To Heads of all Educational Establishments

Dear Colleague

Support for Probationer Teachers: The Probationer Induction Scheme

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Glasgow City Council is committed to ensuring the highest quality of support is available to probationer teachers.

1.2 Consequently, the education authority wishes to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made for the induction and support of probationer teachers who are allocated to placements within Glasgow City Council for their induction year. This Management Circular which is based to a large extent on good practice which has been developed since the introduction of the placement scheme in 2002 is intended to establish within each school procedures for offering a programme of positive support for all new entrants to the profession. The new arrangements include the provision of a guaranteed full year placement for each probationer, the allocation of time for professional development and mentoring support and full registration after one year subject to satisfying the criteria specified in the General Teaching Council (GTC) document ‘Standard for Full Registration’.

1.3 The Education Improvement Service will offer an extensive programme of support for probationer teachers which will complement that provided within individual schools.

1.4 An essential element in the programme, however, is the careful monitoring of progress and the reporting of difficulties. This Management Circular therefore offers advice on the completion of reports to the General Teaching Council of Scotland and outlines the support the local authority can offer to probationer teachers and schools.

2. THE PROBATIONER ENTITLEMENT

2.1 Each probationer teacher will be required to teach between 0.55 and 0.7 of the teaching week. This equates to a maximum of 15 hours and 45 minutes.

The remainder of the time is available for professional development in part supported by a colleague within the school, together with planning, preparation, recording and reporting and the variety of collegiate activities agreed within the school. It is important to be aware that certain criteria are required to be met before a post can be deemed to be a training post. In primary schools, probationer teachers should have all of their teaching commitment in the one class wherever possible.
3. SUPPORT FOR PROBATIONER TEACHERS

3.1 An essential element of the induction arrangements is the support provided within each establishment which has one or more probationer teachers. Funding has been built into allocations to authorities for 0.1 FTE support for every probationer.

3.2 GTCS advice for probationer teachers and guidance for schools can be found in the document ‘Achieving the Standard for Full Registration: Guidance for Probationer Teachers and Schools’ (www.probationerteacherscotland.org.uk). The authority has also produced its own guidelines on supporting the professional development of probationer teachers and these have been updated to take account of the advice given by GTCS. While supporters may be identified from amongst the staff generally, account should be taken of the interpersonal skills required. The authority will provide training opportunities for staff identified as supporters.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 The overall responsibility for the welfare and development of probationer teachers lies with the school. In each school a senior member of staff should act as co-ordinator for providing assistance to probationer teachers.

4.2 Support for probationer teachers is provided by a range of individuals whose contributions need to be co-ordinated and managed. The employer has a responsibility for ensuring that the probationer has a clear understanding of the context within which they are employed. The supporter has a responsibility for agreeing the initial programme of Continuing Professional Development and providing regular support for and feedback to the probationer. The supporter may also have a responsibility for co-ordinating access to a range of appropriate activities both within and outwith the school to support the development of the probationer. The probationer teacher has a responsibility to take an active role in reflecting on and improving their teaching ability.

4.3 Probationer teachers are expected to:

- be open, enthusiastic about and receptive to Continuing Professional Development and the probation process;
- seek advice and guidance from their supporter and other appropriate colleagues;
- become familiar with the school’s policies and the school development plan;
- use the regular meetings with the supporter and the agreed action plans to support their learning and development;
- review and reflect on teaching and learning and adjust plans and expectations in the light of their pupils’ achievements;
- self-evaluate and monitor their professional learning and development with their supporter and other staff as appropriate;
- maintain a record of professional development targets and future actions;
- identify and record appropriate critical incidents and evidence to use as a focus of discussion with their supporter;
- regularly maintain their GTCS online profile as a record of ongoing progress.

4.4 The supporter is expected to:

- get to know the probationer professionally and personally;
- create an open, supportive and challenging climate for discussion;
- co-ordinate and manage the probationer’s professional development programme;
• monitor and evaluate progress through observation of teaching, providing feedback, organizing regular meetings focusing on the probationer’s self-evaluation of his/her progress and identifying development needs and action plans;
• ensure that opportunities are provided to address the professional development needs of the probationer;
• provide pastoral support, when appropriate;
• oversee the development, implementation and review of the probationer teacher’s action plans and portfolio;
• monitor and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the school support programme for the probationer teacher;
• encourage the probationer to reflect on his/her teaching and evaluate pupils’ learning;
• complete in conjunction with the Head of Establishment, the interim and final profiles for the probationer;
• liaise with the authority Probationer Support Officer and Staff Development Co-ordinator in the school.

4.5 The Head of Establishment is expected to:
• support professional development of the probationer within the staff team;
• enable the probationer and supporter to have time to discuss the progress of the probationer and ensure access to appropriate professional development activities;
• provide opportunities for professional development for the supporter;
• monitor and evaluate the school’s probation support programme with the supporter;
• complete, in conjunction with the supporter, the interim and final profiles for the probationer and recommend probationers for full registration with the General Teaching Council for Scotland, where appropriate.

