

Our Vision is to produce outstanding teachers who will ensure their students, whatever their starting point, thrive in all aspects of education. Our trainee teachers will value developing the whole person equally to the achievement of academic success.

Policy and Procedure

Complaints procedure

Adopted: July 2015

Review Date: July 2017

Reviewers: RDv/SKn

The purpose of any complaints system is to put things right when they have gone wrong. The attached policy sets out the procedures to be taken to deal with complaints the North Wiltshire SCITT may receive.

To achieve this, North Wiltshire SCITT will:

- ensure that all trainee teachers have equitable access to its services, resources.
- be non-discriminatory and promote the goals of anti-discrimination, access and equality; and
- take reasonable steps to ensure its services, programs and decision-making promote an inclusive culture.

Definitions

Complainant: the individual alleging the discriminatory treatment or behaviour

Respondent: the individual against whom the allegation of discrimination is made.

Employee: for the purpose of this policy, the term employee includes teachers, volunteers, contractors and consultants working with North Wiltshire SCITT.

Avenues of Complaint

Complaints will be dealt with by the school mentor. Where appropriate, the *School mentor* will consult with the North Wiltshire *SCITT Programme Manager*.

Right to Complain

Individuals have the right to complain about situations they believe to be discriminatory or harassing in nature.

This policy prohibits reprisals against employees because they have complained or have provided information regarding a complaint. Alleged reprisals are subject to the same complaints procedures and penalties as complaints of discrimination.

Reporting a Complaint

Although individuals may first choose to make a verbal complaint, a written summary of the incident will be required.

Complaints should be reported as soon as possible. If the complaint is delayed beyond three months, the complainant should outline the reason for the delay in reporting the incident(s).

A letter of complaint should contain a brief account of the offensive incident(s), when it occurred, the person(s) involved and the names of witnesses, if any. The letter should be signed and dated by the complainant.

Written complaints should be sent to:

SCITT Programme Manager
North Wiltshire SCITT
Royal Wootton Bassett Academy
Lime Kiln
Royal Wootton Bassett
SN4 7HG

The complainant may provide details over the phone on 01793 841961]

Note: some complaints may need to be substantiated in writing. The complainant will be notified if this is required.

Investigation

Within three working days of receiving a complaint, the *SCITT Programme Manager* must initiate the investigation process.

As soon as possible after receiving the complaint, the *SCITT Programme Manager* will notify the individual(s) being named in the complaint. All individuals named in the complaint have a right to reply to the allegations against them.

Individuals named in the complaint as witnesses will be interviewed.

The respondent has the **right to be accompanied** at all meetings by a colleague or union representative.

Settlement and Mediation

With the consent of the complainant and the respondent, the equal opportunity officer may attempt to mediate a settlement of a complaint at any point prior to or during an investigation.

Every effort will be made to reach a settlement satisfactory to the complainant and the respondent.

Confidentiality

All individuals involved with a complaint must ensure the matter remains confidential.

The equal opportunity officer will release information only on a need-to-know basis. Whenever possible, investigation reports are presented in a summary format without the names of witnesses.

Findings and Recommendations

Once the investigation is complete, the equal opportunity officer will prepare a written report summarizing investigation findings.

Final Decision

The individual(s) who filed the complaint and those named in the complaint have the right to review and comment on the investigation findings with the equal opportunity officer.

Remedy

A response to a founded complaint could include remedial action ranging from:

- requiring the respondent to provide a verbal or written apology;
- giving a verbal or written reprimand with a copy to the respondent's personnel file;
- dismissal of the respondent.

If the findings do not support the complaint, the Accounting Officer might:

- make a recommendation for training or better communications; or
- recommend that no further action is necessary.

It may be that no action is taken against the respondent, but there might be a need for some management or systemic activity.

A person who is found to have made a frivolous or vexatious complaint may be subject to disciplinary action.

If the employee wishes to **appeal** against the disciplinary action that has been decided upon, the Accounting Officer should invite the employee to a further meeting.

Timeframe

Complaints should be reported within three months of the incident. If the report is made after three months, an explanation of the delay should accompany the complaint.

Complaints will be dealt with in a timely manner.

Records

When remedial action requires discipline of an employee, a record of the disciplinary action will be placed on an individual's personnel file. All other records of the investigation will be kept separate and apart from the personnel file.