

Westmorland Primary School

Performance Capability Teachers

Policy & Procedure (DfE and Stockport Council)

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This model Appraisal policy is based on the DfE model policy. The NEU, NASUWT and NAHT trade unions have been consulted on this updated version.

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Performance Capability Policy - Teachers

1. Introduction to capability

- 1.1 This Policy is set out as a school capability policy and therefore refers to the "governing board", rather than the "relevant body". However, the Policy is intended to be easily amended or adapted to cover circumstances where the relevant body is the Local Authority.
- 1.2 The term 'capability' is defined as the ability of an employee to perform their duties to the standards required.
- 1.3 This policy and procedure applies only to teachers or Headteachers about whose performance where there are serious concerns, which the appraisal process and informal support has been unable to address, of not meeting the required standards of work performance.
- 1.4 Except in the most serious cases of persistent failures to meet job expectations, resulting in negative consequences on the pupils and the organisation, teachers and school leaders should not be placed on capability procedures without first undergoing a period of informal support. This support should have clear objectives, timelines and goals that are achievable. Informal support should be provided for a reasonable period of 14 weeks to allow for performance improvement. The duration will be determined based on the specific circumstances, with appropriate support in place to facilitate improvement. If no, or insufficient, improvement has been made over this period, the process should move to the formal capability procedures.
- 1.5 The aim of this procedure is to provide a clear formal framework in which capability issues and concerns around performance are managed, reflecting the ACAS Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures. <https://www.acas.org.uk/acas-code-of-practice-on-disciplinary-and-grievance-procedures> A robust and fair teacher capability process combines support, evidence, and careful management to foster improvement and maintain a high-quality education system.
- 1.6 This procedure should follow the ACAS code of practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures. <https://www.acas.org.uk/acas-code-of-practice-for-disciplinary-and-grievance-procedures/html>. Under The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009, Section 8, all maintained schools are required to have a capability policy



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Policy for dealing with capability issues.

The governing board of Westmorland Primary School adopted this policy on Friday 22nd November 2024.

It will review be reviewed in Autumn 2025.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy sets out the arrangements that will apply in serious cases where there have been persistent failures to meet job expectations, resulting in negative consequences on pupils and the organisation. This procedure applies only to teachers and school leaders, where there is a capability issue that the appraisal process, including any informal support arrangements, have been unable to address.

3. Capability Procedure

- 3.1 Notification of a formal capability meeting should never come as a surprise to the teacher concerned. Informal support and a performance improvement plan should mean that the teacher is fully aware of the concerns being raised and they should have had every opportunity to improve in a supportive environment. At least 10 working days' notice will be given of the formal capability meeting. The notification will contain sufficient information about the concerns about performance and their possible consequences to enable the teacher to prepare to answer the case at a formal capability meeting. It will also contain copies of any written evidence; the details of the time and place of the meeting; and will advise the teacher of their right to be accompanied by a companion who may be a colleague, a trade union official, or a trade union representative who has been certified by their union as being competent. Teachers are entitled to reasonably request an alternative date where they are unable to attend the original date proposed.
- 3.2 While a teacher or school leader is in capability procedures, pay progression may be withheld.

4. Formal Capability Meeting

- 4.1 This meeting is intended to establish the facts. It will be conducted by the Headteacher or other appropriate member(s) of the Leadership team or in the case of the Headteacher it will be conducted by the Chair of Governors.
- 4.2 The meeting sets out the required standards which are believed to have been failed by the teacher. The meeting allows the teacher to respond to concerns about their performance and to make any relevant representations, with the option of being accompanied by a work colleague, union representative or an official employed by a trade union. This may provide new information or a



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different context to the information/evidence already collected. During the meeting, evidence shall be presented, and witnesses shall be called where appropriate and necessary. The teacher shall be allowed to ask questions, present their own evidence and rely on their own witnesses where appropriate and necessary, and will be permitted to respond to the evidence and ask questions.

- 4.3 The person conducting the meeting may conclude that there are insufficient grounds for pursuing the capability issue and that it would be more appropriate to continue to address the remaining concerns through the appraisal process. In such cases, the capability procedure will come to an end. The person conducting the meeting may also adjourn the meeting for example if they decide that further investigation is needed, or that more time is needed in which to consider any additional information.
- 4.4 In other cases, the meeting will continue. During the meeting, or any other meeting which could lead to a formal warning being issued, the person conducting the meeting will:
- identify the professional shortcomings, for example which of the standards expected of teachers are not being met;
 - give clear guidance on the improved standard of performance needed to ensure that the teacher can be removed from formal capability procedures (this may include the setting of new objectives focused on the specific weaknesses that need to be addressed, any success criteria that might be appropriate and the evidence that will be used to assess whether or not the necessary improvement has been made);
 - explain any support that will be available to help the teacher improve their performance; set out the timetable for improvement taking into account the teacher's personal circumstances. This may include any medical conditions, working pattern, wellbeing support needs, or disabilities protected by the Equality Act 2010. The timetable will depend on the circumstances of the individual case but in straightforward cases could be eight weeks with a maximum period for the most complex cases of fourteen weeks.
 - explain how performance will be monitored and reviewed and warn the teacher formally that failure to improve within the set period could ultimately lead to dismissal.
- 4.5 Notes will be taken of formal meetings and a copy sent to the member of staff. Where a warning is issued, the teacher will be informed in writing of the level of warning as well as matters covered in the bullet points above and given information about the timing and handling of the review stage and the procedure and time limits for appealing against the warning.



