

Floreat Education

Grievance Policy

FLOREAT WANDSWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADOPTED BY: LGB

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1. Mission Statement

Our mission is to enable all children to flourish in school by giving them a knowledge-rich academic education and developing their character strengths and virtues. Our pupils will learn how to work hard and study well, and also to be good and do good for others. This will ensure that they enjoy every moment of the school day and have a future of success and wellbeing, whatever they choose to do in their lives.

2. Purpose of Policy Statement

It is Floreat Education Academies Trust (FEAT) policy to ensure that all employees have access to a procedure to help deal fairly and without unreasonable delay with any grievances relating to their employment. Where you make us aware that you have a complaint, we will investigate any formal grievance that you raise, hold a meeting to discuss it with you, inform you in writing of the outcome, and give you a right of appeal if you are not satisfied.

Issues that may cause grievances include:

- Terms and conditions of employment;
- Health and safety;
- Work relations;
- Working environment;
- Organisational change; and,
- Discrimination.

This procedure does not form part of an employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time following consultation. FEAT, as “the employer”, may also vary application of this procedure, including any time scales for action, as appropriate.

The policy has been implemented following consultation with FEAT staff. It has been formally adopted by the Board of FEAT as from 2015.

3. Who is covered by the procedure?

This procedure applies to all employees regardless of length of service. It does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors.

3.1 Using this procedure

- i. Complaints that amount to an allegation of misconduct on the part of another employee will be investigated and dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure and you will be informed if this is the case.
- ii. This Grievance Procedure should not be used to complain about dismissal or disciplinary action or the outcomes of other procedures. If you are dissatisfied with any disciplinary action, you should submit an appeal under the Disciplinary Procedure.
- iii. Where an employee 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.
- iv. The Trust operates a separate Whistleblowing Policy to enable employees to report illegal activities, wrongdoing or malpractice. However, where you are directly affected by the matter in question, or where you feel you have been victimised for an act of whistleblowing, you may raise the matter under this grievance procedure.
- v. This procedure does not apply to grievances concerning two or more employees (collective grievances) raised by a representative of a Trade Union or other representative body. These will be dealt with as appropriate to the facts of the case.
- vi. Written grievances will be placed on your personnel file along with a record of any decisions taken and any notes or other documents compiled during the grievance process. These will be processed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.
- vii. It may be appropriate for the matter to be dealt with by way of mediation, depending on the nature of your grievance. This involves the appointment of a third-party mediator, who will discuss the issues raised by your grievance with all of those involved and seek to facilitate a resolution. Mediation will be used only where all parties involved in the grievance agree.

4. Raising grievances informally – Step 1

We believe that most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through open communication and discussion with your line manager or the Headteacher (for school-based staff) or the COO (for Trust-based staff). We would always aim to resolve your grievance informally where possible. If you feel unable to speak to your manager, for example, because the complaint concerns them, then you should speak informally to a member of the FEAT Executive Team. If this does not resolve the issue, you should follow the formal procedure below.

5. Formal written grievances – Step 2

If your grievance cannot be resolved informally you should put it in writing and submit it to the Headteacher indicating that it is a formal grievance. If the grievance concerns, or is raised by, the Headteacher it should be submitted to the Chair of the Local Governing Body via the School. For Trust-based staff, this should be to the COO or to the Chair of the FEAT Board respectively.

ii. The written grievance should contain a brief description of the nature of your complaint, including any relevant facts, dates, and names of individuals involved. In some situations we may need to ask you to provide further information. You should also state what your desired outcome would be to resolve the situation.

6. Investigations

In some cases it may be necessary for us to carry out an investigation into your grievance. The amount of any investigation required will depend on the nature of the complaint and will vary from case to case. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from you and any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents. The investigation will usually be carried out by a member of the school's senior leadership team or a member of the Trust's Executive Team. In the case of an investigation into a complaint against the Headteacher the Chair of the Local Governing Body and the Board of FEAT will determine who will carry out the investigation.

You must co-operate fully and promptly in any investigation. This may include informing us during our investigation of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents to us and attending interviews.

The employer may initiate an investigation before holding a grievance meeting where the employer considers this appropriate. In other cases we may hold a grievance meeting before deciding what investigation (if any) to carry out. In those cases we will hold a further grievance meeting with you after our investigation and before we reach a decision.

7. Right to be accompanied

- i. An employee may bring a companion to any grievance meeting or appeal meeting under this procedure. The companion may be either a colleague or Trade Union representative. You must tell the person holding the grievance meeting who your chosen companion is at least five working days before the meeting.
- ii. At the meeting, your companion may make representations to us and ask questions, but should not answer questions on your behalf. You may request an adjournment to speak to them privately at any time during the meeting.
- iii. Acting as a companion is voluntary and your colleagues are under no obligation to do so. If a colleague agrees to do so, they will be allowed reasonable time off from duties to act as a companion without loss of pay.

- iv. If your choice of companion is unreasonable we may ask you to choose someone else, for example:
- If in our opinion your companion may have a conflict of interest or may prejudice the meeting; or,
 - If your companion is unavailable at the time a meeting is scheduled and will not be available for more than five working days afterwards.
 - We may, at our discretion, allow you to bring a companion who is not a colleague or union representative (for example, a member of your family) as a reasonable adjustment if you have a disability.

8. Grievance meeting

- i. The employer will arrange a grievance meeting, where possible within five working days of receiving your written grievance.
- ii. You and your companion (if any) should make every effort to attend the grievance meeting. If you or your companion cannot attend at the time specified, you should inform us immediately and we will try, within reason, to agree an alternative time.
- iii. The purpose of a grievance meeting is to enable you to explain your grievance and how you think it should be resolved, and to assist us to reach a decision based on the available evidence and the representations you have made. Everyone involved in the process is entitled to be treated calmly and with respect. FEAT will not tolerate abusive or insulting behaviour from anyone taking part in grievance procedures and will treat any such behaviour as misconduct under the disciplinary procedure.
- iv. After an initial grievance meeting we may carry out further investigations and hold further grievance meetings as we consider appropriate. Such meetings will be arranged without unreasonable delay.
- v. We will write to you, usually within five working days of the final grievance meeting, to inform you of the outcome of your grievance and any further action that we intend to take to resolve the grievance. We will also remind you of your right of appeal. Where appropriate we may hold a meeting to give you this information in person.

9. Appeals – Step 3

- i. If the grievance has not been resolved to your satisfaction you may appeal in writing to the Headteacher (school-based staff) or CEO (“head office” staff) stating your full grounds of appeal, within five working days of the date on which the decision was sent or given to you.
- ii. We will hold an appeal meeting without unreasonable delay. This will be dealt with impartially by a member of the FEAT Executive Team who has not previously been involved in the case (although they may ask anyone previously involved to be present). Where the Headteacher has made the decision at the grievance meeting a panel of

governors will hold the appeal meeting. You have a right to bring a companion to the meeting (see Section o of this policy).

- iii. The employer will confirm a final decision in writing, usually within five working days of the appeal hearing. This is the end of the procedure and there is no further appeal.

10. Review of policy

This Policy is reviewed annually by the Board of FEAT. As part of the review process, the Board will monitor the application and outcomes of this policy to ensure it is working effectively.