



Dated 1st May 2015

St Hilda's Church of England Primary School

Grievance Policy



1. Policy Statement

1.1 It is the Governing Body's Policy to ensure that all employees have access to a procedure to help deal with any grievances relating to their employment fairly and without unreasonable delay. The Governing Body aims to investigate any formal grievance you raise, hold a meeting to discuss it with you, inform you in writing of the outcome, and give you a right of appeal if you are not satisfied.

1.2 Issues that may cause grievances include:

- (a) Terms and conditions of employment;
- (b) Health and safety;
- (c) Work relations;
- (d) Bullying and/or harassment;
- (e) New working practices;
- (f) Working environment;
- (g) Organisational change; and
- (h) Discrimination.

1.3 This Policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. It may be amended at any time and the Governing Body may depart from it depending on the circumstances of any case.

2. Who is covered by the Policy?

This Policy applies to all employees regardless of length of service. It does not apply to agency workers, peripatetic local authority staff or self-employed contractors.

3. Using this Policy

3.1 If you have difficulty at any stage of the Grievance Policy because of a disability or because English is not your first language, you should discuss the situation with the headteacher or Chair of Governing Body as appropriate as soon as possible.

3.2 This Policy may not be used for grievances about:

- Disciplinary action;
- Termination of employment;
- National Insurance, Income Tax or Pensions;
- Pay or performance management;
- Harassment or bullying

All of which are covered by separate policies and/or procedures.

3.3 The Governing Body operates a separate Whistleblowing Policy to enable employees to report illegal activities, wrong doing or malpractice. However, where you are directly affected by the matter in question, or where you feel you have been victimised for an act of whistleblowing, you may raise the matter under this Grievance Policy.

3.4 Written grievances will be placed on your personnel file along with a record of any decisions taken and any notes or other documents compiled during the grievance process.



4. Raising grievances informally

Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion with your line manager. If you feel unable to speak to your manager, for example, because the complaint concerns him or her, then you should speak informally to an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team. If this does not resolve the issue, you should follow the formal procedure below.

5. Formal written grievances

5.1 If your grievance cannot be resolved informally you should put it in writing and submit it to the Headteacher, indicating that it is a formal grievance. If the grievance concerns the Headteacher, you may submit it to the Chair of the Governing Body instead.

5.2 The written grievance should contain the following information:

- (a) What the grievance is about (be clear and specific);
- (b) Who is involved and when;
- (c) Why the grievance has not been resolved at an earlier stage; and
- (d) How you think the grievance can be resolved.

5.3 In some situations you may need to provide further information.

6. Investigations

6.1 In some cases it may be necessary to carry out an investigation into your grievance. The amount of any investigation required will depend on the nature of the allegations and will vary from case to case. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from you and any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents. The investigation may be carried out by an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team or Governing Body. You must co-operate fully and promptly in any investigation. This may include providing the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents and attending interviews, as part of the investigation.

6.2 The School may initiate an investigation before holding a grievance meeting where it considers this appropriate. In other cases a grievance meeting may be held before deciding what investigation, if any, to carry out. In such cases it may be appropriate to hold a further grievance meeting with you prior to a decision being taken.

7. Right to be accompanied

7.1 You may bring a companion to any grievance meeting or appeal meeting under this policy. The companion may be either a trade union representative or a colleague. You must tell the person holding the grievance meeting who your chosen companion is, in good time before the meeting.

7.2 At the meeting, your companion may make representations to us and ask questions, but should not answer questions on your behalf. You may confer privately with them at any time during the meeting.

7.3 Acting as a companion is voluntary and your colleagues are under no obligation to do so. If they agree to do so they will be allowed reasonable time off from duties without loss of pay to act as a companion.



- 7.4 If your choice of companion is unreasonable the school may ask you to choose someone else, for example:
- (a) If it is considered that your companion may have a conflict of interest or may prejudice that meeting; or
 - (b) If your companion is unavailable at the time a meeting is scheduled and will not be available for more than five working days afterwards.
- 7.5 The School may, at its discretion, allow you to bring a companion who is not a colleague or union representative (for example, a member of your family) if this will help overcome a disability, or if you have difficulty understanding English. There is no entitlement to legal representation.

8. Grievance Meetings

- 8.1 You will normally receive a written invitation to attend a grievance hearing within 10 working days of receipt of your written grievance.
- 8.2 You and your companion (if any) should make every effort to attend grievance meetings. If you or your companion cannot attend at the time specified, you should inform the Headteacher or Chair of the Governing Body immediately and he/she will try, within reason, to agree an alternative time.
- 8.3 The purpose of a grievance meeting is to enable you to explain your grievance and how you think it should be resolved, so as to allow a decision to be reached based on the available evidence and the representations you have made.
- 8.4 After an initial grievance meeting the Headteacher or Chair of the Governing Body may carry out further investigations and hold further grievance meetings as he/she consider appropriate. Such meetings will be arranged without unreasonable delay.
- 8.5 The Headteacher or Chair of the Governing Body will write to you, usually within 10 working days of the final grievance meeting, to inform you of the outcome of your grievance and any further action that he/she intends to take to resolve the grievance. You will also be informed of your right to appeal the grievance decision.

9. Appeals

- 9.1 If the grievance has not been resolved to your satisfaction you may appeal in writing to the Headteacher or Chair of the Governing Body as appropriate, stating your full grounds of appeal, within 5 working days of the date on which the decision was sent or given to you.
- 9.2 An appeal meeting will normally be held within 15 working days of receiving your written appeal. This will be dealt with impartially by a suitably convened Grievance Appeal Panel consisting of at least three Governors who have not previously been involved in the case (although they may ask anyone previously involved to be present).
- 9.3 The Grievance Appeal Panel will confirm its final decision in writing, usually within 15 working days of the appeal hearing. This is the end of the procedure and there is no further appeal.



10. Overlapping Disciplinary and Grievance Issues

In the event that you were to raise a grievance after disciplinary proceedings have been started against you, the Disciplining Officer(s) should consider whether it is appropriate in the circumstances to suspend the disciplinary case for a short period (no more than one week) to consider what, if any, implications the grievance may have on the disciplinary. If the grievance has been raised before the appeal stage of the disciplinary procedure and the matters of grievance are linked to those of the disciplinary, then the grievance should be considered within the disciplinary procedure. If the grievance concerns matters that are unrelated to the disciplinary, then a separate process under the grievance procedure will need to start. In most cases, the grievance should be considered after the completion of the disciplinary. The exception here would be where there is a long delay in the progress of the disciplinary – perhaps because police proceedings are awaited.