



## Capability Policy for Teachers in Langley Park Learning Trust

Owner (job role):	Director of HR
Approval Body:	Trust Board
Approval Date:	19 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
Date of last review:	15 <sup>th</sup> July 2021
Date of next review:	September 2022

Version	Approval Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	19th September 2019	New policy
1.1	15 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	Reviewed – Section 8.2 - red wording removed: ‘The appeal will be dealt with impartially <b>and, wherever possible</b> , by managers or governors who have not previously been involved in the case’.



## Capability Procedure for Teachers

The Trust Board of Langley Park Learning Trust adopted this policy on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

It is applicable to teachers in all Trust schools:

- Clare House Primary School
- Hawes Down Primary School
- Langley Park School for Boys
- Langley Park School for Girls
- Langley Park Primary School

### 1. Capability Procedure

- 1.1 This policy sets out the arrangements that will apply when teachers fall below the levels of competence that are expected of them.
- 1.2 This procedure applies only to teachers and headteachers where there is serious underperformance which the appraisal process has been unable to address. At least five 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. Teachers are entitled to request an alternative date which is within five days of the original date.

### 2. Formal capability meeting

- 2.1 This meeting is intended to establish the facts. It will be conducted by the CEO (for headteacher capability meetings) or headteacher or other suitable senior leader (for other teachers). The meeting allows the teacher, accompanied by a colleague or union representative if they wish, to respond to concerns about their performance and to make any relevant representations. This may provide new information or a different context to the information/evidence already collected.
- 2.2 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.*
- 2.3 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 and explain how performance will be monitored and reviewed. The timetable will depend on the circumstances of the individual case
- warn the teacher formally that failure to improve within the set period could lead to dismissal. In very serious cases, this warning could be a final written warning or other serious implications such as no pay progression

2.4 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 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.

### 3. **Monitoring and review period following a formal capability meeting**

3.1 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, unless they were issued with a final written warning, in which case they will be invited to a decision meeting (see below).

### 4. **Formal review meeting**

4.1 As with formal capability meetings, at least five 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 companion who may be a colleague, a trade union official, or a trade union representative.

4.2 If the person 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

4.3 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 that failure to achieve an acceptable standard of performance (within the set timescale), may result in dismissal and



given information about the handling of the further monitoring and review period and the procedure and time limits for appealing against the final warning. The teacher will be invited to a decision meeting.

## 5. Decision meeting

5.1 As with formal capability meetings and formal review meetings, at least five 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 companion who may be a colleague, a trade union official, or a trade union representative.

5.2 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. If performance remains unsatisfactory, a recommendation to the trust board, will be made that the teacher should be dismissed or required to cease working at the school. This decision will be delegated to the school governing body for all teachers except headteachers and the CEO.

5.3 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.

## 6. Decision to dismiss

6.1 The power to dismiss teachers below the post of headteacher in trust schools has been delegated *to the school governing body*.

## 7. Dismissal

7.1 Once the decision to dismiss has been taken, the school governing body (or trust board in the case of headteachers and CEO) will dismiss the teacher with notice.

## 8. Appeal

8.1 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 five 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 companion 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.

8.2 The appeal will be dealt with impartially by managers or governors who have not previously been involved in the case.

8.3 The teacher will be informed in writing of the results of the appeal hearing within 5 working days, although this timeframe may need to be adjusted to take account of school holidays.

## 9. General Principles Underlying This policy

9.1 ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

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



## 10. Confidentiality

- 10.1 The capability process will be treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the headteacher and governance board to quality-assure the operation and effectiveness of the capability process.

## 11. Consistency of Treatment and Fairness

- 11.1 The governance 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 governance board is aware of the guidance on the Equality Act issued by the Department for Education.

## 12. Definitions

- 12.1 Unless indicated otherwise, all references to “teacher” include the headteacher.

## 13. Delegation

- 13.1 Normal rules apply in respect of the delegation of functions by governance boards, headteachers and local authorities.

## 14. Grievances

- 14.1 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 it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

## 15. Sickness

- 15.1 If long term sickness absence appears to have been triggered by the commencement of monitoring performance at any stage of the formal capability procedure, the case will be dealt with in accordance with the trust’s absence policy (*e.g. 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 procedures*). In some cases, it may be appropriate for monitoring and/or formal procedures to continue during a period of sickness absence.