role.
- make arrangements for you to work a mentor/buddy, where appropriate.
- create a development plan with you, to help support you in achieving the objectives previously identified.
- discuss any training and development needs and specify how and when these needs will be addressed during the probationary period.
- discuss our policies and procedures, where a copy of these can be found and which policies must be read during your probationary period.

If there are any concerns regarding your conduct or performance, these will be addressed at an early stage with the aim of supporting you to improve your conduct or performance to the level required. Should the required improvements not be made the probationary period may be extended or if performance remains unsatisfactory termination of employment within or at the end of the probationary period may be considered. Nothing in this policy prevents the Academy from terminating your employment prior to the end of your probationary period (or any extension of it).

We, may, at our discretion, extend the probationary period in line with your contract of employment. At the end of your probationary period, you will be informed in writing if you have successfully passed your probationary period. We reserve the right to terminate your employment at any time without recourse to the adopted disciplinary, performance or capability procedures.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ACADEMY

The Assistant Headteacher will generally have the responsibility for managing your probationary period.

The Assistant Headteacher responsibility will be to provide:

- induction and training relevant to the role (training may be delegated to another suitable colleague).
- clear and constructive feedback on your performance, clarifying any areas of concern at the earliest opportunity and giving an opportunity to improve.
- appropriate support, help and where necessary appropriate training, to assist you to improve your performance.

Unless one of the Senior Leadership Team are your line manager, they will only normally be involved in the following meetings:

- at the End of Probation meeting to confirm whether or not the probationary period has been successfully completed; or
- at an earlier meeting where progress has not been satisfactory and employment may not be continued.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EMPLOYEE

You have responsibility to:

- carry out your job to the standard that is expected of and required for the role and grade.
- engage fully in induction/initial training opportunities for new employees.
- clarify expectations with your Line Manager and/or the Lead in Professional Effectiveness if you are unclear about them.
- alert your Line Manger or the Extended Leadership Team at the earliest opportunity to any difficulties you are experiencing meeting the expectations of the role and work positively to achieve the required performance standards.
- actively participate in any meetings/discussions/supportive measures put in place as part of this procedure.

Concerns during the Probationary Period

Where concerns are identified during the probationary period, they will be raised with you at the earliest opportunity with the aim of supporting you to improve your performance and/or conduct.

This will usually include a discussion of the following, with the Senior Leadership Team:

- the areas where performance / conduct improvement is required and targets to be met.
- your views about your performance in the role.
- appropriate training, support or coaching to help you meet the required standards.
- timescales for improvement and arrangements for further monitoring/meetings; and
- whether an extension of the probationary period is appropriate.

You will also be made aware, that should the required improvements not be made, your employment may be terminated within the probationary period.

The outcome of this discussion will be confirmed in writing.

Additional meetings may be arranged to assist with the support and monitoring of your performance with the aim of working towards addressing these concerns.

4. Conclusion of Probation

At the end of the probationary period the Headteacher/Deputy Head will meet with you to discuss the probationary period as a whole. Your Line Manager will provide feedback on your progress to the Assistant Head, and you will have the opportunity to comment.

The Senior Leadership Team will have the responsibility for deciding whether you have successfully passed your probationary period and will inform you of this decision at the meeting.

If the probationary period has:

- been satisfactory, continued employment will be confirmed.
- not been satisfactory, the Senior Leadership Team may decide to either:
    a) give notice of the termination of your employment; or
    b) agree to an extension to the probationary period, during which you will have a final opportunity to improve.

This decision will be confirmed in writing.

5. Extending a Probationary Period

As outlined above, if, during or towards the end of the probationary period and despite addressing concerns with you, there remain areas of performance that remain unsatisfactory, the Senior Leadership Team may extend the probationary period.

An extension may not be appropriate in all instances but may be considered where:

- it is felt that you will be able to meet the expectations of the role within the extended period.
- you have demonstrated genuine progress towards meeting the standards expected.
- you are awaiting further training which is key to the performance of the role; and/or
- absence has meant it has not been possible to adequately assess your performance.

When the decision to extend the probationary period is made, the Headteacher will confirm in writing:

- the reason for the extension
- any further assistance/training that will be given in the extension period

- the length of the extension
- the levels of performance expected and how this will be monitored during this period; and
- should the satisfactory improvements not be made, your employment may be terminated within or at the end of the probationary period.

Towards the end of the period of extension a final review meeting will usually take place.

Should performance be deemed satisfactory at the end of the extension period, you will receive written confirmation of the successful completion of your probationary period.