

# Grievance Policy

September 2021

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## **1 ABOUT THIS POLICY**

- 1.1 It is our 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 Academy aims to investigate any formal grievance raised by an employee, hold a meeting to discuss it with them, inform them in writing of the outcome, and give them a right of appeal. This procedure applies equally to all Academy employees regardless of length of service. Monitoring will take place to ensure compliance and fairness.

## **2 GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

- 2.1 Employees should be in a position to bring to the attention of management any grievances that arise in the course of their work and to have these issues considered fairly and promptly.
- 2.2 This Grievance Policy should not be used to complain about dismissal or disciplinary action. If you are dissatisfied with any disciplinary action, you should submit an appeal under the appropriate procedure
- 2.3 As an employer, the Academy has a duty to protect individuals from harassment that may take the form of grievances submitted maliciously. Having been investigated any such grievance found to have been submitted maliciously will be considered further under the Disciplinary Procedure.

## **3 GRIEVANCES RAISED BY THE HEADTEACHER / A MEMBER OF THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM**

- 3.1 A grievance raised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team should be addressed to the Headteacher. Any grievance raised by the Headteacher should initially be addressed to the Chair of Trustees. It is not expected that the Chair of Trustees would hear a grievance in the early stages, instead they would be expected to allocate these hearings to a committee of the Trust Board.

## **4 RAISING GRIEVANCES INFORMALLY**

- 4.1 Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion between an employee and their line manager. If an employee feels unable to speak to their manager, for example, because the complaint concerns him or her, then they should speak informally to a more senior manager. If this does not resolve the issue, they should follow the formal procedure below.

## **5 FORMAL WRITTEN GRIEVANCES**

- 5.1 If a grievance cannot be resolved informally, employees should put their grievance in writing and submit it to the Headteacher, indicating that it is a formal grievance. If the grievance is about the Headteacher, it should be sent to the Chair of Trustees to delegate appropriately.
- 5.2 The written grievance should contain a brief description of the nature of the complaint, including any relevant facts, dates, and names of individuals involved. In some situations, we may ask you to provide further information.

## **6 INVESTIGATIONS**

- 6.1 It may be necessary for the Academy to carry out an investigation into a 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 the employee and any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents. The investigation may be carried out by the Headteacher or by an appropriate manager appointed by the Headteacher.

- 6.2 Employees should co-operate fully and promptly in any investigation. This may include informing us of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents to us and attending interviews, as part of our investigation.
- 6.3 The Academy may initiate an investigation before holding a grievance meeting where appropriate. In other cases, a grievance meeting may be held before deciding what investigation (if any) to carry out. In those cases, a further grievance meeting will be held with the employee after the investigation and before a decision is reached.

## **7 THE RIGHT TO BE ACCOMPANIED**

- 7.1 There is a statutory right to allow employees to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or an agreed work colleague (who is independent) at a grievance hearing or appeal.
- 7.2 The representative will be able to address the hearing, put the employee's case and sum it up and respond on the employee's behalf to any views expressed at the hearing. The representative and employee are also able to confer during the hearing. However, the representative is not permitted to answer questions on behalf of the employee or address the hearing if the employee does not wish it, or prevent the employer from explaining their case.
- 8 Individuals should confirm before the meeting whether or not he/she will be accompanied and which witnesses have been called. If an employee's chosen companion is unavailable at the time a meeting is scheduled and will not be available for more than five working days afterwards, the Academy may ask them to choose someone else.

## **9 GRIEVANCE MEETINGS**

- 9.1 A grievance meeting will be arranged, normally within 10 days of receiving a written grievance.
- 9.2 Employees and their companions (if any) should make every effort to attend grievance meetings. If an employee or their companion cannot attend at the time specified, they should inform the Academy immediately and we will try, within reason, to agree an alternative time.
- 9.3 The purpose of a grievance meeting is to enable an employee to explain their grievance and how they think it should be resolved, and to assist the Academy to reach a decision based on the available evidence and the representations made.
- 9.4 After an initial grievance meeting the Academy may carry out further investigations and hold further grievance meetings as it considers appropriate. Such meetings will be arranged without unreasonable delay.
- 9.5 The Academy will write to an employee, usually within one week of the final grievance meeting, to inform them of the outcome of their grievance and any further action that it intends to take to resolve the grievance. Employees will be reminded of their right of appeal.

## 10 **APPEALS**

- 10.1 If the grievance has not been resolved to an employee's satisfaction they may appeal in writing to the Chair of Governors, stating their full grounds of appeal, within one week of the date on which the decision was sent or given to them.
- 10.2 The Academy will hold an appeal meeting, normally within one week of receiving a written appeal. This will be dealt with impartially by a committee of the Trust Board which has not previously been involved in the case (although they may ask anyone previously involved to be present). Employees have a right to bring a companion to the meeting (see paragraph 7).
- 10.3 The Academy will confirm its final decision in writing, usually within one week of the appeal hearing. This is the end of the procedure and there is no further appeal.