

Horizons Independent School

STAFF GRIEVANCE POLICY

Procedure/Guidance

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Appendix 1: staff grievance notification form

1. Aims

This policy aims to enable employees to raise concerns about workplace issues without fear of victimization and repercussion, and to ensure all grievances are dealt with fairly, fully 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 disciplinary and grievance code of practice from Acas.

3. Definitions

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 or discrimination, or work relations. This policy does not cover issues raised by people who are not employed by the school, as this would fall under our complaints procedure.

4. Roles and responsibilities

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.

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 Senior staff

Provided they are not the subject of the grievance, the senior staff will consider the grievance at the formal stage (see 5.2).

4.3 Investigating officer

At the formal stage, the senior staff 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.

4.4 Grievance panel

The senior staff will appoint a grievance panel consisting of 4 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.

4.5 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 victimization 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.

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 senior staff will appoint an investigating officer. This will be an independent individual with no prior knowledge of the grievance.

The senior staff 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.

Senior Leaders not involved in the Grievance will make up the Panel.

The investigating officer will undertake a grievance investigation and will make a recommendation. The investigating officer will also arrange a formal meeting (to be held in person, or over video conferencing if appropriate) within 14 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.

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 investigating officer will communicate the decision to the employee in writing within 14 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 grievance they have the right to appeal the decision.

The employee should set out their grounds of appeal in writing as soon as possible and submit this to Nicola Griffiths and Roger Boulton. 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 senior staff will appoint a grievance appeal panel consisting of 4 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. Appeals will be heard without unreasonable delay and in any event within 14 working days of the date of the appeal notice.

The senior staff 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 to the employee within 14 working days of the appeal. The decision of the appeal panel will be final.

6. Record keeping

Minutes will be kept of all meetings. Where possible, these will be confirmed as an accurate reflection of what was discussed during the meeting.

Records of all materials relating to the grievance process will be kept securely, only for as long as necessary and in line with data protection law, our privacy notices.

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will usually be reviewed every year, but can be revised as needed from time-to-time. It will be reviewed by Roger Boulton

8. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures
- Complaints procedure, which sets out how grievances will be raised by those not employed by the school
- Equality