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DIOCESE OF  
**ST ALBANS**  
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

# Trust Policy

# Grievance Policy

<b>Policy type</b>	<b>Trust wide: Tier 1</b>
<b>Review</b>	<b>Three yearly</b>
<b>Author/Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Head of People</b>
<b>To be ratified by</b>	<b>Finance, People and Operations Committee</b>
<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Trust Board</b>
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This policy is a mandatory policy for all DSAMAT Academies and must be implemented without any amendments

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## **Our mission, vision and values**

The Trust has a clear **mission** at its core, ensuring that all pupils are enabled to flourish, rooted in God's Love - academically, socially, spiritually, physically and mentally. This is central to our work, and rooted in our Christian foundation (John 10 v 10). Our commitment to mutual flourishing within the school community is built upon our shared belief in Church of England principles. In our Trust, just as in the wider Church of England community, 'flourish' refers to prospering, thriving and growing – not shrinking out and dying. It means prayerfully encouraging all within our schools so that they might prove fruitful, successful and contented in the longer term. We seek to provide space generously for all to flourish in life and all of its structures. Equitable treatment for all pupils, staff and the wider community is a core part of enabling this long term, holistic flourishing.

We have a clear **vision** about creating successful schools for the benefit of their communities and we expect any school in the Trust to continuously improve. All schools provide rich and diverse curricula which evolve to meet the needs of their children and local communities, as well as delivering educational excellence to enable them to continue to flourish in later life.

The way we work and deliver against our mission is critical to our Trust. We have shared, agreed **values** of:

Hope; Nurture; Equality; Respect; Collaboration

The Trust's vision is underpinned by a Christian values framework which is adopted by all schools. It provides clear expectations for all Trust employees on how we wish our values to impact on all areas of school life. It draws on, and is informed by, the National Church of England Vision for Education and the Diocesan Board of Education Vision.

Each school within the Trust has a personalised vision for education, developed locally to reflect the individual character and needs of the school community. This vision is underpinned by the Trust's wider vision, and agreed with the Trust, but it is owned and driven by the headteacher and their LGB.

## **Our community**

The Trust are dedicated to delivering education that serves local communities. Our schools are inclusive, welcoming those from all and no faiths, from all abilities and backgrounds. We believe in providing a high-quality education, underpinned by Christian values, which enables every child to flourish.

Underpinning all of the Trust's work is a belief in educational excellence. The Trust serves all stakeholders by providing schools with the highest levels of academic rigour and pastoral care.

Our schools are places where children and young people develop and thrive intellectually, socially, culturally and spiritually. All of the Trust's schools teach a broad and balanced curriculum within national guidelines focusing on core skills. This is designed to ensure that all pupils reach their academic potential and seek to enrich their experience along the way. Pupils will be enabled to succeed in an atmosphere of high expectation, aspiring to educational excellence with a firm foundation of values.

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This policy forms part of our Trust governance and ensures that we are held to the highest standards as we carry out our duties.

### **Statement of Intent**

This is the Diocese of St Albans Multi-Academy Trust (DSAMAT) Grievance policy and must be implemented and adhered to in each of the academies within the Diocese of St Albans Multi Academy Trust along with those working within the central team.

This policy will also be implemented and adhered to from the first day of any other academy joining the Trust.

For the remainder of this document, the Diocese of St Albans Multi Academy Trust will be referred to as DSAMAT.

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## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The aim of this procedure is to enable an employee to have their grievance heard and to seek redress as appropriate. The intention is that grievances should be settled quickly and fairly and should be first dealt with as close to the source as possible. Assumptions will not be made about the nature of a grievance raised or the employees involved pending investigation and the Trust will be sensitive to the circumstances and needs of any employee who is the subject of a grievance as well as to the circumstances and needs of the employee who raised the grievance. Support will be offered to both parties while a grievance is being investigated.
- 1.2. There are a number of issues that can cause grievances at work and these may include working conditions, application or non-application of policies and procedures, environment, relationships with management or colleagues, duties and responsibilities, or work volume. Grievances may relate to discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.
- 1.3. Where the grievance relates to a matter covered by another procedure, for example, pay, probation or whistleblowing, then the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant procedure. This grievance procedure may not be used to complain about dismissal or disciplinary action. An employee who is dissatisfied with any formal warning should submit an appeal under the appropriate procedure.
- 1.4. Where an employee raises a grievance during any existing process or procedure, that process may be temporarily suspended in order to deal with the grievance. However, where the grievance and the existing process are related, it may be appropriate to deal with both issues concurrently. The Headteacher/ Trust Head of People will have the discretion to decide which option is appropriate, in all circumstances.
- 1.5. Those responsible for dealing with employees' grievances will treat them seriously and attempt to resolve them as quickly as possible. There should be no attempt to block an employee's wish to raise the grievance at a higher level.
- 1.6. Employees should recognise that an investigation may be necessary which may delay the process beyond normal time limits.
- 1.7. An informal grievance should normally be raised within four weeks after the act or incident that causes the grievance, or the last significant act if the grievance is linked to a series of events or actions. The employee needs to be aware that the longer they leave the issue before raising a grievance, the less credibility may be assigned to the grievance due to lack of information or evidence.
- 1.8. At any stage of the procedure, the Trust Head of People may refer to an adviser external to the Trust for guidance to bring about a resolution of the grievance acceptable to both sides outside the formal procedure. Such conciliation is without prejudice to the position of both parties in the procedure.

