



The Children First Learning Partnership Probation Policy 2026-2027 (Version 1)

The Prohibition Policy in respect of the Children First Learning Partnership has been discussed and adopted by the Directors Board after consultation with Unions

Chair of Board:	Mrs N Chell
Responsible Officer	CEO – Mrs A Rourke
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1. Introduction

We recognise that starting with a new employer can be a significant transition. At the Children First Learning Partnership, we are committed to supporting new employees to settle into their role, understand our organisation, and build the confidence to succeed.

Through regular check-ins, clear objectives and ongoing support, probation is designed to help employees integrate into their team, understand how they contribute to the council's priorities, and build effective working relationships.

Probation is a two-way process. It allows both the employee and the council to take time to assess whether the role is the right fit, while ensuring that appropriate support is in place to enable success wherever possible.

2. Policy Principles

We are committed to developing policies and processes that reflect our Strategy, Values and contribute to promoting a positive working environment. The principles that underpin this are:

- encouraging adult-to-adult conversations where everyone acts to address workplace concerns early through 1-2-1's and other day-to-day conversations
- being supportive, proactive and solution focussed, addressing concerns quickly and fairly, tailored to individual needs
- recognising that everyone has a responsibility and role to play in creating the right conditions to do their job well
- focussing on wellbeing and building trust within the workplace
- developing policies that support diversity and inclusion and promote an inclusive work environment free from any form of discrimination, bullying, harassment, or victimisation
- holding ourselves and each other to account to always behave and act in the best interests of the council, school and the Children First Learning Partnership.

3. Purpose

The probation period is primarily a period of induction, learning, and development. Its purpose is to ensure that you are given clear expectations, regular feedback and appropriate support to succeed in your role. The process is two ways, helping you and your manager assess if the new role is suitable.

This policy supports your integration, so you can:

- understand and fulfil the requirements of your role

- demonstrate your skills, knowledge and experience
- achieve the required standards of performance, conduct/behaviour and attendance
- integrate and embed fully into your team and service area
- understand the importance of the contribution you make to the Trust, School and our community.

4. Scope of Policy

The policy applies to all new employees to the Children First Learning Partnership School's, irrespective of working hours. It includes temporary, variable hours or fixed-term contracts.

All new employees appointed to a post with us (whether or not you have continuous service recognised under the Modification Order) will be required to satisfactorily complete the school's probationary period.

This policy does not apply to those employed on teachers' terms and conditions, casuals, agency workers, consultants, self-employed contractors or volunteers.

The policy does not form part of your contract of employment or any other contract to provide services and can be amended from time to time and in consultation with the recognised trade unions.

If you are already an employee of the school, who is then appointed to a different role in the organisation, you will not be subject to a new probation period. An exception to this is where you are a new employee to the school, and have changed roles within your probation period, in which case you will continue to be subject to the residual period of probation.

This policy has been implemented following consultation with our recognised Trade Unions.

Decisions will be made in line with the school's local scheme of delegation or equivalent mechanism for making decisions at the appropriate level.

5. Length of the probation period

The probation period is 5 months from your start date.

If your contract of employment is shorter 5 months, the probation period will be proportionate to the duration of your contract and/or for the full duration of time you are employed.

6. Probation Review meetings

6.1 Monthly Probation Review meetings

You will have a probation review meeting after each month of service with the school, up to the 5th month (unless there are exceptional circumstances for an extension to be applied).

Managers are responsible for ensuring that you receive a structured induction, clear objectives, access to appropriate learning and development, and regular feedback throughout the probation period.

As our employee, you are encouraged to prepare for review meetings, reflect on your progress, raise any concerns, and identify any support or adjustments you feel would help you succeed.

We reserve the right to amend any of the probation review meetings if there are concerns about your suitability for the role in which you are employed (see Section 6.2).

At the probation meetings your manager will: • assess your

performance against your objectives,

- discuss areas of good work and areas of concern and any improvements needed,
- whether you have all the sufficient tools and equipment needs to do your job,
- review your conduct, behaviour and attendance,
- discuss your wellbeing and support available,
- assess your performance, capability and suitability for the role,
- get feedback from supervisors, colleagues or other managers involved in your probation process.

In addition to these probation meetings, your line manager will check in with you regularly to ensure that you understand what you need to do, provide you with feedback and check that you are receiving sufficient support.

Where concerns arise during probation, managers must consider whether any health, wellbeing, or equality-related factors are relevant and seek advice from their HR provider where appropriate.

6.2 Final Formal Review Meeting (5th month)

Subject to the below, your line manager will meet with you to conduct a final formal probation review of your performance, progress and suitability for the role. At the meeting, you will be given an opportunity to ask questions and invited to comment on your probation period.

The outcome of the meeting may be a decision to:

- confirm your appointment, as per contract, where your line manager is satisfied with your performance; or
- extend your probation period, if there are exceptional reasons to do so (see Section 6.3); or
- terminate your employment if your manager considers that you are not suitable for the role and/or that it is unlikely that any further support or training will lead to a satisfactory standard of performance (including conduct or attendance) being achieved in a reasonable period of time. Termination of employment during probation will normally only be considered where appropriate support, feedback, and opportunities to improve have been provided and progress remains insufficient.