4.6 The school is expected to:

a) prepare a probationer information file/pack including:
   • school aims, ethos and mission statement;
   • school routines and administration arrangements;
   • school policies and procedures;
   • resources and facilities;
   • school induction programme;
   • staff list;
   • health and safety information;
   • extra-curricular activities;
   • parental/carer contact;
   • information about where to locate information related to relevant legislation or codes.

b) ensure the probationer teacher has a copy of his/her job description.

The education authority will co-ordinate the overall programme with the operational responsibility falling to the Probationer Support Officer.
5. **GTCS PROFILES AND PROBATIONER PORTFOLIO**

5.1 GTCS Profiles will be a useful source of evidence and will form an important tool in monitoring progress and writing reports. Every probationer teacher must maintain their record of progress in their GTCS online profile.

Supporters should ensure that probationer teachers record their progress on a regular basis and that online profile entries are regularly signed off.

5.2 GTCS Profiles should be sent online to the Authority in the first instance.

The assessment of the competence of probationer teachers against the Standard for Full Registration must be based on evidence and that evidence should be retained at each stage of the process.

5.3 Interim Profiles

Interim profiles should be completed by December and submitted to the Probationer Support Officer who will forward them to GTCS.

In situations where the progress of a probationer is giving cause for concern, or is unsatisfactory, the GTCS will request that a further interim profile be submitted in the Spring term (Interim 2 Profile).

5.4 Final Profiles

Final profiles should be completed and submitted to the Probationer Support Officer by late May/early June.

5.5 Probationer teachers should maintain a CPD portfolio which would provide evidence to support the record within their profiles.

Such a portfolio might include:
- planning evidence;
- lesson outlines;
- materials developed in relation to teaching;
- observation notes;
- self-evaluation/critical reflection.

5.6 The GTCS document ‘Achieving the Standard for Full Registration - Guidelines for New Teachers and Schools’ provides advice for new teachers to assist them during their induction year and guidance for schools on the key elements of the induction experience. The document also provides advice for assessing probationer teachers as they work towards the Standard for Full Registration.
6. **MONITORING OF PROBATIONER TEACHERS**

6.1 The monitoring of probationers should involve:

- regular contact;
- classroom observation of teaching;
- assessment of planning;
- inspection of the work of children and young people;
- observation of interaction with children and young people;
- observation of interaction with colleagues;
- assessment of curriculum/subject competence;
- observation of conscientiousness;
- observation of personal characteristics/professionalism.

6.2 Staff involved in monitoring procedures should be familiar with teacher competencies which are useful tools in monitoring progression in teaching skills and quality. Further advice can be found in the GTCS publication ‘Achieving the Standard for Full Registration - Guidance for New Teachers and Schools’. Dialogue on progress of the probationer between supporter and the Probationer Support Officer is essential and must be recorded in line with the revised arrangements.

7. **DEALING WITH PROBLEMS**

7.1 The structured programme of support will mean that concerns about progress can be dealt with systematically and as part of the ongoing process. Where problems are perceived by the supporter or probationer, the Head of Establishment or Co-ordinator should be informed.

7.2 Detailed notes should be kept and agreed specific targets set for the probationer to achieve. Where there are continuing concerns about progress, advice should be sought on strategies from the Probationer Support Officer. Emphasis in the support meetings should be on development needs, areas of growth, an ability to use self evaluation in a critical way, and identification of next steps. Support provided will be recorded in the GTCS interim/final profiles.

7.3 If a Headteacher decides to recommend extension to probation or cancellation of registration a case Overview Report must be prepared for submission to GTCS. The Probationer Support Officer should be asked to assist the Headteacher with the preparation of this report.

8. **GTCS PROBATIONER REPORTING**

8.1 Heads of Establishment are reminded of the need for careful attention being given to the compilation of reports for the GTCS, and of the importance of providing evidence in support of all professional judgements made. In particular, all adverse comments should be accompanied by details of the efforts made by the school to assist the probationer and of the results achieved. In the case of final reports, unfavourable recommendations should be demonstrated to be based upon systematic evidence and a consensus of professional opinion. It should be noted that the GTCS report is a confidential report between the Head of Establishment, the probationer, the GTCS and Education Services.

8.2 Guidance on completing GTCS reports on probationer teachers is laid out clearly in the Guidance section of the GTCS online profile system.

Yours sincerely

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Support Programme for Probationer Teachers

The main components of the programme provided centrally by Glasgow City Council are:

1. **The Probationer Orientation Programme**
   
   A ‘Welcome to Glasgow’ programme is offered prior to the start of the new school session. The programme enables new probationer teachers to be welcomed to the city and to be given an overview of the full programme and the arrangements for the Induction Scheme.

2. **Daytime Training programme**
   
   Throughout the Induction year there will be sessions of centrally provided full day training for probationer teachers. Topics include:
   
   - Teaching for Effective Learning
   - Pastoral care
   - Promoting Positive Behaviour
   - Enterprise in Education
   - Health Promotion.

3. **The Probationer Twilight Programme**
   
   A voluntary twilight programme for probationer and returning teachers will supplement the formal induction programme. This programme will be similar to that run successfully in previous years.

4. **The Probationer Support/Induction Pack**
   
   All documents relating to support for probationer teachers can be found on Connect and in the GTCS probationer teachers’ web-site www.probationerteacherscotland.org.uk