

Grievance Procedure

For Employees in Voluntary Aided
Schools

Version Autumn 2018

Grievance Procedure

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Grievances can arise from a variety of sources. They can arise among individual members of staff or be directed towards school management and the governing body. They can be of a relatively simple nature or of fundamental importance.

This procedure is designed to enable school leaders, staff and governing bodies to foster good relations by:

- Discouraging the harbouring of grievances;
- Assisting the resolution of individual grievances in an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality;
- Enabling grievances to be settled as closely as possible to their point of origin;
- Ensuring that grievances are dealt with fully, promptly and fairly.

The procedure sets out:

- An informal process through which most grievances may be resolved without recourse to any subsequent stage;
- A formal procedure to be invoked when the first stage has failed or is inappropriate;
- A right to appeal the outcome of any stage of the procedure.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. The policy will be reviewed every two years and may be amended from time to time.

2. Representation

2.1 At all stages any staff involved in the procedure are entitled to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative. At formal meetings, the companion may make representations and ask questions but should not answer questions on the employee's behalf. During the formal procedure, witnesses may be called and questioned on either side.

3. Informal Stage

3.1 Where a member of staff has a grievance which involves another member (or members) of staff, they should make every effort to resolve it by approaching the person(s) concerned directly.

3.2 If a direct approach fails to resolve the grievance, the employee should then request in writing a personal interview, in writing with their line manager, Head of School, Headteacher, or Executive Headteacher (as appropriate), stating the reason, and the other party must be informed about the complaint. If the complaint is against the Headteacher or Executive Headteacher, the employee may request

an interview with a member of the governing body. In the first instance, the employee should contact the Chair, who will nominate a suitable governor to look into the matter.

The interview should take place within five working days of the request and seek to resolve the problem personally in consultation with any other member (s) of staff involved. The parties may, by mutual agreement, seek consultation with the Executive Headteacher, Headteacher (if not already involved), the Chair of Governors or representatives of trade unions, as appropriate.

3.3 The aim of the meeting is to resolve matters informally, and this may result in a mediation or facilitated meeting between parties or lead to a more formal investigation by the Executive Headteacher, Headteacher, Head of School, Senior Leadership Team (SLT) member or an independent party.

Formal stage

4.1 Where the matter has not been resolved informally as above (or it has not been appropriate to raise the matter informally), the employee should submit a formal written notice of the grievance to the Executive Headteacher, Headteacher or Chair of Governors. The written notice should:

- Include full details of the grievance, together with any supporting documents;
- Set out steps already taken to resolve the issue;
- State the resolution now requested.

4.2 The Executive Headteacher, Headteacher or member of SLT will advise any other parties concerned as to the nature of the grievance, and they may make a formal written response (together with any supporting documents). This response should normally be submitted within ten working days of receipt of the written notice of grievance unless not practicable.

A hearing will then be arranged before either a panel of three governors or the Executive Headteacher or Headteacher to consider the grievance. The hearing will normally take place within twenty working days of receipt of the formal notice of grievance.

4.3 At least five working days' notice of the hearing will be given to the employee, who may be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague.

The above time limits may be altered by agreement of the parties concerned.

4.4 The panel or person hearing the grievance, in seeking to resolve the matter, may adjourn the meeting or defer making a decision if this is considered appropriate to promote conciliation or obtain further information on relevant factors.

4.5 The decision of the panel or person hearing the case and the reasons for it will be confirmed to the parties within five working days.

4. Appeal

5.1 The aggrieved employee may appeal in writing to the Chair of Governors within ten working days of receiving the written decision. The notice of appeal should set out the reasons, and a copy should be submitted to the Clerk to the governing body, who will provide copies to any other persons concerned.

5.2 The appeal will be heard by a panel of three governors of the school involved or members from another LDBS school if appropriate. All documents already submitted will be made available to the appeal committee. This hearing will normally take place within fifteen working days of receipt of the notice of appeal.

At least ten working days' notice will be given to the parties concerned, who may attend in person and be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative.

5.3 The decision of the appeal committee will be final.

This process may run concurrently with any other procedure being implemented involving the complainant.