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## 2 Stages of the Grievance Procedure

### STAGE 1: RAISING GRIEVANCES INFORMALLY

- 2.11 Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion. If an employee feels unable to speak to the person causing the grievance, then the employee should speak informally to their immediate line manager. If this does not resolve the issue, the employee should follow the formal procedure below.
- 2.12 If an employee's grievance is against the line manager personally, the grievance may be referred directly to stage 2, but it would normally be reasonable to inform the line manager of this intention.
- 2.13 It is only in exceptional circumstances that formal grievances will be accepted without initial action being taken to resolve the matter informally in the first instance.

### STAGE 2: FORMAL GRIEVANCES

- 2.14 If an employee is not satisfied their concerns have been addressed informally, the employee should submit a formal grievance. The employee should use the 'Notification of Grievance Form' (Appendix A) to do this to detail the grounds of their grievance and the remedy that is being sought. The 'Notification of Grievance Form' (Appendix A) details who the grievance should be submitted to.
- 2.15 The Headteacher (school-based employees) or the COO (Central team employees) to whom the grievance has been submitted will normally meet with the employee to hear the grievance and reply as soon as possible, normally within 10 working days, even if it is only an interim reply pending further investigation. If the grievance is related to the Headteacher, the grievance should be raised with the COO. If the grievance is related to the COO, the grievance should be raised with the CEO. If the grievance is related to the CEO, the grievance should be raised with the Chair of the Board.
- 2.16 A formal grievance meeting constitutes a formal meeting and should be arranged in line with the ACAS code of practice and the right to representation offered to the employee. This may be a fellow work colleague or a Trade union representative.
- 2.17 It may be necessary to carry out an investigation into the grievance depending on the nature of the complaints and will vary from case to case. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from the employee, any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents. The Headteacher / COO may appoint an Investigating Officer as appropriate.
- 2.18 The employee must co-operate fully and promptly in any investigation. This may include informing those handling the investigation of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents and attending interviews.
- 2.19 An investigation may be started before a grievance meeting is held, where this is considered appropriate. In other cases, a grievance meeting may be held before

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deciding what investigation (if any) to carry out. If appropriate and/or necessary, in those cases, a further grievance meeting may be held with the employee after the investigation and before a decision is reached.

- 2.20 The written outcome of the grievance meeting will include:
- Any further action to be taken
  - Right of appeal

### **Stage 3: Grievance Appeal**

- 2.21 The employee has a right of appeal if the grievance has not been resolved to their satisfaction.
- 2.22 Appeals against the outcome of a grievance should be submitted to the Head of People, COO or Chief Executive Officer. Grievance appeals will be heard by a senior leader of the Trust on the same or higher grade as the hearing manager.

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## APPENDIX A: EMPLOYEE'S NOTIFICATION OF GRIEVANCE

This form should be used to submit a grievance in accordance with stage 2 of the formal grievance procedure, once the informal route has been exhausted.

Send the completed 'Employee's Notification of Grievance Form' (Appendix A) including as much information as possible to your Headteacher (school-based employees) or COO (Central team employees). *Please do not cc the form to the CEO unless the grievance is related to the COO, as it is the role of the CEO to hear any Appeals to the outcome of the grievance.*

If the grievance is concerning a Headteacher, you should submit the form to the COO. If the grievance is concerning the COO, you should submit the form to the CEO. If you are raising a grievance about the CEO, the form should be submitted to the Chair of the Board.

You are advised to keep a copy. Please be aware that the information will, in normal circumstances, be shared with any person/s complained about. Please think carefully about what you write. DSAMAT policy is to ensure confidentiality at all times, and you should not discuss your grievance with anyone else.

Name/s	
Post/s held:	
The nature of your grievance. Please include all relevant facts, dates and names of people involved and any witnesses. (Continue on a separate page, if necessary.)	
When did you first raise your grievance, and with whom? Is this a one-off issue or part of a chain of events?	

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What action has been taken on your grievance at the informal stage (stage 1)?

What steps or action do you want to be taken as a remedy for your grievance?

If you are a member, have you informed your trade union or professional association representative?

Yes or No

If yes: do you wish the representative to receive correspondence?

Yes or No

If yes: please identify the representative and provide email and postal addresses and telephone number:

Representative name:	
Representative email:	
Representative address:	
Representative phone number:	

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Printed name:	
Signed:	
Date:	