


Sunbeams

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Document Control Sheet

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Signature	

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Description of Change	Approved By
1.0	Sep 2022	Admin	Initial release outlining grievance process and resolution procedures.	Board of Trustees
2.0	Sep 2023	Admin	Review	Board of Trustees
3.0	Sep 2025	Admin	Review; minor clarification to informal resolution stage.	Board of Trustees

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff and volunteers working at Sunbeams have a clear, fair, and confidential process through which to raise and resolve concerns relating to their work, colleagues, or the organisation.

Sunbeams value a positive, open, and supportive working environment where concerns are addressed early and fairly.

This policy applies to all employees, sessional staff, and volunteers, regardless of role or length of service.

Grievances may relate to (but are not limited to):

- Terms and conditions of employment or engagement.
- Treatment by colleagues or managers.
- Working environment or allocation of duties.
- Communication or breakdown in relationships.
- Alleged discrimination, harassment, or bullying (where not covered under the separate Anti-Bullying or Safeguarding Policies).

Wherever possible, concerns should be resolved informally. However, a formal process is available when informal resolution is not appropriate or unsuccessful.

2. Principles

- All staff and volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns promptly.
- Grievances will be treated seriously, fairly, and confidentially.
- No person will be disadvantaged or treated differently for raising a genuine grievance.
- Issues should be addressed as close to the point of origin as possible.
- The individual has the right to be accompanied by a colleague, representative, or support person at formal meetings.
- Sunbeams will aim to resolve grievances quickly and constructively, focusing on restoration of trust and mutual understanding.
- Where a grievance involves safeguarding concerns, the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy takes precedence

3. Informal Resolution

In most cases, grievances can be resolved informally through open discussion.

- The individual should first discuss the concern with their Line Manager (or with the Director if the concern involves their manager).
- The aim is to resolve the matter quickly and respectfully through discussion, mediation, or a practical solution.
- A brief written note may be kept by the manager to confirm what was discussed and agreed.

If the issue cannot be resolved informally or if the individual prefers a formal process, the Formal Grievance Procedure should be followed.

4. Formal Grievance Procedure

Step 1 – Submitting a Grievance

- The individual should submit a written grievance to the Director (or to the Chair of Trustees if the grievance concerns the Director).
- The statement should outline the nature of the grievance, key facts, and desired outcome.

Step 2 – Acknowledgement and Initial Review

- The grievance will be acknowledged within five working days.
- The Director (or nominated manager) will decide whether the issue requires a formal hearing or further investigation.

Step 3 – Investigation (if required)

- An impartial person, not previously involved in the matter, will carry out an investigation.
- This may include reviewing records and interviewing relevant individuals.
- The investigation should normally be completed within ten working days, unless additional time is required (in which case the individual will be informed).

Step 4 – Grievance Meeting

- A formal grievance meeting will be arranged, giving at least five working days' notice.
- The individual may be accompanied by a colleague, trade union representative, or trusted support person.
- The purpose of the meeting is to allow the individual to present their grievance and discuss potential resolutions.

- A written record will be kept of the discussion.

Step 5 – Outcome

- Following the meeting, a written decision will be provided within ten working days.
- The response will outline any action to be taken or, where the grievance is not upheld, explain the reasons clearly.
- If the grievance is upheld, Sunbeams will take appropriate action to address the issue promptly and prevent recurrence.

5. Appeal Process

If the individual is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may appeal in writing within ten working days of receiving the decision.

- The appeal should be addressed to the Chair of Trustees, stating the grounds for appeal (e.g. procedural error, new evidence, or unfair decision).
- An appeal hearing will be arranged with a Trustee or senior manager not previously involved.
- The decision following the appeal hearing will be final.

6. Confidentiality and Support

- All grievance matters will be handled with strict confidentiality.
- Information will only be shared with those directly involved in resolving the issue.
- Sunbeams recognise that raising a grievance can be stressful and will offer support where possible, including signposting to employee assistance, counselling, or supervision.
- No form of retaliation or disadvantage will be tolerated against any individual who raises a genuine concern.

7. Interaction with Other Policies

If a grievance reveals misconduct, it may be referred under the Disciplinary Policy. If it raises safeguarding or serious welfare concerns, it will follow the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy procedures.

8. Monitoring and Review

- The Director will maintain a confidential record of all grievances and their outcomes.
- Trustees will review this information annually to identify trends, ensure fairness, and inform staff wellbeing improvements.
- This policy will be reviewed every 12 months or sooner if there are significant changes in law or organisational structure.

Signed: _____ Position: Trustee

Date: _____