


Sunbeams

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Document Control Sheet

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Approved By	Jessica Zwiebel, Safeguarding Officer and Trustee
Signature	

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change	Approved By
1.0	Sep 2023	Admin	Initial release outlining disciplinary procedures and staff expectations.	Board of Trustees
2.0	Sep 2025	Admin	Review; minor clarification to investigation steps.	Board of Trustees

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Sunbeams' disciplinary process is fair, transparent, and consistent.

It outlines the steps that will be taken when conduct or performance falls below the expected standards, helping to maintain a safe, respectful, and professional environment for all.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, sessional staff, and volunteers at Sunbeams, across all programmes and settings.

It covers all types of misconduct, breaches of policy or procedure, and performance concerns.

Trustees are covered separately under the Trustee Code of Conduct and Charity Commission guidance.

3. Principles

- All disciplinary matters will be handled promptly, fairly, and confidentially.
- Individuals will be given the opportunity to explain their actions and to be supported throughout the process.
- Disciplinary action will only be taken after a full and fair investigation.
- No individual will be dismissed for a first offence, except in cases of gross misconduct.
- Decisions will be made by impartial managers not previously involved in the case.
- The right of appeal will always be provided.

4. Standards of Conduct

All staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Uphold Sunbeams' values, Code of Conduct, and Safeguarding Policy.
- Act professionally and responsibly at all times.
- Maintain confidentiality, respect, and integrity in their work.
- Follow instructions and report any concerns appropriately.

Failure to meet these standards may result in disciplinary action.

5. Types of Misconduct

Examples of Misconduct (normally managed through informal or formal stages):

- Persistent lateness or poor timekeeping
- Insubordination or disrespectful behaviour
- Minor breaches of policy or procedure
- Negligence or unsatisfactory performance
- Misuse of Sunbeams' property or resources

Examples of Gross Misconduct (may lead to summary dismissal):

- Theft, fraud, or dishonesty
- Violence, bullying, or harassment
- Serious breach of Safeguarding or Confidentiality
- Substance misuse while on duty
- Falsification of records or qualifications
- Gross negligence endangering others
- Bringing Sunbeams into serious disrepute
- Any conduct considered unlawful or incompatible with Sunbeams' values

Each case will be judged on its individual circumstances.

6. Informal Resolution

Minor concerns or first-time issues should normally be dealt with informally by the Line Manager or Programme Lead.

The aim is to encourage improvement, not to punish.

A record of the conversation may be kept for reference.

If the issue persists or is more serious, the formal procedure will be initiated.

7. Investigation Stage

Before any disciplinary action is taken, a fair and thorough investigation will be carried out to establish the facts.

- The Director (or delegated manager) will appoint an impartial Investigating Officer.
- The individual concerned will be informed in writing that an investigation is taking place.

- They may be asked to provide a written statement or attend an investigatory meeting.
- Witnesses may be interviewed, and relevant evidence reviewed.

If the matter involves safeguarding concerns, the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy will take precedence and statutory agencies may be informed.

The outcome of the investigation will determine whether:

1. No further action is required;
2. Informal resolution is appropriate; or
3. A disciplinary hearing should be convened.

8. Suspension

In serious cases, or where presence may hinder the investigation, the Director may suspend the individual.

Suspension is a neutral act and not a disciplinary sanction.

During suspension:

- The individual will continue to receive full pay (if employed).
- The period will be as short as possible and reviewed regularly.
- The suspension decision and reasons will be confirmed in writing.

9. Formal Disciplinary Procedure

If the investigation indicates a disciplinary hearing is required:

1. The individual will receive a written notice of the hearing, including details of the alleged misconduct, evidence, and the potential consequences.
2. They will have at least five working days' notice to prepare and may be accompanied by a colleague, union representative, or support person.
3. A hearing will be conducted by a senior manager (not previously involved).
4. After the hearing, a written decision will be issued within ten working days.

Possible outcomes include:

- No action (case not upheld)
- Informal verbal warning
- Formal written warning

- Final written warning
- Dismissal or termination (employment or volunteering)

The severity of action will depend on the nature of the misconduct and any previous warnings.

10. Right of Appeal

All individuals have the right to appeal any disciplinary decision. An appeal must be made in writing within ten working days of the outcome letter, stating the grounds for appeal.

Appeals will be heard by a Trustee or senior manager not previously involved in the case.

The decision of the appeal hearing will be final.

11. Confidentiality

All disciplinary matters will be handled confidentially. Information will only be shared with those directly involved in the process. Records will be stored securely in line with Data Protection and Confidentiality Policies.

12. Record-Keeping and Retention

All records of disciplinary investigations, hearings, and outcomes will be kept securely for 12 months, after which they will be deleted or destroyed, unless there is an ongoing process or legal requirement to retain them.

13. Training and Awareness

This policy will be shared with all new staff and volunteers during induction and discussed in supervision where relevant.

Managers involved in disciplinary procedures will receive training to ensure fairness and compliance with ACAS guidance.

14. Monitoring and Review

The Director and Trustees will review this policy annually to ensure it remains compliant with employment law and best practice.

Trends or learning points arising from disciplinary cases will inform staff training and policy development.

Signed: _____

Position: Trustee

Date: _____