



# LIFE Education Trust

## Learning Is For Everyone

Our Aim is that every School will be:

- An efficient school
- An effective School
- An enriching school
- An enabling school

## DISCIPLINE & DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

<b>Policy</b>	Discipline & Dismissal Procedure
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<b>Policy Source</b>	Essex

**KEY DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS POLICY:**

The Trust	LIFE Education Trust
The Board/Directors/Trust Board	The Board of Directors of LIFE Education Trust
School/Trust school	An Academy or school within LIFE Education Trust
Staff	All staff employed by LIFE Education Trust and working with academies, schools or units within LIFE Education Trust

**All schools** within the LIFE Education Trust are legally defined as academies, regardless of whether the term “school” is used to describe them in the following policy.

# Staff Discipline and Dismissal Procedure

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# Staff Discipline and Dismissal Procedure

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Trust is committed to being a fair and reasonable employer and to ensuring that disciplinary matters and other dismissals are managed in a consistent and non-discriminatory manner and these procedures set out how such matters will be dealt with.
- 1.2 In operating procedures, the Trust and line managers will have regard to the particular needs of individuals and will make reasonable adjustments in consultation with employees, where appropriate.
- 1.3 The Trust expects that, through effective day to day supervision, minor deficiencies in employees' conduct are brought to the line manager's attention at the earliest possible stage and remedied through these informal measures.
- 1.4 The object of the formal disciplinary procedure is to provide a framework to deal with cases of more serious misconduct or where informal measures have been unsuccessful in improving employees' conduct.
- 1.5 The disciplinary procedure accords with employment and education legislation and takes due account of the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary Procedures (as amended) ("the ACAS Code").

A summary of the disciplinary procedure is at Appendix A

A summary of the procedure for other dismissals is at Appendix B

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 These procedures are applicable to all employees (including the headteacher). In the case of employees who have less than two year's continuous service and/or who are undergoing a probationary period in line with the Probationary procedure, while the principles of reasonableness and natural justice reflected in these procedures and the ACAS Code will apply, it may be appropriate to foreshorten procedures, processes and relevant timescales, depending on the individual circumstances of each case.
- 2.2 Where misconduct relates to a child protection issue, London Borough of Havering Procedures will be followed.
- 2.3 Dismissal may be for a number of reasons. The procedures covered in this document apply to dismissal relating to:
- 2.3.1 Misconduct, including gross misconduct
- 2.3.2 Statutory prohibition  
It may be necessary to terminate a contract where a failure to do so would contravene an enactment (i.e. a requirement cannot be met and it would be illegal to continue the employment). Examples may include:
- an overseas worker's work permit or leave to remain is revoked/expires;
  - being disqualified by virtue of the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 (where a waiver has been refused);
  - an employee being placed on the DBS Children's Barred List;
  - a driver loses his/her licence (where driving is a requirement of the role).
- 2.3.3 Some other substantial reason (SOSR)  
This may include
- Unsatisfactory pre-employment checks,

- Occasions where an employee's conduct outside of school may not in itself impact directly on the employment contract but may nonetheless raise serious concerns about a person's continued employment.
- An irreparable breach of the implied contractual term of trust and confidence in the employment relationship.

2.3.4 There are separate procedures for dealing with dismissals by reason of:

- unsatisfactory performance/capability;
- redundancy;
- ill health;
- retirement;
- failure to satisfactorily complete probation/Statutory Induction (teachers).

## 2.4 Disciplinary rules

The types of issue which could result in disciplinary action being taken are outlined at Appendix C and are contained in employees' employment contracts.

## 2.5 Trade Union Officials

2.5.1 No formal disciplinary action or dismissal will normally be determined in respect of a recognised shop steward, or other accredited official of a trade union or professional association recognised by the employer, until the circumstances of the case have been discussed with a senior trade union representative or full-time official of the trade union concerned.

2.5.2 No action will be taken against any employee in respect of alleged misconduct which arises from trade union duties or activities, until the matter has been discussed with a senior trade union representative or full-time official of the trade union concerned.

