

South Nottingham Catholic Academy Trust



Our Lady & St. Edward Primary & Nursery
Catholic Voluntary Academy



Blessed Robert Widmerpool
Catholic Voluntary Academy

St Patrick's Catholic Primary and Nursery School,
A Voluntary Academy



St Edmund Campion Catholic Primary School:
a Catholic Voluntary Academy

Probationary Policy

Company Number: 7743523

Registered Office: The Becket School, The Becket Way, Wilford Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QY

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Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. – Romans 12:2

1. Introduction

1.1 It is the Academy Trust's policy to operate probationary periods for all new employees, and in some cases, at the Academy Trust's discretion, in respect of employees who have been transferred or promoted into different posts within the school.

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

1.3 The Head Teacher or the line manager is responsible for ensuring that all new employees are properly monitored during their probationary period. If any problems arise, the Head Teacher or the line manager should address these promptly and in accordance with the policy and 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.

1.4 Where the employee is the Head Teacher or Principal, the Chair of the Executive Trust Board shall be responsible for managing the probation process and determining whether their employment is confirmed or their employment is terminated.

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 Academy 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 12 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 or the line manager has been absent from the workplace for an extended period during the probation.

3.3 Before extending an employee's probationary period, the line manager may consult with the Head Teacher / Chair of Governors, depending on who is making a

decision to extend. If an extension to the probationary period is agreed, the Academy 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 where these fall below acceptable standards.

4.2 Except in the case of existing employees who have been transferred or promoted into different roles, the amount of notice that an employee must give to the [School/ Academy/Trust] if they wish to resign, and the amount of notice that the [School/ Academy/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 notice in line with your contract of employment. [In the event that the [School/ Academy/Trust] decides to terminate the employee's employment immediately, 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.

4.4 In the case of existing employees who have been transferred or promoted into different roles, the amount of notice that the employee must give to the Academy Trust if they wish to resign, and the amount of notice the Academy Trust must give to the employee of dismissal will be as defined in the employee's contract of employment.

5. Line managers' responsibilities

5.1 Under this policy, line manager has responsibility for monitoring a new employee's performance, conduct, attendance and progress during the probationary period. The line manager 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 line manager should review and assess the employee's performance, capability, conduct, attendance and suitability for the role during the employee's probation with reviews after one month, three months, and again at the end of the probationary period.

6.2 During an employee's probation, the line 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. The line manager is 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 Academy Trust will terminate the employment in line with the contract of employment, giving the relevant weeks' pay in lieu of notice. If the employee is an existing employee who has been transferred or promoted into a different role, the Academy Trust's normal capability/dismissal procedure must be followed in full.

8. End of probation

8.1 Shortly before the end of the probationary period (or end of the extension, if applicable), the line manager should conduct a final review of the employee's performance, conduct, attendance and suitability for the job. This will involve a meeting with the employee to discuss their performance and progress throughout the period of probation.

8.2 If the employee's performance is satisfactory, the line manager should notify the Head Teacher/ Business Manager/HR Leader in order to issue a letter of confirmation of appointment to the employee.

9. Termination of employment

9.1 Ordinarily it is the Academy 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 from the Head Teacher/the line manager), 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 from the Head Teacher/the line manager), 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 from the Head Teacher/the line manager/HR Leader), and it is thought unlikely that further 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 Academy 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.

9.6 If the employee is an existing employee who has been transferred or promoted into a different role, the Academy Trust's normal capability/disciplinary / sickness absence /dismissal procedure must be followed in full.

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 Head Teacher 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 Head Teacher (if not involved in the original decision to dismiss)] or a panel of Governors. 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. Where the employment of the Head Teacher/ is terminated they should appeal to the Chair of Governors who will make arrangements for the appeal hearing.

11. Review of policy

11.1 This policy is reviewed and amended every 3 years by South Nottingham Catholic Academy Trust in consultation with the recognised trade unions. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.