



## STAFF GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

*This Policy includes the Hazelwood School Nursery and Early Years Foundation Stage*

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### Aims

This policy aims to enable employees to raise concerns about workplace issues without fear of victimisation and repercussion, and to ensure all grievances are dealt with fairly, fully and objectively.

### Legislation and guidance

These grievance procedures are based on the Acas Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures.

### Definitions and scope

A **grievance** is a concern, problem or complaint raised with the school by an employee. It can be caused by issues such as working conditions, health and safety concerns, bullying, discrimination or working relationships.

This policy **does not** apply to:

- Issues raised by people who are not an employee of the school, for example volunteers or parents/carers, as this would instead fall under our complaints procedure
- Redundancy dismissals
- Non-renewal of fixed-term contracts
- Collective grievances, raised on behalf of 2 or more employees by a representative of a recognised trade union or other appropriate workplace representative.

These are covered by separate policies and procedures found in the Staff Drive in the Policies folder, and in the Staff Handbook in the Staff Directory on the drive.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

Being internal matters, grievances may involve several people in the school. There is an emphasis on dealing informally with grievances, and so it is not practicable to prescribe specific roles. However, the following guidelines may be useful.

### ***The line manager***

Provided they are not the subject of the grievance, the line manager will be the first point of contact for the employee raising a grievance. If the grievance is about the employee's line manager, the employee will raise the grievance with their line manager's manager.

### ***Chair of governors***

Where the Head is the subject of the grievance, the chair of governors will be responsible for appointing an appropriate governor who has not been directly involved in the grievance to oversee the procedure at the formal stage.

### ***Investigating officer***

At the formal stage, the Head (or appointed governor, if the Head is the subject of the grievance) will appoint an investigating officer to collect and present the facts of the grievance in an investigation report. The investigating officer will be someone who has not been directly involved in the grievance.

### ***Other members of staff or trade union staff***

A work colleague, trade union official, or trade union representative who has been certified as being competent to attend such meetings may accompany the employee raising the grievance at a formal grievance meeting.

## **Grievance procedures**

We are committed to dealing with grievances fairly and objectively. Employees will be protected from discrimination or victimisation after raising a work-related grievance.

### ***Informal stage***

In the first instance, an employee will aim to resolve their grievance informally with their line manager. If the employee's concerns relate to their line manager, they should discuss the issue with the line manager's manager.

It may be necessary for the employee who has raised a grievance to attend a meeting to discuss the concerns in more detail. However, this will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

It's anticipated that several grievances will be resolved at this informal stage with no need to progress matters further. However, if the matter has not been resolved at the informal stage, it may then proceed to the formal stage of the procedure.

### ***Formal stage***

If it is not possible to resolve the matter informally, employees should set out their grievance in writing to their line manager, in accordance with the staff grievance notification form at Appendix 1. If the subject of the grievance is their line manager, the employee should submit the written grievance to an alternative, preferably senior, manager.

Upon receipt of a grievance, the Head (or appointed governor if the Head is the subject of the grievance) will appoint an investigating officer. This will be an independent individual with no prior knowledge of the grievance.

The Head (or appointed governor if the Head is the subject of the grievance) will also appoint a grievance investigator/chair. This group of people will be separate from the investigating officer and will be chaired by an independent individual, with no prior knowledge of the grievance. This may include the Head/Chair

of Governors or other Governor/other senior member of staff.

The investigating officer will undertake a grievance investigation and will make a recommendation.

The investigating officer, supported by the HR Advisor, will also arrange a formal meeting (to be held in person, or over video conferencing if appropriate) within five working days after the grievance has been raised. At the meeting, the employee will be given the opportunity to explain their grievance and how they think it should be resolved, to the grievance panel.

Employees have a statutory right to be accompanied by a companion at a grievance meeting. The companion must be a work colleague, trade union official, or trade union representative who has been certified as being competent to attend such meetings.

The employee must let the investigating officer know that they request to be accompanied. If the chosen companion is not available on the initial date and time proposed for the formal meeting, the investigating officer must move the meeting to an alternative time proposed by the employee, provided that the alternative time is both reasonable and no more than 5 working days after the date originally proposed.

The companion may address the hearing to put and sum up the employee's case, respond on behalf of the employee to any views expressed at the meeting and confer with the employee during the hearing. The companion may not answer questions on the employee's behalf, address the hearing if the employee does not wish it or prevent the employer from explaining their case.

### ***Deciding on appropriate action***

The meeting will be adjourned, and the grievance investigator / chair will reflect on it before coming to a decision.

The chair will communicate the decision to the employee in writing within five working days. The decision will set out the action that will be taken to resolve the grievance. It will also inform the employee that they can appeal if they are not satisfied with the outcome and explain how to do this.

### ***Appeals***

If the employee is not satisfied with the outcome of the grievance they have the right to appeal the decision.

The employee should set out their grounds of appeal in writing within 5 working days and submit this to the Head.

An appeal is not designed to re-hear the matter but to examine the grounds of appeal. The employee should therefore be specific about the grounds of the appeal. However, a full re-hearing may be appropriate in exceptional circumstances.

The Head (or appointed governor if the Head is the subject of the grievance) will appoint an appropriate person to hear the appeal. This will be chaired by an independent individual.

Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay and in any event within ten working days of the date of the appeal notice. The Head (or appointed governor if the Head is the subject of the grievance) will tell the employees the time and place of the appeal meeting in advance (to be held in person, or over video conferencing if appropriate).

Employees have the same statutory right to be accompanied to the appeal meeting by a work colleague, trade union official, or trade union representative who has been certified as being competent to attend such meetings.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed in writing to the employee within five working days of the appeal. The decision will be final.

### **Overlapping procedures**

If an employee raises a grievance after disciplinary proceedings have already started against them, the disciplinary proceedings may temporarily be suspended in order to consider the implications of the grievance on the disciplinary process.

If the grievance and disciplinary proceedings address related matters, it may be possible to deal with the issues simultaneously as part of disciplinary proceedings.

### **Record keeping**

Minutes will be kept of all meetings. Where possible, these will be confirmed as a record of what was discussed during the meeting.

Records of all materials relating to the grievance process will be kept secure, only for as long as necessary and in line with data protection law, our privacy notices and record retention schedule.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will usually be reviewed every two years but can be revised as needed from time to time. It will be reviewed by the HR Advisor.

This policy will be approved by the Head.

### **Links with other policies**

This policy links with our policies on:

- Complaints procedure, which sets out how grievances will be raised by those not employed by the school
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Staff capability policy
- Staff codes of conduct
- Staff disciplinary procedures

**This policy was approved by Head/SMT in Autumn Term 2025**