The Ebor Disciplinary Process

A straightforward guide to what happens and what to expect from your point of view

1. Core Principles & Purpose

Ebor Academy Trust works closely with Trade Union Partners to develop and implement a fair and effective suite of people policies. This guide is designed to help you understand the disciplinary process if concerns are raised about conduct. The Trust aims to help and encourage all employees to maintain high standards, to treat staff fairly and consistently, and to resolve matters at the lowest appropriate level of the process.

- **Standards:** Line managers will remind you of the expected standards of **behaviour** as defined in the Staff Code of Conduct.
- **Confidentiality:** Confidentiality is essential. To protect the integrity of the process and all individuals involved, you must not discuss your case with anyone who does not have a direct reason to be involved. This includes discussions on electronic platforms and social media.

2. Informal Resolution (Minor Issues)

Minor disciplinary issues are dealt with informally at first. Your line manager will **organise** a brief meeting to discuss the concerns and explore what support or guidance is required to help you improve. They will remind you of the expected standards of **behaviour** as defined in the Staff Code of Conduct. Notes of this informal discussion will be taken and retained. An informal warning may also be issued where justified. If the matter is successfully resolved, or if there is no further recurrence, the informal process is completed.

3. The Investigation Phase

If a matter is too serious for informal action, or if standards do not improve, formal procedures begin. A senior leader will notify you of this face-to-face (or via video conference) and follow up in writing.

- **Initial Fact-Finding:** A brief exercise takes place to establish if there is a case to answer. If there is, an independent Investigating Officer (from another school or the central team) will be appointed to conduct a formal investigation.
- **Fast-Track Option:** If you fully admit to the allegations, there is an option—subject to the agreement of all parties and the approval of the CEO—to fast-track the case directly to a conclusion and agreed sanction, avoiding the need for a full formal hearing. This is an exceptional process that requires your written admission.
- **Investigation Outcome:** Following investigatory meetings, the Investigating Officer will provide a written outcome. This will be either to close the process with no further action, to agree informal actions, or to refer the matter to a formal disciplinary panel hearing.

> **Suspension & Redeployment:** Suspension is never the default position and is only used as a last resort (e.g. where there is suspected gross misconduct or a potential risk of harm to children). Suspension does not imply guilt and is not a disciplinary action. You will remain on full pay, and your suspension will be reviewed every 10 working days. A nominated contact will be assigned to support you and keep you updated.

4. The Formal Disciplinary Hearing

If the case progresses to a formal hearing, you will receive written notification at least 10 working days before the hearing date. This written notification will contain:

- A clear description of the alleged misconduct.
- Copies of all written evidence to be relied upon, including named witness statements.
- The date, time, and location of the meeting.
- Details of any witnesses the employer intends to call.
- A statement reminding you of your statutory right to be accompanied by a companion.

The hearing is conducted by an independent Disciplinary Officer (usually a Headteacher or CST Director) and a panel of senior leaders, advised by an HR representative.

5. Your Right to be Accompanied

You have a statutory right to bring a companion to any formal meeting that may result in a warning, disciplinary action, or the confirmation of a sanction. Your companion must be either a **recognised** trade union representative or a workplace colleague.

What Your Companion CAN Do	What Your Companion CANNOT Do
Address the hearing to put forward and sum up your case.	Answer questions on your behalf (you must explain your own case).
Confer privately with you during the hearing.	Address the hearing if you do not wish them to do so.
Ask questions, present evidence, and call relevant witnesses.	Prevent the employer or yourself from explaining respective cases.

6. Possible Outcomes and Sanctions

The hearing panel will adjourn to consider the facts. You will be notified of the decision when the meeting reconvenes and in writing within 10 working days. Outcomes and sanctions include:

Sanction / Outcome	Description & Standard Retention Period
No Case to Answer	The process is concluded and closed with no further action.

Sanction / Outcome	Description & Standard Retention Period
Management Advice	No formal warning, but includes learnings or opportunities for improved practice. Not formally recorded on your record.
Informal Warning	Used for minor misconduct. Not formally recorded as a written warning. May include supportive measures (e.g. occupational health).
First Written Warning	Issued for a first instance of misconduct. Remains live on your file for 6 months.
Final Written Warning	Issued for serious misconduct or where a first warning is already live. Remains live on your file for 12 months.
Dismissal	Dismissal applies where there is gross misconduct (summary dismissal) or where a final written warning has been breached. Decisions are approved by the CEO or Director of Education.

7. Your Right to Appeal

If you feel that the decision is unfair, you have the right to appeal under the Ebor Standard Appeal Process. You must submit your appeal in writing, stating your reasons, within 10 working days of receiving the written outcome. Appeals are heard by an independent panel of senior managers or trustees.

This guide is non-contractual and represents a summary of Ebor Academy Trust's Disciplinary Policy. Please refer to Self Service HR for the full policy documents.