



Policy: Staff Grievance Policy

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Person responsible for policy: Stephen Dean, Chief Executive Officer

Authorised by: Board of Trustees

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This Policy applies to all schools within the Primary QuEST Multi-Academy Trust. Primary QuEST is a Church of England Trust which seeks to ensure all pupils flourish, together in a supportive and caring environment.

Flourishing together through LIFE

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1. Aims

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

2. Legislation and guidance

We are required to set out grievance procedures under [general employment law](#).

These grievance procedures are based on the [Acas Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance](#).

These procedures also comply with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions and scope

A **grievance** is a concern, problem or complaint raised within the trust, or within one of our schools, 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 employed by the trust, e.g. volunteers or parents/carers, as this would 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.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Being internal matters, grievances may involve a number of people in the trust. 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.

4.1 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.

4.2 The headteacher and CEO

If the grievance is raised within one of our schools, provided they are not the subject of the grievance, the headteacher will consider the grievance at the formal stage (see 5.2).

If the grievance is raised within the central trust, provided they are not the subject of the grievance, the CEO will consider the grievance at the formal stage.

4.3 Chair of local governing body and trust board

Where the headteacher is the subject of the grievance, the chair of the local advisory board will be responsible for appointing an appropriate governor who has not been directly involved in the grievance to oversee the procedure.

Where the CEO is the subject of the grievance, the chair of the trust board will be responsible for appointing an appropriate trustee who has not been directly involved in the grievance to oversee the procedure.

4.4 Investigating officer

At the formal stage, the headteacher/CEO (or appointed local advisor/trustee if the headteacher/CEO 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.

4.5 Grievance panel

The headteacher/CEO (or appointed local advisor/trustee if the headteacher/CEO is the subject of the grievance) will appoint a grievance panel consisting of three people with no prior knowledge of the grievance. These people will be separate from the investigating officer and will be chaired by an independent individual.

4.6 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.

5. 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.

5.1 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 a number of 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.

5.2 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 headteacher/CEO (or appointed local advisor/trustee if the headteacher/CEO 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 headteacher/CEO (or appointed local advisor/trustee if the headteacher/CEO is the subject of the grievance) will also appoint a grievance panel. 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.

The grievance panel may include:

Amend the following list in line with your scheme of delegation:

- The headteacher
- Members of the local advisory board
- Members of the board of trustees
- Senior school leaders, such as the deputy head or heads of other schools in the trust
- Senior trust leaders, such as the CEO

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

The investigating officer, supported by HR colleagues, will also arrange a formal meeting (to be held in person, or over video conferencing if appropriate) within 20 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 will not be 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.

5.3 Deciding on appropriate action

The meeting will be adjourned and the grievance panel will reflect on it before coming to a decision.

The chair of the panel will communicate the decision to the employee in writing within 5 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.

5.4 Appeals

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

The employee should set out their grounds of appeal in writing within 5 working days of receiving the grievance outcome.

School-based staff should submit a request for appeal to the headteacher or the chair of the local advisory board.

Central trust staff should submit a request for appeal to the CEO or the chair of the trust board.

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 headteacher (or appointed local advisor if the headteacher is the subject of the grievance) will appoint a grievance appeal panel consisting of three people. This will be a group of people independent from any previous stage of the grievance procedure, and the panel will be chaired by an independent individual.

The appeals panel may include:

Amend the following list in line with your scheme of delegation:

- The headteacher
- Members of the local advisor board
- Members of the board of trustees
- Senior school leaders, such as the deputy head
- Senior trust leaders, such as the CEO

Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay and in any event within 20 working days of the date of the appeal notice. The headteacher/CEO (or appointed governor/trustee if the headteacher/CEO 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 by the chair of the appeal panel to the employee within 5 working days of the appeal. The decision of the appeal panel will be final.

6. Overlapping procedures

If an employee raises a grievance after disciplinary proceedings have already started against them, the disciplinary proceedings may be temporarily 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.

7. 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.

The trust will store and retain all records relating to grievance procedures for no longer than is necessary, in line with data protection legislation.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, but can be revised as needed from time-to-time. It will be reviewed by the GPAC Committee

The policy will be approved by the Trust Board.

9. 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
- Privacy notice for the school workforce
- Records management policy
- Staff capability policy
- Staff codes of conduct
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Staff wellbeing policy

Appendix 1: staff grievance notification form

Name:	School:
Post held:	
Describe the nature of your grievance, including: • A full description of your grievance • Relevant evidence, such as facts, dates and names of individuals involved	
Please state the following:	
The date on which you first raised your grievance, and with whom	
The action taken in respect of your grievance at the informal stage	
The outcomes you are seeking and the actions you would like taken to resolve the situation	
Whether you would like to explore a resolution through mediation	
Whether you would like accompaniment at a grievance meeting by a work colleague, trade union official, or trade union representative – and if so, their name and position	
Signed:	Dated: