

# Staff Capability policy



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### 1. Aims

The aim of our capability of staff policy is to set out a clear and consistent process for when a member of staff falls below the levels of competence expected of them, as set out in the relevant professional standards, job descriptions and overall performance expectations.

### 2. FIRST PRINCIPLES

Rugby High School values all staff and the contribution they make to teaching and learning. From time to time, however, there will be occasions when an individual's performance falls short of that which is required.

Good leadership, clear expectations and appropriate support will go a long way towards addressing weaknesses in performance. Early identification of problems through the appraisal and school's self-evaluation processes will be utilised to avoid the need for formal capability procedures. Every effort will be made to provide informal support and guidance to address such weaknesses. However, in some cases where the informal stage does not bring about improvement and teaching standards are not being met, a more formal approach will be necessary.

This Capability Procedure sets out the process that will be followed in such cases and outlines the timescales for improvement that will be applied.

This procedure has been adopted by the Governing Body who have considered the model procedure recommended by the Department for Education.

This procedure will be used for all staff where there are concerns about an employee's capability. If it is an issue of an employee's conduct, then the School's Misconduct Procedure will be applied.

An employee subject to the formal stages of this procedure is entitled to be represented throughout the process by a colleague or union representative.

### 3. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the [Department for Education's model policy and guidance](#), and the [Acas code of practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures](#).

When carrying out capability procedures, we will ensure we abide by the [Equality Act 2010](#).

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

### 4. Definitions

Lack of capability is defined as:

- A staff member failing to perform their role at the level of competence expected of them and that their job requires

References to '**staff**' include the headteacher, teachers and support staff, unless indicated otherwise.

### 5. Roles and responsibilities

Where the member of staff subject to the procedure is the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors will be responsible for co-ordinating the procedure.

Where the member of staff subject to the procedure is not the Headteacher, the Headteacher or a nominated member of senior staff will be responsible for co-ordinating the procedure.

Where appropriate, other members of staff may be asked to provide additional support to the teacher or to assist in monitoring the effectiveness of the policy. Where this happens, responsibilities will be made clear in advance.

### 6. Capability procedure

Performance is monitored on a day-to-day basis by line managers. This is done through our appraisal process, learning walks, drop in and lesson observations, as well as one to one meetings with line managers.

#### 6.1 Informal stage

Where there is evidence that suggests a teacher may be under-performing, the Headteacher or other line manager should investigate. This may involve returning to see a second lesson (if a lesson is judged to be not at the expected standard – see appendix 1), asking for further evidence (e.g. to see students' books or the teachers' mark book), in the case of TLR post holders asking for evidence of monitoring, advice issued to staff, employment of strategies to tackle short comings. The Chair of Governors must make arrangements for an investigation if the performance of the Headteacher is in question. Once the facts are gathered if the evidence suggests that there is under-performance, a plan for supporting the employee needs to be negotiated. This might include coaching, observation of others, peer mentoring, as well as external CPD where relevant. If the evidence suggests that there are insufficient grounds for addressing the concerns through the capability process, the remaining concerns may be addressed through the appraisal process. In such cases the capability process will come to an end at this point.

#### Coaching

Informal coaching should aim to encourage and help the teacher to improve. It should be conducted discreetly. The teacher must be told what is required, how performance will be reviewed, the review period, and that the formal procedure will commence if there is no improvement.

Informal support should not go on for longer than a term. A brief note of any support provided should be kept for reference.

If more serious concerns arise during this period, or if there are no signs of improvement, the formal procedure should be commenced to deal with the matter in a more structured and objective manner.

Formal capability procedures will begin when line management support and the appraisal process have been unable to bring about satisfactory performance or improvements in the staff member's work.

An informal period of support, put in place and monitored by the line manager, will have been in place before formal capability procedures are triggered. Evidence of this will be available before the process begins.

Where an early career teacher (ECT) is subject to capability procedures, we will continue the induction process in parallel with the capability procedure and inform the appropriate body.

## **6.2 Formal capability meeting**

At least 5 working days' notice will be given of the formal capability meeting, and will explain:

- The concerns about performance and possible consequences
- Any written evidence
- The time and place of the meeting
- That the staff member has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative

It will be conducted by the chair of governors if the concern relates to the headteacher, and the Headteacher for other teachers, or support staff.

The purpose of the meeting is to establish the facts, and to allow the staff member to respond to the concerns and make relevant representations.

### **6.2.1 Possible outcomes**

The meeting may establish that there are no grounds to pursue the capability issue. In this case, the procedure will come to an end and the issues will continue to be addressed through the appraisal process.

The meeting may be adjourned if further investigation is needed, or if more time is needed to consider additional information presented.

