CARLTON
ACADEMY TRUST

Grievance Policy

Approved on behalf of Trustees:	**Gareth Logan**
Date:	**November 2025**
Next Review Date:	**July 2026**

Glossary

CEO: Chief Executive Officer
COT: Chair of Trustees
DOP: Director of Primary
HOS: Head of School
IO: Investigating Officer

Aims and Scope

This policy outlines the procedures when an employee formally raises a work-related grievance. It does not apply to grievances relating to pay, restructures or redundancies.

Resolution of Grievances

Wherever possible and appropriate, it is preferable to resolve grievances informally. Where inappropriate or when a grievance can't be resolved informally, the grievance will be managed on a formal basis.

Formal complaints should ideally be made in writing but can be made verbally where the staff member does not have the necessary literacy skills. Grievances should be addressed through the following personnel:

HOS: When a grievance is made against a staff member within their school.
CEO: When a grievance is made against a HOS or member of central trust staff.
COT: When a grievance is made against the CEO.

Grievances will be acknowledged within five working days and where required and appropriate, an IO will be appointed to lead investigations.

Grievance Meeting

Once investigations are complete, a grievance meeting will be held. Wherever possible, the meeting should be held within twenty working days of formal acknowledgement. All parties will be provided with reasonable notice.

The meeting will either be chaired by:

- The person receiving the grievance (HOS; CEO; COT).
- Another senior leader appropriate to the circumstances as decided at the discretion of the trust.

Meeting Guidelines

- The member of staff making the grievance has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative.
- The meeting may be held remotely at the discretion of the school/trust.
- The meeting will be formally recorded by the school/trust with minutes available to all parties on request.
- There must be no other means of recording (covert or otherwise) by any party or their representative. Should this occur, this will be considered as gross misconduct for breach of implied trust between employer and employee. As voice recordings are considered personal

data, the trust will also report them to the Information Commissioners Office requesting prosecution.

- Findings will be presented along with judgements as to whether the grievance/s will be upheld, partially upheld, or not upheld. Decisions will be based on the civil 'Balance of Probabilities' basis.

The overall findings and decision will be formally communicated in writing within ten working days.

Appeals

Appeals against grievance hearing outcomes must be submitted within five working days of formal communication of the outcome. Appeals will only be considered where new evidence is presented or where there has been a significant breach of protocol.

They will be formally acknowledged within five working days, and where accepted will take place within twenty working days of formal acknowledgement.

Hearings will be chaired by someone of higher seniority than the person who made the original decision and follow all protocols as for the original grievance hearing.

Unjustified Actions

Staff who are found to have made grievances on unreasonable grounds will be subject to disciplinary action. Unreasonable grounds include claims that are:

- Malicious or vexatious.
- Frivolous.
- Deliberately false.

They may also be found to have abused the grievance process in a way that damages workplace relationships.

Where found, this will be considered gross misconduct with appropriate disciplinary responses including dismissal.