## 3. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

3.1 It is the responsibility of the Trust to:

- define and communicate disciplinary rules;
- ensure that systems are in place for the proper induction of new and promoted employees, and for day to day management and performance management of employees;
- ensure that appropriate disciplinary and dismissal procedures are in place, are monitored and reviewed regularly and are implemented in a fair and consistent manner;
- consult employees regarding these procedures prior to adoption;
- suspend employees and lift suspensions, where appropriate (LGB);
- establish, where appropriate, disciplinary/dismissal and appeals committees.

3.2 It is the responsibility of the headteacher and other managers to:

- ensure that appropriate pre-employment checks are carried out;
- ensure that all employees, particularly new staff as part of their Induction, are aware of disciplinary rules and procedures;
- deal with any minor deficiencies in conduct at the earliest stage through normal day to day supervision;
- ensure that, where necessary, disciplinary and dismissal procedures are carried out promptly, fairly and consistently;
- suspend employees where appropriate (LGB only).
- make initial dismissal decisions where appropriate (see 3.3)

3.3 Initial decisions, including dismissal, will normally be made by the Headteacher in consultation with the Chair of the LGB, except where:

- the matter relates to the him/her

- s/he has been involved in a disciplinary investigation
- 3.3.1 Where possible, the investigation stage of the disciplinary procedure will be operated by a manager other than the headteacher and any formal hearing will take place before the headteacher who will adjudicate on the matter. The headteacher may be accompanied by a governor(s) and/or an HR advisor, but the decision will rest with the headteacher.
  - 3.3.2 Where the headteacher has been directly involved in the investigation stage of a disciplinary matter or is a witness to particular conduct relevant to the investigation, any formal hearing will take place before the Trust Disciplinary/Dismissal Committee.
  - 3.3.3 The headteacher will usually make initial dismissal decisions in cases related to unsatisfactory pre-employment checks and statutory prohibition.
  - 3.3.4 Where the conduct of the headteacher is called into question, the Trust shall depute a Director of the Trust to operate the disciplinary procedure. In this case, any formal hearing shall be heard by the Trust Disciplinary/Dismissal Committee.
  - 3.3.5 All appeals will be heard by the Trust Disciplinary/Dismissal Appeals Committee.
  - 3.3.6 The Trust of school may agree to collaborate with another Trust or Bodies on matters in respect of employees. In these circumstances the collaboration agreement may empower the headteacher and/or Governors of one or more of the collaborating schools to operate disciplinary/dismissal procedures in respect of any identified employees.

Where no general collaboration agreement exists in respect of disciplinary/dismissal matter, the Trust may agree to collaborate with the headteacher/Trust of another school to adjudicate on an individual case. This may be necessary where there are insufficient Governors at the employing school to hear the matter fairly.

All collaboration agreements will be recorded in writing.

- 3.4 It is the responsibility of all employees to:
  - be aware of and comply with general rules and procedures referred to in their contract and conditions of service and the specific working rules and procedures related to their area of work and workplace;
  - comply fully with the disciplinary and other procedures and to co-operate with the processes contained therein.

#### **4. REPRESENTATION AND SUPPORT**

##### **4.1 Support for employees**

It is recognised that disciplinary/dismissal procedures may be distressing and stressful.

- 4.1.1 Employees may contact their Union representative or other companion at any time and may ask for access to their employer's occupational health and/or counselling service where these exist.
- 4.1.2 It is in everyone's best interests to deal with the case and conclude matters as quickly as possible. Where an employee becomes unwell, advice will be sought from an occupational health adviser with a view to facilitating employees' participation in the process.

4.1.3 Where an employee is removed from their normal workplace/duties as part of the procedure (see 6. below), a member of staff will be assigned as a contact point to keep the employee up to date with work related issues. The person managing the disciplinary procedure will keep the employee advised of the progress of the case.

## 4.2 Sharing Information

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality during the investigatory process and disciplinary proceedings.

4.2.1 The Trust may be notified of any suspension and/or major investigations but not of the details of a case.

4.2.3 The employer will act in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 2011 when investigating or considering an allegation against an employee made by a pupil at the same school. These provisions contain reporting restrictions preventing the publication of any material which could lead to the identification of an employee where an allegation is made by a pupil at the same school.

Such restrictions cease to apply where an employee waives their rights by giving written consent or by going public themselves.

