Copnor Primary School

Staff Grievance Policy

Governing Body approval gained in February 2026 Next review February 2027
Policy proposed for adoption by Matt Johnson, Headteacher
Headteacher's signature: Chair of Committee signature:

Rationale

We are wholly committed to ensuring that everyone at Copnor Primary School is treated with respect and, therefore, it is essential that all staff act as role models. A grievance may, however, occur at some point in a member of staff's time at the school. Therefore, the school has in place a Staff Grievance Policy to support staff who have a grievance. We follow the policies and procedures laid out in Portsmouth Education Authority's "Manual of Personnel Practice." This has been agreed by union organisations and is in line with employment legislation. This policy should also be read with the Grievance Policy and the Appraisal and Capability Policy for Teachers and Support Staff. The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS), a Crown non-departmental public body of the Government of the United Kingdom, provide statutory guidance on grievance and this statutory guidance will be followed by the school when there is a grievance where the grievance process is used.

Aims of this Policy

1. To ensure that all staff are acting professionally and as good role models
2. To ensure that all staff are treated in a consistent, fair and sensitive manner
3. To address any issues where a grievance has been raised
4. To address any issues of misconduct

What is a Grievance?

Grievances are concerns, problems or complaints that employees raise with their employers.

When should the Grievance Process be Used?

Employers and employees should always seek to resolve disciplinary and grievance issues in the workplace. Where this is not possible employers and employees should consider using an independent third party to help resolve the problem. The third party need not come from outside the organisation but could be an internal mediator, so long as they are not involved in the disciplinary or grievance issue. In some cases, an external mediator might be appropriate.

Many potential disciplinary or grievance issues can be resolved informally. A quiet word is often all that is required to resolve an issue. However, where an issue cannot be resolved informally then it may be pursued formally.

Let the School Know the Nature of the Grievance

If it is not possible to resolve a grievance informally, then the member of staff should raise the matter formally and without unreasonable delay with a line manager who is not the subject of the grievance. This should be done in writing and should set out the nature of the grievance.

Grievance Process

- The school will hold a meeting with the member of staff to discuss the grievance. The school will arrange a formal meeting to be held without unreasonable delay after a grievance is received.
- The member of staff should make every effort to attend the meeting. The member of staff should be allowed to explain their grievance and how they think it should be resolved. Consideration should be given to adjourning the meeting for any investigation that may be necessary.
- The member of staff has a statutory right to be accompanied by a companion at a grievance meeting which deals with a complaint about a duty owed by the school to the member of staff. This would apply where the complaint is, for example, that the employer is not honouring the member of

staff's contract, or is in breach of legislation. The statutory right is to be accompanied by a fellow member of staff, a trade union representative, or an official employed by a trade union. A trade union representative who is not an employed official, must have been certified by their union as being competent to accompany a member of staff. The school will agree to a member of staff's request to be accompanied by any companion from one of these categories. The member of staff may also alter their choice of companion if they wish. As a matter of good practice, in making their choice the member of staff should bear in mind the practicalities of the arrangements. For instance, a member of staff may choose to be accompanied by a companion who is suitable, willing and available on site rather than someone from a geographically remote location.

- To exercise the statutory right to be accompanied the member of staff must make a reasonable request. What is reasonable will depend on the circumstances of each individual case. A request to be accompanied does not have to be in writing or within a certain time frame. However, the member of staff should provide enough time for the school to deal with the companion's attendance at the meeting. The member of staff should also consider how they make their request so that it is clearly understood, for instance by letting the school know in advance the name of the companion where possible and whether they are a member of staff or trade union official or representative.
- If a member of staff's chosen companion will not be available at the time proposed for the hearing by the school, the school will postpone the hearing to a time proposed by the member of staff provided that the alternative time is both reasonable and not more than five working days after the date originally proposed.
- The companion should be allowed to address the hearing to put and sum up the member of staff's case, respond on behalf of the member of staff to any views expressed at the meeting and confer with the member of staff during the hearing. The companion does not, however, have the right to answer questions on the member of staff's behalf, address the hearing if the member of staff does not wish it or prevent the school from explaining their case.

Appropriate Action

Following the meeting the school will decide on what action, if any, to take. Decisions will be communicated to the member of staff, in writing, without unreasonable delay and, where appropriate, should set out what action the school intends to take to resolve the grievance. The member of staff should be informed that they can appeal if they are not content with the action taken.

Appeal

- Where a member of staff feels that their grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, they should appeal. They should let the school know the grounds for their appeal without unreasonable delay and in writing.
- Appeals should be heard without unreasonable delay and at a time and place which should be notified to the member of staff in advance.
- The appeal should be dealt with impartially and wherever possible by a senior member of staff/ manager who has not previously been involved in the case.
- Members of staff have a statutory right to be accompanied at any such appeal hearing.
- The outcome of the appeal should be communicated to the member of staff in writing without unreasonable delay.

Overlapping grievance and disciplinary cases

Where a member of staff raises a grievance during a disciplinary process the disciplinary process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. Where the grievance and disciplinary cases are related it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently.

Collective grievances

Where grievances are raised on behalf of two or more employees by a representative of a recognised trade union or other appropriate workplace representative, then these grievances should be handled in accordance with the school's collective grievance process.