If the meeting continues, the person conducting the meeting will:

- Explain the expected standards that are not being met based on the Teachers' Standards or other relevant standards, career stage expectations and/or job description
- Give clear guidance on the standard of performance needed to end the procedures
- Explain the support available to help the staff member improve their performance
- Set out the timetable for improvement and explain how performance will be monitored and reviewed
- Warn the staff member that failure to improve within this timetable could lead to dismissal

### **6.2.3 After the meeting**

The staff member will be sent formal meeting notes. If a formal warning has been issued, the staff member will also receive:

- A written record of the bullet points above
- Information about the timing and handling of the review stage
- Information about the procedure and time limits for appealing against the warning

### 6.3 Monitoring and review period

A performance monitoring and review period consisting of formal monitoring guidance and support will follow the formal capability meeting.

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 6.5 below).

### 6.4 Formal review meeting

At least 5 working days' notice will be given of the formal review meeting, and will explain:

- The time and place of the meeting
- That the staff member has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative

If the person conducting the meeting is satisfied that the staff member 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 staff member will receive a final written warning

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. They will be given information about the further monitoring and review period, the procedure and time limits for appealing against the final warning. The staff member will be invited to a decision meeting.

### 6.5 Decision meeting

At least 5 working days' notice will be given of the decision meeting, and will explain:

- The time and place of the meeting
- That the staff member has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative

If an acceptable standard of performance has now been achieved, the capability procedure will end and the appraisal process will re-start.

If the staff member's performance does not improve to a sufficient standard, a decision, or recommendation to the governing board, may be made that the staff member should be dismissed or required to cease working at the school.

The staff member 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
- Their right of appeal

### 6.6 Dismissal

The power to dismiss staff in this school rests with the Staff Dismissals Committee of the Governing Body. The case will be heard by a panel of three governors. As with the formal meeting, five days' notice of the hearing will be given and the teacher will be advised 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.

Once the decision to dismiss has been taken, the Governing Body will dismiss the teacher with notice.

## **7. Right to appeal**

If a staff member feels that a decision to dismiss them is wrong or unjust, they may appeal in writing against the decision within 5 working days of the decision, setting out at the same time the grounds for appeal.

Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay and at an agreed time and place. The same arrangements for notification and statutory right to be accompanied will apply as with formal capability and review meetings. Notes will be taken and a copy sent to the staff member.

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

The staff member will be informed in writing of the results of the appeal hearing as soon as possible.

## **8. Confidentiality**

The 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 system.

## **9. 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 where these are deemed either necessary or appropriate.

The governing board is aware of the guidance and provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

## **10. Monitoring arrangements**

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the headteacher and governing board.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, but can be revised as needed.

This policy will be approved by the Chair of Governors and the Personnel Committee of the governing board.

This policy will be approved by the Chair of Governors.

## **11. Links with other policies**

This policy links to our policies on:

- Staff behaviour policy and code of conduct
- Teachers' appraisal
- Equality information and objectives
- Early career teacher induction programme

## Appendix 1:

### A summary of key expectations of lessons: the expected standard

1. Teachers support students to make progress through the curriculum.
2. Lessons are carefully sequenced, and are taught in line with the curriculum plans.
3. Lessons are carefully planned to offer appropriate challenge to all students.
4. Assessment for learning strategies, including carefully targeted questioning, are used to ensure that all students can access the learning and make progress, including SEND and PP students.
5. Teaching is adaptive.
6. Teachers make reasonable adjustments to their planning and lesson delivery, in line with information shared on student passports.
7. Teachers have high expectations for their students, both in terms of learning and behaviour.
8. Students are engaged in their learning and can talk about how their learning fits with what they have learnt previously and how this fits with their future learning.
9. Instructions are clear, and the teacher checks understanding of these.
10. Formative and summative assessment is used appropriately, feedback is regular and enables the students to move forward.

### Appendix 2: capability action plan template

This template can be used as part of the process of supporting a teacher who is underperforming. It records the outcomes of the initial capability meeting, where targets and timescales are set and agreed.

Where possible, the objectives should be linked to the relevant professional standards, appropriate to the career experience of the member of staff concerned.

NAME OF STAFF MEMBER	NAME OF APPRAISER	DATE OF MEETING

OBJECTIVE 1:		
Professional standard(s) that the objective relates to	Success criteria	Evidence to be used to assess progress

**OBJECTIVE 1:**

Support/resources to be provided

Monitoring arrangements

Review date



**OBJECTIVE 2:**

Professional standard(s) that the objective relates to	Success criteria	Evidence to be used to assess progress
Support/resources to be provided	Monitoring arrangements	Review date

**OBJECTIVE 3:**

Professional standard(s) that the objective relates to	Success criteria	Evidence to be used to assess progress
Support/resources to be provided	Monitoring arrangements	Review date

### Other support provided

MENTOR/COACH ALLOCATED	YES/NO (IF YES GIVE NAME)
Counselling to be provided	Yes/No
Occupational health referral to be made	Yes/No
[Insert any other support provided]	
Formal review date	

SIGNED BY MEMBER OF STAFF	SIGNED BY APPRAISER	DATE