If your line manager feels that satisfactory progress has not been made during your probation, you will be informed in writing prior to the final formal review meeting. The letter will set out sufficient information and examples of why you are not suitable for the role and explain the possible outcomes of the meeting. In such cases, your manager will seek advice from their HR provider prior to the meeting.

You may, if you wish, ask a work colleague or trade union official to attend the meeting with you. A HR provider may be present, to provide advice, at a final formal probation review meeting.

The outcome will be confirmed to you in writing, following the final review meeting.

We reserve the right to invite you to a final formal probation review meeting, at any stage of the probation period, to consider possible termination of employment when:

- we can demonstrate that, during the appointment process, you have purposely misled the organisation or provided false information. An example may be concerning your qualifications, skills or experience.
- we consider that your performance, conduct, or attendance is unsatisfactory and requires early consideration of dismissal.

6.3 Extending your probationary period

In exceptional circumstances, the school may extend your probationary period where it considers that additional time is required to fully assess your suitability for the role. An extension of probation is intended to provide additional time and structured support where improvement is considered achievable and should not be used as a substitute for appropriate training, induction, or management support.

Examples of circumstances in which an extension may be appropriate include (but are not limited to) periods of maternity/paternity/adoption leave or other authorised leave that have prevented a fair assessment of performance, or, where we believe you may be capable of improvement with further support within a defined period, e.g., implementation of 'reasonable adjustments.

Any extension to probation will:

- be for a specified period;
- be confirmed in writing, setting out the reasons for the extension, the duration, and the standards or improvements required;
- include appropriate support, supervision and review arrangements to assist you in meeting the required standards.

Failure to meet the required standards during or by the end of an extended probation period may result in termination of employment.

6.4 Final review of probation extension meeting

Shortly before the end of any agreed period of extension, your line manager will meet with you to conduct a final review of your performance during the extension period.

If your line manager feels that satisfactory progress has not been made during the extended period of your probation, you will be informed in writing prior to the final review of extension meeting. The letter will set out sufficient information and examples of why your manager believes your performance has fallen short of an acceptable standard/ you are not suitable for the role and explain the possible outcomes of the meeting. You may, if you wish, ask a work colleague or trade union official to attend the meeting with you.

At the meeting, you will be given an opportunity to ask questions and comment on your probationary period.

The outcome of the meeting may be a decision to:

- confirm your employment; or
- terminate your employment

We will not extend a period of probation more than once.

The outcome will be confirmed to you in writing, following the final review of extension meeting.

7. Dismissal Appeal

You have the right to appeal against the decision to dismiss you during your probation period under our Appeal Procedure. This must be submitted within 5 days of you receiving the written notice of dismissal.

8. Wellbeing and Support

Supporting wellbeing is an integral and essential part of our Policies. We all respond to stressful situations in different ways. Sometimes a process may cause distress and impact on both physical and mental health.

Where schools buy in to the Councils Health and Safety service this provides access to [Wellbeing](#) support via the SLN (Staffordshire Learning Net). This contains information and resources and provides ideas and solutions to help support your own wellbeing as well as providing advice for your manager.

9. Data Protection and Confidentiality

Our aim is to deal with probationary matters sensitively and with due respect for the privacy of individuals involved. All employees must treat as confidential any information communicated to them. Breach of confidentiality may give rise to disciplinary action under this policy.

If you are invited to a formal meeting, you must not make any electronic recordings. An exception to this may be where it has been agreed by all parties as a reasonable adjustment related to a disability. Any breach of this provision may lead to disciplinary action, which could include dismissal.

Information about your probation may be placed on your personnel file along with a record of the outcome given and any notes or other documents compiled during the process. We process personal data collected during probation periods in accordance with the school's privacy notice and data protection policy.

10. Manager responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities set out in Section 6.1, managers must ensure that their decisions are in full compliance with the Equality Act 2010. This includes giving appropriate consideration to any protected characteristics that may be relevant.

These characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

They must take care not to unlawfully discriminate—either directly or indirectly against you based on any of these characteristics. A fair and inclusive approach is essential to ensure

that all of our employees are managed and supported equitably (see Section 12 for Community Impact Assessment).

Nothing in this policy removes your statutory employment rights or our duty to act reasonably, fairly, and without discrimination.

11. Further Advice

If you need any further information about any aspect of this policy, please initially speak to your manager or Head Teacher. Alternatively, you can contact the school's HR Provider

12. Community Impact Analysis

We consider carefully how the decisions we make affect people who share different protected characteristics (race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, religion, belief, sexual orientation, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity).

The Community Impact Analysis, available to support this policy, highlights the proactive and positive approach we take to supporting employees who are subject to a probation period, whilst taking into consideration any employee protected characteristics.

The completed community impact analysis to support this policy is available on request.

Version Control and History

Version	Date	Amendment	By
1	21.09.2026	New policy adopted from SCC	OM