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5. Monitoring and Review Period following a Formal Capability Meeting

- 5.1 A performance monitoring and review period will follow the formal capability meeting. Formal monitoring, evaluation, guidance and support will continue during this period. The member of staff will be invited to a formal review meeting to be held at the end of the monitoring and review period, unless they were issued with a final written warning, in which case they will be invited to a decision meeting (see section 7).

6. Formal Review Meeting

- 6.1 As with formal capability meetings, at least ten working days' notice will be given and the notification will give details of the time and place of the meeting and will advise the teacher of their right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative. Teachers are entitled to reasonably request an alternative date where they are unable to attend the original date proposed (for example a date that is within five working days of the original proposed date)
- 6.2 If the Headteacher or appropriate member(s) of the Leadership Team conducting the meeting is satisfied that the teacher has made sufficient improvement, the capability procedure will cease and the appraisal process will re-start. In other cases:
- If some progress has been made and there is confidence that more is likely, it may be appropriate to extend the monitoring and review period;
 - If no, or insufficient improvement has been made during the monitoring and review period, the teacher will receive a final written warning. which will set out the areas where performance standards have not been met, targets for improvement, any measures (training and supervision) which will be taken to improve performance, a period for the review and the consequences of not meeting expected performance standards.
- 6.3 As before, notes will be taken of formal meetings and a copy sent to the member of staff. The final written warning will mirror any previous warnings that have been issued. Where a final warning is issued, the member of staff will be informed in writing and will include:
- that failure to achieve an acceptable standard of performance, (within the set timescale), may result in dismissal.
 - information about the handling of the further monitoring and review period.
 - the length of the monitoring and review period.
 - the right to appeal against the final written warning. An appeal will not suspend the procedure unless the appeal decision leads to the matter being reconsidered.



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- 6.4 Following the conclusion of this period of monitoring and review the teacher will be invited to a decision meeting.

7. Decision Meeting

- 7.1 As with formal capability meetings and formal review meetings, at least 10 working days' notice will be given and the notification will give details of the time and place of the meeting and will advise the teacher of their right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative.
- 7.2 If an acceptable standard of performance has been achieved during the further monitoring and review period, the capability procedure will end and the appraisal process will re-start.
- 7.3 If performance remains unsatisfactory, a decision, or recommendation to the Governing Board, will be made that the final written warning should be extended (where possible or appropriate), or the teacher should be dismissed or required to cease working at the school. Redeployment into an alternative role may be considered where appropriate and possible.
- 7.4 Before the decision to dismiss is made, the school will discuss the matter with the local authority. For maintained schools the local authority may attend and offer advice at all proceedings relating to the dismissal of any teacher, and the governing body must consider any such advice.
- 7.5 The teacher will be informed as soon as possible of the reasons for the dismissal, the date on which the employment contract will end, the appropriate period of notice and their right of appeal.

8. Decision to Dismiss

The power to decide that members of staff should no longer work at this school has been delegated to one or more governors acting with the head teacher.

9. Dismissal

The power to decide that members of staff should no longer work at this school has been delegated to the head teacher/ to one or more governors/ to one or more governors acting with the head teacher

Once the Governing Board has decided that the teacher should no longer work at the school, it will notify the Local Authority of its decision and the reasons for it. Where teachers work solely at this school, the Local Authority must dismiss them



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within fourteen days of the date of the notification. Where they work in more than one school, the local authority must require them to cease to work at this school.

10. Appeal

- 10.1 If a teacher feels that a decision to dismiss them, or other action taken against them, is wrong or unjust, they may appeal in writing against the decision within ten working days of the decision, setting out at the same time the grounds for appeal. Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay and, where possible, at an agreed time and place. The same arrangements for notification and right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative will apply as with formal capability and review meetings and, as with other formal meetings, notes will be taken and a copy sent to the teacher.
- 10.2 The appeal will be dealt with impartially and, wherever possible, by managers or governors who have not previously been involved in the case.
- 10.3 The teacher will be informed in writing of the results of the appeal hearing as soon as possible.

General Principles Underlying This Policy

ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

The policy will be implemented in accordance with the provisions of the ACAS Code of Practice.

Confidentiality

The appraisal and capability processes will be treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Headteacher and governing board to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the appraisal system. The Headteacher or appropriate colleague will review all teachers' objectives and written appraisal records personally, in order to check consistency of approach and expectation between different appraisers.

Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

The governing board is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness. It will abide by all relevant equality legislation, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled teachers. The governing board is aware of the guidance on the Equality Act 2010 issued by the Department for Education.



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References

If a teacher has been subject to formal capability procedures in the previous two years, as stated in The School Staffing (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 and the Staffing and employment advice for schools, this must be disclosed to new potential school employers when requested.

[Staffing and employment advice for schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

Definitions

Unless indicated otherwise, all references to "teacher" include the Headteacher.

Delegation

Normal rules apply in respect of the delegation of functions by governing boards, Headteachers and local authorities.

Grievances

Where a member of staff raises a grievance during the capability procedure the capability procedure may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and capability cases are related, including as part of the capability process, it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

Sickness

If long term sickness absence appears to have been triggered by the commencement of monitoring or a formal capability procedure, the case will be dealt with in accordance with the school's absence policy and will be referred immediately to the occupational health service to assess the member of staff's health and fitness for continued employment and the appropriateness or otherwise of continuing with monitoring or formal procedure. In exceptional cases, it may be appropriate for monitoring and/or formal procedures to continue during a period of sickness absence.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The governing board and Headteacher will monitor the operation and effectiveness of the school's capability policy. This will include ensuring that the arrangements minimise the impact on workload for all parties involved.

Retention

The governing board and Headteacher will ensure that all written capability records are retained and stored in a secure place in line with their Retention and Disposal Policy



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