



Charity No: 1169903

The Prout Bridge Project

Disciplinary Policy

Date of Review: 9th January 2024

Date of next review: 31st January 2025

Introduction

The purpose of these procedures is to provide a framework to help and encourage all employed and freelance staff and volunteers to achieve and maintain appropriate standards of conduct and performance. The aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all.

We hope that any issues that arise during your work will be resolved after informal discussions with the Trustees of the Prout Bridge Project.

Formal procedures will take place when efforts to resolve matters informally have failed. When formal procedures are to take place, the Prout Bridge Project will comply with the procedures outlined below.

An employee, freelancer or volunteer has the right to be accompanied by a friend at all stages of the formal procedures. You may also be accompanied, with prior arrangement with the Prout Bridge Project, by a legal or union representative (if appropriate).

The Disciplinary Procedure

The Disciplinary process involves the following:

Stage 1 – Putting it in Writing.

A letter will be personally handed to you by a member of the Prout Bridge Project, explaining the reasons why disciplinary action is being considered. You will be invited to a meeting with the Chair of the Prout Bridge Project. You will be given time to consider the contents of the letter and prepare your responses prior to the meeting.

Stage 2 – Disciplinary Hearing.

You will meet with the Chair of the Prout Bridge Project and another Trustee of the Prout Bridge Project. Another Trustee of the Prout Bridge Project will also be present in order to take notes. You will be informed of the complaint(s) against you and you

will be given the opportunity to examine the evidence or hear verbal evidence before stating your case. At the end of the meeting, the Chair will consider the evidence and will make a decision. You will be notified of the decision in writing and notified of your right of appeal within 24 hours.

Stage 3 – The Appeal.

If you consider that the Disciplinary Action taken against you is unreasonable, you may appeal to an Appeal Committee, which comprises of alternative Trustees of the Prout Bridge Project than the ones who conducted your Disciplinary Hearing. You must send a letter, stating the reason for your appeal, within 5 working days of receipt of your disciplinary letter.

You will be given a letter, inviting you to a meeting with the Appeal Committee. There will again be another representative of the Prout Bridge Project present to take notes (the person who is the note-taker may be the same person as at your Disciplinary Hearing in order to provide consistency in record keeping. If you have any objections to this, please make these known at the start of the appeal). You will be given the opportunity to present your appeal.

You will be notified of the result of your appeal in writing within 24 hours. The decision of the Appeal Committee is final.

Sanctions

The following sanctions may be imposed as a result of the disciplinary process. The starting point for action will depend on the circumstances.

Verbal Warning

If your conduct is unsatisfactory a verbal warning may be issued. You will be told of the reason for the warning and a note of this may be kept in a confidential file. If there are no further occurrences meriting a disciplinary hearing, then the note will be removed from file at the end of the time period.

Listed below are examples of behaviour which may attract verbal warnings. This list is NOT exhaustive.

- Minor breach of minor Health and Safety Regulations.
- Minor insubordination.

Written Warning and Final Written Warning

Should you fail to make the required improvement in performance or if any further offence occurs, a written or a final written warning will be issued. This may also be applied if your performance or conduct is considered so serious that a verbal warning is not considered appropriate.

The written warning will give the reason for the warning, and list the improvements required. It will warn that the final written warning or dismissal from your role will be considered if there is a repetition of the conduct, or if there is no satisfactory improvement. You will be informed of your right to appeal.

A copy of the warning will be added to a confidential file for a period of 12 months. If no further offence occurs, the warning will be removed at the end of this period.

The following are examples of conduct likely to attract a written or final written warning. The list is NOT exhaustive.

- A breach of Health and Safety rules and regulations.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst carrying out your role at The Thanet.
- Smoking within the premises and grounds of The Thanet.
- Behaving in a way that is prejudicial to the good name of the organisation.

Dismissal

Should you fail to make the required improvement in behaviour or if there is a further breach of conduct after the issuing of a Written or Final Written warning, you will be dismissed from your role with the Prout Bridge Project .

Gross Misconduct.

In the case of Gross Misconduct you will be subject to immediate dismissal as a volunteer/member of staff of the Prout Bridge Project.

The following are examples of Gross Misconduct. The list is NOT exhaustive.

- Personal misconduct that may give offence to a Prout Bridge Project user, fellow volunteer, paid employee or member of the public.
- Conduct which may be in breach of civil or criminal law, including unlawful discrimination.
- Conduct that may bring disrepute on the Prout Bridge Project .
- Breaches of Confidentiality.
- Negligence and /or deliberate failure to comply the Health and Safety Policy.
- Failure to comply with the code of conduct set out in the Safeguarding Policy
- Misappropriation or unauthorised possession of money or property belonging to the Prout Bridge Project
- The consumption of alcohol or drugs to such an extent as to impair your ability to carry out your role effectively.
- Anti-social behaviour (e.g. indecency, physical violence or assault, verbal abuse whilst volunteering or working for the Prout Bridge Project or aimed at any other Prout Bridge Project member, member of staff or centre user when not in your role)
- Theft
- Fraud, including deliberate falsification of records.

If you are dismissed in accordance with these procedures, confirmation of the decision, the reasons for dismissal and your right to appeal will be forwarded to you in writing as soon as possible. The Prout Bridge Project may also contact the police or child protection services, as applicable, if the offence is deemed serious enough.