## 4.3 Representation

4.3.1 Employees have a statutory right to be accompanied at disciplinary hearings and appeals by a trade union representative, an official employed by a trade union or work colleague. Trade union representatives who are not employed officials must have been certified by their union as being competent to accompany an employee. Requests to be accompanied must be clearly communicated to the school allowing adequate time for the school to deal with the companion's attendance at the meeting. The request should be made in advance of the meeting (see 7.3 below) providing the name of the companion and whether they are a fellow worker or trade union official or representative.

4.3.2 Requests to be accompanied at investigation meetings, if held, may be approved entirely at the discretion of the employer.

4.3.3 If an employee wishes to be accompanied by a person who is not a work colleague, an official employed by a trade union or trade union representative, they must seek permission from the employer in advance. All such requests will be given reasonable consideration and whether permission is granted will be entirely at the discretion of the employer.

4.3.4 Employees are responsible for making their own arrangements for their chosen companion to attend hearings. When considering their choice of companion, employees should bear in mind the practicalities of such arrangements and seek to identify a suitable, willing companion who is available to attend the hearing. All requests to be accompanied must be reasonable, which will depend on the circumstances of each individual case.

4.3.5 The companion will be allowed to address the hearing to put and sum up the employee's case, respond on behalf of the employee to any views expressed at the hearing and confer with the employee during the hearing. The companion does not, however, have the right to 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. INVESTIGATIONS**

- 5.1 In all disciplinary and dismissal cases, an investigation will be conducted to gather sufficient information and evidence to make a reasoned determination about whether or not the matter needs to be pursued formally at a disciplinary/dismissal hearing
- 5.2 Employees will be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless there is an objection from Social Care or the Police.
- 5.3 The investigation may involve interviewing witnesses, the employee and other relevant parties and taking statements.
- 5.4 All reasonable effort will be made to begin and complete the investigation without delay.
- 5.5 Where an employee's conduct is subject to a criminal investigation, charge or conviction the facts will be investigated. It will not normally be necessary to wait for the outcome of any prosecution before deciding what action, if any, to take.
- 5.6 In certain circumstances, the investigating officer may conclude that formal disciplinary action is not necessary but that professional advice should be given to the employee. This will be in the form of a letter of expectation which will be placed on the employee's file for an indefinite period. Such advice does not constitute a disciplinary sanction.
- 5.7 Following the conclusion of an investigatory process, an employee, with advice from their companion/representative, may accept a disciplinary sanction without being subject to the full normal procedure. This is called an 'agreed outcome'. In accepting an agreed outcome, an employee will forego their right of appeal.

## **6. SUSPENSION**

- 6.1 In some cases it may be appropriate to remove the employee from their particular role, duties or location, or from the workplace entirely, for example where:
- the allegations are so serious that dismissal for gross misconduct could be a possible outcome;
  - there is a risk of re-occurrence of the misconduct;
  - there is a tangible risk to property or person;
  - allowing the employee to remain at work could hinder the investigatory process;
  - there is a statutory prohibition in effect which renders employment unlawful.
- 6.2 The following options will be considered prior to consideration of suspension:
- reallocation of duties;
  - relocation to another workplace or work area or work from home;
  - increased supervision in the workplace.
- 6.3 Where alternative options are not viable, and removal from the workplace is considered necessary, the employee may be suspended.
- In either case a risk assessment should be undertaken.
- 6.4 Only the Board and the LGB have the power to suspend an employee. Suspension can only be ended by the Board or the LGB.
- 6.5 Suspension is a neutral act and does not imply guilt. During a period of suspension, the employee will receive his/her contractual pay. Where an employee falls sick during a



period of suspension, the normal certification requirements and reporting and contractual sick pay entitlements, will apply.

## **7. DISCIPLINARY/DISMISSAL HEARINGS**

7.1 Disciplinary/dismissal hearings will be carried out without undue delay.

7.2 The employee will be given at least seven working days' notice, in writing, of the date, time and place of any hearing. When given this notice, the employee will be:

- (i) informed of the nature and details of the alleged misconduct/reason for proposed dismissal;
- (ii) informed of his/her right to be accompanied at the hearing by a representative (see 4. above) and of his/her right to call relevant witnesses;
- (iii) supplied with a copy of the evidence which is to be considered at the hearing, including any witness statements;
- (iv) given an indication of the possible penalty which could be imposed if the allegations were found to be substantiated, e.g. a formal warning or termination of employment by dismissal;
- (v) informed who will conduct the hearing and where appropriate, the name of the presenting officer, including any advisers and the names of any witnesses\* to be called;

7.3 Not later than three working days before the hearing the employee:

- (i) must supply the name and status of his/her companion/representative;
- (ii) must supply the names of any witnesses\* s/he intends to call and an outline the evidence they will give;
- (iii) may submit a written statement or other supporting written evidence if s/he wishes, either direct or through his/her representative.

\* All parties should give careful consideration to whom they call as witnesses, limiting the numbers to the minimum necessary to support their case. Careful consideration should be given to the appropriateness of using character witnesses who have no direct knowledge of the issues under consideration.

7.4 At the hearing both parties may:

- (i) present their case;
- (ii) be questioned on the statements made by them and on any evidence they have submitted;
- (iii) ask questions on any relevant aspect of the evidence presented by the other party.

7.5 Witnesses called may be questioned by both parties.

7.6 Employees are required to take all reasonable steps to attend hearings (see 12.3)

7.7 Where a criminal matter is pending and an employee is unable, or is advised not to attend a disciplinary hearing or say anything about a pending criminal matter, a decision may be made based on the available evidence.

7.8 In child protection cases, if an employee resigns prior to a formal disciplinary hearing, the matter will still be referred to a hearing for a determination of an appropriate sanction and a referral will be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) (see 9.4). As this is not a disciplinary hearing, as the employment has ended, there is no right of appeal.

## **8. POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF DISCIPLINARY/DISMISSAL HEARINGS**

8.1 Any decision of the hearing will be on the basis of balance of probability. Where an allegation is proven, any sanction will satisfy the test of reasonableness in all the

circumstances and will be proportionate. The following will be considered in determining an appropriate sanction:

- the employee's disciplinary and general record, position and length of service;
- any explanation or mitigation put forward by the employee;
- any action taken in similar situations;
- any relevant unexpired warnings;
- any other relevant factors.

## 8.2 Disciplinary sanctions

Depending on the circumstances, disciplinary action could take the following forms:

- i) Written warning e.g. where there has been a failure to conform to standards
- ii) Final written warning e.g. where there is further misconduct or the misconduct is considered to be sufficiently serious.
- iii) Dismissal with notice e.g. where misconduct is sufficiently serious or where conduct has failed to improve following previous warning(s).
- iv) Summary dismissal e.g. where an act of gross misconduct has been committed.

Warnings will set out the:

- nature of the misconduct and expectations of future conduct;
- length of the warning;
- consequences of any future misconduct.

## 8.3 Time limits for disciplinary warnings

8.3.1 Normally, the validity of disciplinary warnings will be considered to have expired after one year provided that no further warnings have been issued and no disciplinary action has been taken against the employee during that period. Exceptions are set out below. Expired warnings will be disregarded in the event of any future disciplinary action (although a record of the warning will not be removed from the personal file) but the fact that there is an expired warning may explain why the employer does not substitute a lesser sanction.

8.3.2 There may be occasions, however, where the nature or pattern of misconduct and the post concerned do not make it desirable and appropriate for the one year time limit to apply. In these circumstances the employee will be notified in writing of the period applicable to the warning, which will not normally exceed 5 years. Exceptionally, there may be circumstances where the misconduct is so serious, relating for example to safeguarding children or vulnerable adults, that it cannot be disregarded for future disciplinary purposes. In such circumstances, the written warning can never be disregarded and any recurrence may lead to dismissal.

## 8.4 Other dismissals

8.4.1 Unsatisfactory pre-employment checks:

- Where the employment has not commenced, the offer will be withdrawn.
- Where employment has commenced under a conditional offer the headteacher/principal will make a decision whether to terminate the contract.
- Failure to disclose a relevant criminal offence constitutes gross misconduct and will usually result in summary dismissal. Otherwise dismissals will be with statutory notice.

8.4.2 Statutory Prohibition

- Where the prohibition is evidenced and unavoidable, the headteacher/principal will make a decision whether to terminate the contract.
- Where the prohibition is already in effect, termination will be with one week's notice.
- Where the prohibition is due to come into effect, as much notice as possible will be given.
- If the prohibition ceases to apply during the period of notice, notice of termination will be withdrawn.

## **9. NOTIFICATION OF OUTCOME OF HEARINGS**

- 9.1 Where possible the decision of the hearing will be notified verbally to the employee at the end of the hearing. In any case the employee will be issued with a written notification of the outcome within five working days of the hearing.
- 9.2 Where appropriate, this letter will contain notice of dismissal. This may be rescinded subsequently on appeal.
- 9.3 Employees will be asked to sign and return a copy of such notifications to confirm that they have received and understood them.
- 9.4 Employers are required to refer any safeguarding matters to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) which will consider the employee's suitability to work with children. Where an employee is dismissed (or would have been dismissed had they not resigned) for other disciplinary matters, a referral will be made to the National College for Teaching and Leadership.

## **10. APPEALS**

- 10.1 An employee has a right of appeal against any disciplinary sanction/dismissal. An employee may forego his/her right to appeal.
- 10.2 Notice of any appeal must be given in writing to the chair of the Trust board within five working days of receipt of the written notification by the employee of the outcome of the hearing, clearly stating the grounds upon which the appeal is made. Valid grounds for appeal may be:
- there was a flaw or error in the procedure,
  - the penalty was unduly severe;
  - the original finding was against the weight of evidence;
  - there is evidence not taken into account which could affect the original decision
  - there has been an error of judgement on a point of fact.

Employees may be asked for clarification of the grounds for their appeal where this is not clear.

- 10.3 All appeals will be heard by the Trust Disciplinary/Dismissal Appeal Committee. The decision of this Committee is final, subject to the employee's rights at law.
- 10.4 The employee will be given at least five working days' notice of the appeal hearing in writing.

10.5 A disciplinary appeal hearing may be a full rehearing of the original case or a consideration of particular matter where the appeal is on a specific and narrow point(s). An appeal will not normally hear matters which were not upheld at the original hearing. . The format for the Appeal hearing will be determined, upon receipt of the letter of appeal and communicated to all parties.

- 10.6 Procedures and Evidence

### Re-hearing

The procedure will normally be as for the original hearing. New evidence, provided it is relevant to the original allegation(s), can be introduced by either party. All parties' papers, including any new evidence relevant to the appeal, must be submitted to the other party and the Appeals Committee at least 3 working days before the re-hearing

### Appeal on points

The employee will present evidence to support their appeal point(s) and the original decision maker will respond to these as part of the appeal process. The Appeal Committee will then consider these submissions, together with the outcome letter and notes from the original hearing. New evidence will not normally be permitted at an appeal on points.

- 10.7 The outcome of the appeal will be notified as for the original hearing, except there is no further right of appeal within this procedure (see 9.1).

## **11. RECORDS AND DATA PROTECTION**

- 11.1 Notes of hearings and meetings with the employee will be taken and shared with him/her as soon as possible after the hearing. The employee has the right to challenge the accuracy of any minutes and to have these recorded.
- 11.2 No-one may record meetings or hearings, except for the Clerk, to assist with producing the minutes, where permission is given by all parties. A request from a disabled employee/companion to record the hearing will normally be considered as a reasonable adjustment in appropriate circumstances, but will be subject to agreement by all parties. Any recording made will be destroyed once minutes/notes are completed. If an unauthorised recording is made by the employee this may result in disciplinary action. If an unauthorised recording is made by the companion this may result in the employer refusing to allow the companion to attend further meetings.
- 11.3 Details of any formal action, including any warnings will be retained on the employee's personal file.
- 11.4 Professional advice/letters of expectation which are not a disciplinary sanction will remain on file for the duration of the employment and thereafter will be held in line with the school's retention schedule
- 11.5 If an investigation or hearing concludes that an allegation is totally unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious, records will be removed from the employee's personal file.
- 11.6 Details of any ongoing disciplinary action and/or sanctions, and in the case of safeguarding matters, expired warnings, will be referred to when responding to an employee reference request.
- 11.7 The school processes personal data collected during the investigation stage and any subsequent stages of the disciplinary procedure (including any appeal) in accordance with its data protection policy. In particular, data collected as part of the investigation stage and any subsequent stages of the disciplinary procedure is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing the disciplinary procedure. On the conclusion of the procedure, data collected will be held in accordance with the school's retention schedule. Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the school's data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under this disciplinary procedure.

## **12. TIMING/LOCATION OF MEETINGS/HEARINGS**

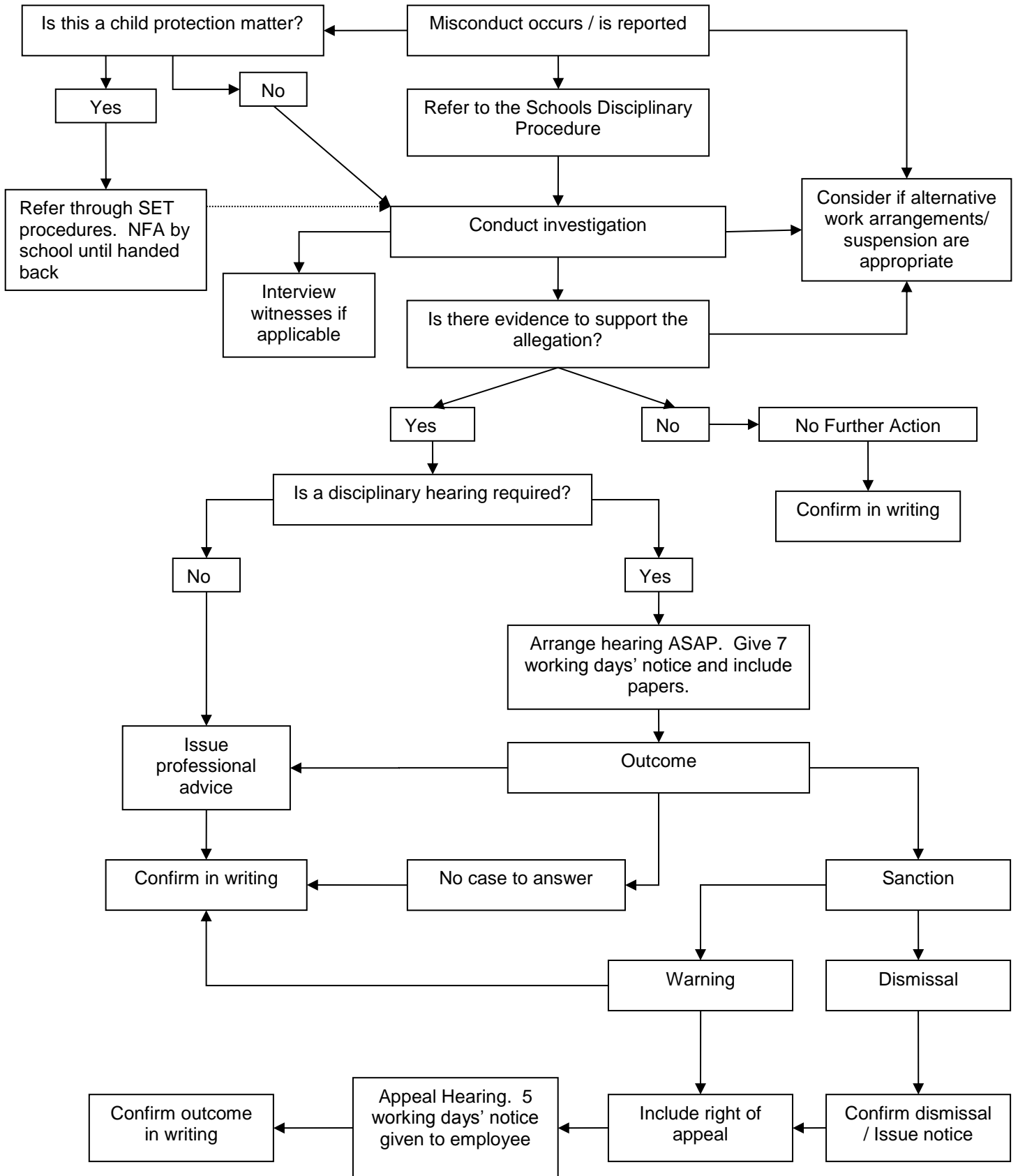
- 12.1 Employers are obliged to deal with disciplinary and dismissal matters without undue delay. It is expected that employees and their representatives will assist in this aim.
- 12.2 Where possible, timings of meetings and hearings will be agreed with the employee and his/her representative and will normally take place during the working day.

- 12.3 Employees and their representatives should make themselves available to attend meetings within a reasonable period of time. If the employee's companion is not available, for a reason that was not reasonably foreseeable, at the time proposed, one alternative date will be set, normally within 5 working days from the original date.
- 12.4 Where possible meetings and hearings will be held at a mutually convenient location, which meet any special needs of attendees and which may sometimes be away from the normal place of work where this is considered to be appropriate.
- 12.5 Reasonable time off with pay will be granted to employees who are acting as a witness or companion for an employee who is subject to the disciplinary process.

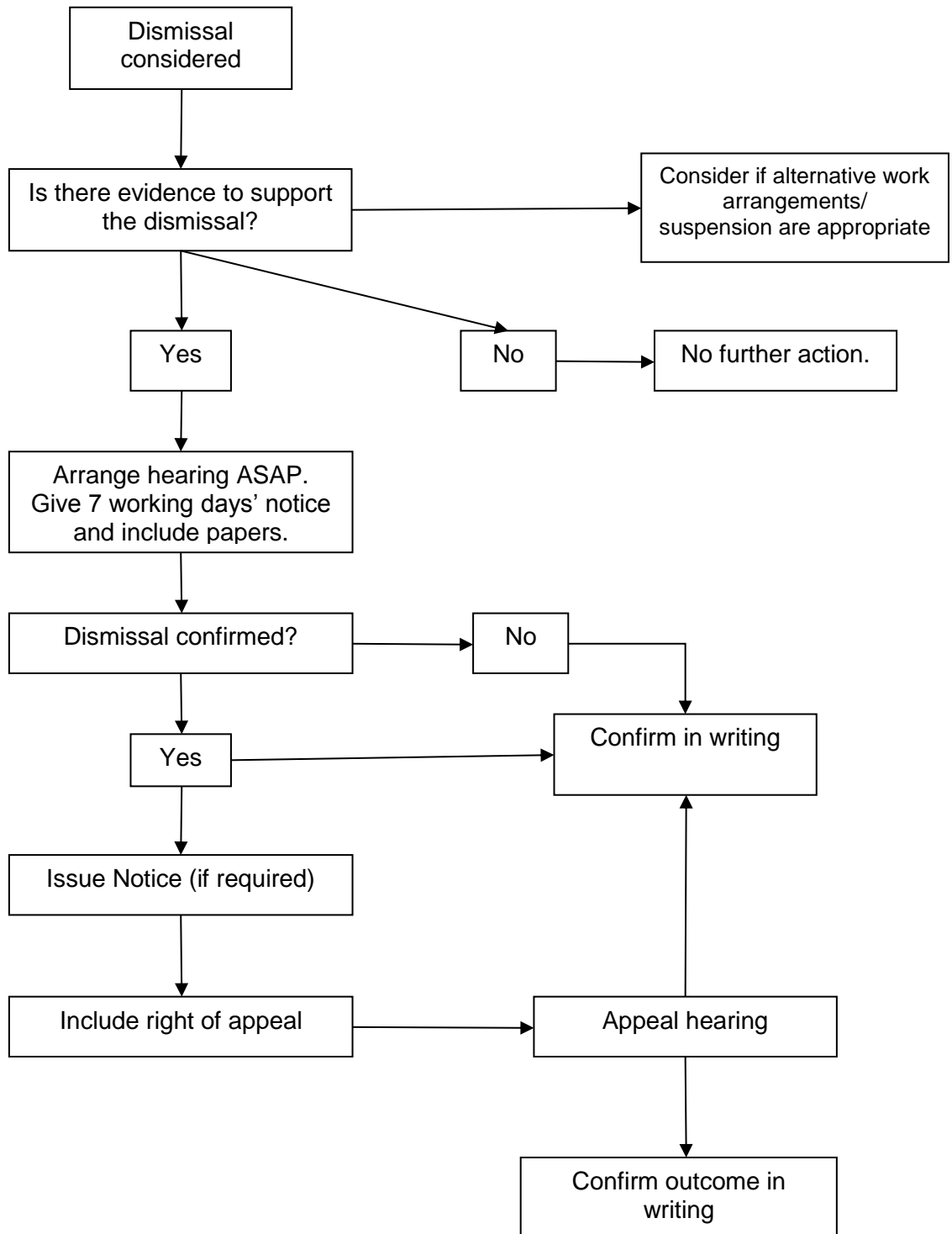
**13. GRIEVANCES RAISED DURING DISCIPLINARY/DISMISSAL PROCEDURES**

If an employee raises a grievance during the course of the disciplinary/dismissal procedure, related to the case, the grievance will normally be dealt with as part of the formal disciplinary hearing/appeal process. If appropriate, given the nature of the grievance, the disciplinary/dismissal process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance.

## Appendix A – Disciplinary Procedure



## Appendix B – Other Dismissals Procedure



## Appendix C – Disciplinary Rules

Listed below are the types of issues which could result in disciplinary action being taken. The lists are neither exclusive nor exhaustive and there may be actions which do not appear but may nevertheless be the subject of disciplinary action.

In determining the seriousness of the misconduct, particular regard will be given to the circumstances of the individual case. Factors which can influence a decision as to the seriousness of the offence may include:

- the type, degree and frequency of the misconduct
- the consequences arising from the misconduct, and
- the level of responsibility of the employee concerned

Careful consideration will be given to the above factors in each case. There may be situations where misconduct which would normally lead to summary dismissal may warrant less serious action. Similarly, there may be situations in which misconduct which would not normally lead to summary dismissal warrants such action.

### Misconduct

Examples of misconduct where a form of warning may be issued, or where cumulative or repeated acts could lead to dismissal are as follows:

- Attendance and Time-keeping
  - continuing failure to comply with attendance and time-keeping requirements
  - continuing failure to follow procedures for booking and returning from leave
  - absenteeism and unauthorised absence from the workplace
- Behaviour
  - refusal or failure to follow a legitimate management instruction
  - inappropriate behaviour or abuse of authority towards a colleague or member of the public or person in the care of the school/academy
  - insubordination
  - failure to comply with policies and procedures
  - abuse of the policies and procedures
  - conduct at work which is likely to offend decency
  - conduct which could bring the employer into disrepute
  - negligence in the performance of duties
  - misuse of facilities
- Poor Working Practices
  - failure to maintain proper records
  - failure to follow procedures e.g. financial regulations, standing orders
  - failure to comply with health and safety requirements
- General
  - misconduct in relation to official documents e.g. destroying or mutilating records, altering/erasing or adding to entries without legitimate reason
  - neglect of health e.g. committing an act or adopting conduct which may impede recovery and return to work whilst absent from work due to sickness
  - engaging in paid employment outside the hours contracted to work without the employers express permission
- Conduct outside of the workplace which impacts on the employer, for example
  - Serious driving offences, particularly those involving alcohol or drugs
  - Serious offences involving gambling
- Any other act of misconduct of a similar gravity



## **Gross misconduct**

Gross Misconduct is defined as misconduct of such a serious nature that the employer is justified in no longer tolerating the employee's continued presence at the place of work.

- Unauthorised removal of property
- Stealing/theft from the school/academy, its governors, its employees or the public and other offences of fraud or serious dishonesty
- Sexual offences/misconduct (including serious misuse of the internet)
- Breaches of the Equality and Diversity policy, including serious acts of harassment, discrimination or verbal abuse against employees, clients or members of the public on grounds of race, sex, disability or religious belief or any other grounds
- Fighting / Physical assault / offences involving violence
- Possession of prohibited firearms, knives or other weapons
- Harming pupils (as defined by the Children's Act 1989, as amended)
- Abuse of Trust relating to pupils within the school
- Establishing inappropriate relationships with children or young people, including through social networking sites
- Falsification of time sheets or subsistence/expenses claims, sickness self-certification etc.
- Other offences which seriously threaten the security of the pupils, members of the public, employees or property or which seriously damages public confidence in the employer
- Deliberate misuse of data protection information and/or deliberate interference with computerised information
- Falsification of qualifications which are a stated requirement of employment and which result in financial gain
- Malicious damage to property, arson and other major criminal damage
- Serious breaches of Health and Safety legislation and/or the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy e.g. intentional or reckless interference with or misuse of anything provided by the employer in the interests of health and safety.
- Serious drug/alcohol related offences
- Serious breaches of the policy on use/misuse of the internet/data records
- Serious breaches of the Code of Conduct
- Failure to disclose any relevant criminal offences prior to employment and any criminal convictions which occur during employment
- Any other act of misconduct of a similar gravity