

THE HAVEN

Operated by the Autistic Girls Network charity — 1196655 (England and Wales), SC054837 (Scotland)

The Haven Grievance and Disciplinary Policy

Document	The Haven Grievance and Disciplinary Policy
Version	04.26
Status	live
Last reviewed	29 April 2026
Next review	29 April 2027
Owner	Headteacher
Approved by	Proprietor

Date: October 2025

Review Date: October 2026

Coordinator: Head / DSL

Nominated Governor: the Co-Chair of Governors

Version: v10.25

1. Purpose

At The Haven, everyone deserves to feel safe, valued, and heard.

This policy ensures that any member of our community can raise concerns or have matters of conduct addressed through a **clear, compassionate, and fair process**.

It covers both:

- **Grievances** – concerns raised by staff about work, conditions, relationships, or breaches of policy.
- **Disciplinary matters** – concerns raised about staff conduct or performance that may breach The Haven's standards.

Our aim is to resolve concerns early, informally where possible, and with a shared commitment to wellbeing, growth, and restorative practice.

2. Scope

This policy applies to **all Haven staff, contractors, and volunteers**.

It is underpinned by:

- The ****Staff Conduct Policy v10.25**
> **
- The ****Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy v01.26**
> **

- ** ACAS Code of Practice (2023)
> **
- ** Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
> **
- **LA frameworks** and trauma-informed guidance

3. Guiding Principles

Our approach is:

- **Restorative** – prioritising repair over punishment
- **Timely** – addressing concerns promptly and clearly
- **Trauma-informed** – ensuring safety, choice, trust, and empowerment
- **Inclusive** – neurodivergent-friendly and accessible at every stage
- **Fair** – no bias, assumptions, or retaliation tolerated

4. Grievance Procedure

4.1 Informal Resolution

Where it feels safe to do so, staff are encouraged to raise concerns informally first.

This may include:

- A conversation with a peer, coordinator, or mentor
- A supported mediation space, facilitated by a senior leader

Informal discussions will not be treated as formal grievances unless the concern escalates or the individual requests it.

4.2 Raising a Formal Grievance

A formal grievance can be raised when:

- The issue is serious or unresolved; or
- The individual prefers a formal process.

To raise a grievance:

- Write to a senior leader or designated governor, **or
> **
- Share the concern verbally in a recorded conversation if writing is a barrier

The grievance will be acknowledged within **5 working days**, and an initial response or meeting proposed within **10 working days**.

4.3 Review and Investigation

The person receiving the grievance will:

- Confirm who will lead the review

- Offer the option to be accompanied (e.g. peer, union rep, colleague)
- Gather relevant information and meet those involved
- Propose next steps – which may include mediation, written resolution, or formal investigation

4.4 Outcomes and Follow-Up

We aim to resolve grievances within **20 working days** of receipt.

Possible outcomes:

- A mutually agreed resolution
- Recommendations for change or training
- Formal findings and appropriate actions (e.g. apology, reflection, supervision)

All records are stored **securely and confidentially**.

4.5 Appeals

If the individual is not satisfied with the outcome, they may appeal by:

- Writing within **7 days** of receiving the outcome, stating reasons for appeal

A different senior leader or governor will review and respond within **10 working days**.

4a. Sexual Harassment, Third-Party Harassment, and the Worker Protection Act 2024

The **Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023** (in force 26 October 2024) places a positive, preventive duty on The Haven as employer. Where a grievance concerns sexual harassment or sexual harassment by a third party (parent carer, commissioner, contractor), this section applies in addition to section 4.

Specific provisions:

- **Immediate safety review.** On receipt of a sexual harassment grievance, the Head (or the Proprietor where the concern is about the Headteacher) immediately considers what interim safeguards the staff member needs — adjusted duties, alternative supervision, withdrawal from the relevant working context — without prejudging investigation outcomes. Suspension is a neutral act and used only where there is no reasonable alternative.
- **Confidentiality.** Information is shared on a need-to-know basis. The reporter's identity is protected to the maximum extent compatible with fair process.
- **Third-party respondents.** Where the alleged harasser is a third party (parent carer, commissioner, contractor), The Haven will: end the contract or interaction where the threshold is met; raise the matter with the third party's organisation where one exists; consider commissioner contractual obligations; and protect the affected staff member from continued exposure.
- **Active bystander follow-up.** Where another staff member witnessed the harassment, their account is sought sensitively and they are supported.
- **Tribunal compensation uplift.** Tribunals can uplift compensation by up to 25% where the preventive duty has been breached. The Haven's standard is to discharge the duty proactively — risk assessment, training, clear reporting routes, leadership tone — not to manage to the uplift.
- **No retaliation.** Retaliation against a reporter or witness is a disciplinary matter under section 5.

This subsection does not displace the safeguarding-first response where the alleged harasser is a staff member and the affected party is a child — see Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy v01.26.

5. Disciplinary Procedure

5.1 Standards of Conduct

All staff are expected to uphold The Haven's values and statutory duties.

Examples of misconduct include:

- Breach of safeguarding or confidentiality
- Inappropriate behaviour towards learners, colleagues, or families
- Failure to follow policies or instructions
- Actions that bring The Haven into disrepute

5.2 Stages of the Disciplinary Process

Informal Stage

- Concerns are first addressed through **supportive supervision, reflection, or coaching**.
- Low-level concerns are recorded in line with *Farrer & Co. guidance* and reviewed by the DSL.

Formal Investigation

- Conducted by a senior leader not involved in the concern.
- The staff member is informed in writing and invited to a meeting, with the **right to be accompanied**.

Outcome and Sanctions

- Possible outcomes: no action, written warning, final written warning, or dismissal (in serious cases).
- Sanctions are **proportionate, time-limited, and reviewed** regularly.

Appeal

- Right to appeal within **10 working days**.
- Appeal panel includes at least one **independent member** of the governing board.

6. Safeguarding and Disciplinary Overlap

- Any allegation involving safeguarding follows **The Haven's Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy v01.26**.
- Safeguarding concerns are always referred to the **DSL** and, where necessary, **external agencies**.
- Such matters are not handled solely through disciplinary channels.

7. Monitoring, Learning and Review

- **Termly:** DSL and governors review grievance and disciplinary actions for fairness and proportionality.
- **Annually:** Policy reviewed for compliance with **ACAS**, **KCSIE**, and **local authority frameworks**.
- The Haven analyses anonymised themes to improve workplace culture and prevention.

8. Final Note

This policy is here to **protect people, not processes**.

If you're unsure whether something counts as a grievance or concern, please ask.

We see courage in speaking up — and care in listening well.

This PDF was generated from the published policy at policies.thehavenonline.school on 26 August 2026. The website is the authoritative, most current version of this policy.