Staff grievance policy and procedures

Overley Hall School

Approved by:	Support and Scrutiny Board	**Date:** 04 Sep 2026
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Aims

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

At Overley Hall School, we are committed to fostering a culture of mutual respect, openness, and emotional safety for all. We believe that valuing and listening to our staff is central to our therapeutic, person-centred ethos and enables us to maintain a positive collaborative working environment where everyone can thrive.

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 procedures.

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

Definitions and scope

A **grievance** is a concern, problem or complaint raised with the school 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 an employee of the school, e.g. volunteers or parents/carers (covered under our Complaints Procedure).
- Redundancy dismissals
- Non-renewal of fixed-term contracts
- Collective grievances, raised on behalf of two or more employees by a representative of a recognised trade union or other appropriate workplace representative

These are covered by separate policies and procedures.

Roles and responsibilities

At Overley Hall School, all staff are recognised as essential contributors to the life and well-being of our school community. Grievances are approached with empathy, impartiality, and a focus on restoring positive working relationships wherever possible. Our commitment to therapeutic care and emotional well-being extends to our professional relationships, and we encourage all members of staff to seek informal resolution in a way that reflects our ethos of respectful communication and mutual understanding.

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

Class tutor

Provided they are not the subject of the grievance, the class tutor/teacher will be the first point of contact for the employee raising a grievance. If the grievance is about the class tutor/ teacher, the employee will raise the grievance with a member of the Education Management Team.

The headteacher or a senior leader

Provided they are not the subject of the grievance, the headteacher or a nominated member of the education management team will consider the grievance at the formal stage.

Chair of Support and Scrutiny Board

If the headteacher is the subject of the grievance, the Chair will appoint an appropriate Board member not previously involved.

Investigating officer

Appointed by the headteacher or Chair to collect and present the facts of the grievance.

Grievance panel

Comprising three independent individuals with no prior involvement. Chaired independently.

Other members of staff or trade union staff

May accompany the employee throughout formal grievance procedures.

Grievance procedures

We are committed to dealing with grievances fairly and objectively.

This process is underpinned by Overley Hall School's commitment to safeguarding emotional well-being, respecting the dignity of all staff, and promoting a culture of listening and inclusion.

Informal stage

Employees are encouraged to resolve concerns informally with their line manager or a member of the Education Management Team, where appropriate. Many issues can be resolved quickly and sensitively through discussion and mutual understanding.

Formal stage

If informal resolution is not successful, employees should complete the Staff Grievance Notification Form (Appendix 1) and submit it in writing. An investigating officer and grievance panel will be appointed to hear the grievance.

Employees have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative. The meeting will be scheduled within 10 working days of the formal submission, with flexibility to accommodate reasonable requests for rescheduling.

Upon receipt of a grievance, the headteacher (or appointed Board member if the headteacher 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 (or appointed Board member, if the headteacher 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 investigating officer will undertake a grievance investigation and will make a recommendation.

The investigating officer, supported by HR as required, will also arrange a formal meeting (to be held in person, or over video conferencing if appropriate) within 10 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.

Deciding on appropriate action

After the formal meeting, the panel will adjourn to consider the outcome and will provide a written response within five working days.

Appeals

Employees may appeal in writing within five working days. An independent appeal panel will be convened, and a final written decision will be provided within five working days of the appeal meeting.

Throughout all stages, Overley Hall School will strive to support staff sensitively, ensuring they feel heard, understood, and valued.

Overlapping procedures

If a grievance arises during disciplinary proceedings, the disciplinary process may be paused. Where appropriate, related issues may be handled concurrently.

Record keeping

Accurate records will be kept of all meetings and decisions. These will be maintained securely in accordance with data protection law and school policy.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will usually be reviewed every two years or as needed. It will be reviewed and approved by the Headteacher.

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
- Staff capability policy
- Staff codes of conduct
- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Staff wellbeing policy

Appendix 1: Staff grievance notification form

Name:	
Job title:	
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: