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***'Supporting Children to Flourish, Respecting and Nurturing their Individuality and Developing Strengths in Preparations for their Unique Learning Journey.'***

# Disciplinary Grievance Dismissal

Our Approach (Kind, Fair, and Supportive)

We believe people do their best when they feel safe, respected and supported. Our aim is to resolve concerns early, through open conversation, coaching and clear expectations. Formal processes are used only when needed. This procedure follows the ACAS principles of fairness and the Equality Act 2010, and sits alongside our Safeguarding Policy and the EYFS 2025.

Values and Principles

• Kindness and dignity for everyone.• No surprises: we communicate concerns clearly and give time to respond.• Proportionate: we use the least formal step that will work.• Support first: coaching, training and wellbeing signposting wherever helpful.• Fair process: hear both sides, share information, allow representation.• Child-centred: safety and welfare remain paramount.

Scope

This procedure applies to all employees. Separate policies cover capability, safeguarding, and whistleblowing.

Stage 0 – Informal Resolution and Support

Many issues are best solved with a kind conversation. Your line manager will explain concerns, listen to your view, and agree on simple next steps (an improvement note or coaching plan). We’ll check in after an agreed period to celebrate progress or adjust support.

Investigation (Fact-Finding) and Precautionary Suspension

If a matter may need formal action, we will carry out a fair and proportionate investigation. You will know what is being looked into and may share your account. Very occasionally we may ask you not to work while enquiries happen. This is a neutral, paid measure to protect you and the setting—never a punishment. We will keep in touch and review this regularly.

Any allegation involving the safety or welfare of a child is immediately shared with the DSL. Where appropriate we will consult the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Stage 1 – Formal Disciplinary Hearing

If there is a case to answer, you will receive a written invite with:• what the concerns are and why,• the evidence we’ll consider,• your right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative,• the possible outcomes.You’ll have reasonable time to prepare. A chair not previously involved will hear the case where possible. You can set out your view and share evidence.

Possible Outcomes and Support

Outcomes are proportionate to the issue and your overall record. We will confirm the decision in writing, with reasons and the right of appeal. Where a warning is given, we agree a supportive improvement plan (goals, timescales, training/supervision). Typical ‘live’ periods are:• Improvement Note / First Written Warning – normally 6 months• Final Written Warning – normally 12 months• Dismissal with notice (or pay in lieu) if conduct does not improve or is sufficiently serious• Summary Dismissal (without notice) for Gross Misconduct

Examples (Not Exhaustive)

Misconduct may include: persistent lateness; unauthorised absence; ignoring reasonable instructions; minor health & safety breaches; inappropriate or offensive language; using personal mobiles during sessions; policy breaches not amounting to gross misconduct.

Gross Misconduct may include: ill‑treatment/abuse or a serious safeguarding breach; theft/fraud; violence or serious threats; serious confidentiality/data breaches; attending work impaired by alcohol/drugs; reckless health & safety breaches creating serious risk; unauthorised recording/photography of children on personal devices; serious bullying/harassment/discrimination.

Appeals

You may appeal in writing within 5 working days of the outcome letter, saying why you disagree. An appeal meeting will be arranged with someone not previously involved. We’ll confirm the decision in writing; this will normally be final.

Grievances (Raising Concerns Kindly)

If something is worrying you, please speak to your manager early. For a formal grievance, write to the Supervisor (or to the Committee Chair if your concern involves the Supervisor). You may be accompanied at meetings. We’ll respond in writing and you’ll have a right of appeal.

Wellbeing and Support

We care about our team. Where appropriate we will signpost support (e.g., GP/Occupational Health) and consider reasonable adjustments, training or mentoring. We know that personal challenges can affect work; please talk to us so we can help.

Records and Data Protection

Accurate records of investigations, hearings and outcomes are kept securely and confidentially in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Live warnings are retained for their stated period; a basic record of outcomes may be kept thereafter for audit/safeguarding purposes.

 Guide for Staff

1) Talk early – we’ll listen and try informal support first.2) If formal: you’ll get a written invite with details and your right to be accompanied.3) Hearing with a fair chair – you can share your view and evidence.4) Written outcome with reasons, improvement plan if needed, and appeal rights.5) Child safety first – DSL/LADO involved where required.

Links to Other Policies

Safeguarding and Child Protection • Whistleblowing • Equality, Diversity and Inclusion • Data Protection/Confidentiality • Mobile Devices, Images & Social Media • Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking • Health and Safety

Review Statement

Updated September 2025. Reviewed annually or sooner if legislation, ACAS guidance or EYFS requirements change.