

# Medlock Primary School



## Capability Policy

March 2021

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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 any 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. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on:

- [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#) (regulation 8)
- [The School Staffing \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2012](#)
- [The Education \(School Teachers' Appraisal\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(the Appraisal Regulations\)](#)
- [Department for Education's model policy and guidance](#)
- [Acas code of practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures](#).

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

## 3. 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.

## 4. Roles and responsibilities

Where the member of staff subject to the procedure is the headteacher, the chair of governors will be responsible for coordinating 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 coordinating 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.

## 5. Capability procedure

Performance is monitored on a day-to-day basis by line managers. Where a development area is identified, this is recorded on the member of staff's personal feedback log. It is then the responsibility of the member of staff to address this development area. It is the responsibility of the line manager to facilitate the

support needed by the member of staff to work towards meeting the development area. This process is linked to the appraisal policy and systems and is how all staff demonstrate they are meeting their professional standards.

Capability procedures will begin when line management support and the appraisal / performance management 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 capability procedures are triggered (as outlined in the appraisal policy). Evidence of this will be available before the process begins.

### **5.1 Formal capability meeting**

At least 10 working days' notice will be given of the formal capability meeting and will explain:

- The concerns about performance and possible consequences.
- 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 (Headteacher) or a member of the senior leadership team for all other 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.

#### **5.1.1 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 teacher's 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.

#### **5.1.2 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.

## **5.2 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 5.4, below).

## **5.3 Formal review meeting**

At least 10 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.

## **5.4 Decision meeting**

At least 10 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.

## **5.5 Dismissal**

The power to decide that members of staff should no longer work at this school rests with the governing board in the form of a delegated committee.

Once the decision that the staff member should no longer work at the school has been taken, the governing board (in the form of a delegated committee) will notify the local authority of its decision and the reasons for it. Where staff work solely at this school, the local authority must dismiss them within 14 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.

## **6. 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 14 working days of the decision setting out at the same time the grounds for the appeal.

Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay and at an agreed time and place. The same arrangements for notification 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 senior leaders or 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 within 14 working days.

## **7. 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.

## **8. 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.

### **9. 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 governing board.

### **10. Links with other policies**

This policy links to our policies on:

- Staff code of conduct
- Teachers' appraisal
- Acceptable usage policy

## Appendix 1: 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
Support/resources to be provided	Monitoring arrangements	Review date

**Objective 2:**

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

**Objective 3:**

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

**Other support provided**

<b>Mentor/coach allocated</b>	Yes/No (If yes give name)
<b>Counselling to be provided</b>	Yes/No
<b>Occupational health referral to be made</b>	Yes/No
<b>[Insert any other support provided]</b>	
<b>Formal review date</b>	

<b>Signed by member of staff</b>	<b>Signed by appraiser</b>	<b>Date</b>