

# Conflict Resolution

## Ellesmere Port Catholic High School



Approved by:	Mr J Coucill, Chair of Governors 
Lead of Review:	Mr C Jones, Business Manager
Last reviewed on:	August 2020
Next review due by:	July 2021 or on receipt of documentation from CWAC

Cheshire West and Chester Council on behalf of its maintained schools conducts, leads and facilitates a system of employee relations and collective bargaining with its recognised trade unions through a joint consultative and negotiating panel known as the Schools Staffs Panel. The CWAC School Staffs Panel supports the principles of openness and co-operation in employee relations matters. We recognise that the demands of work in schools; the monitoring and inspection regimes; the generality of the employment relationship and the pressures of staffs personal lives mean that there are occasions when conflict arises that involves whole or majority staff groups, and school wide issues. Such situations will often benefit from an approach that seeks to resolve differences through dialogue and negotiation rather than recourse to formal proceedings. As a Panel, we are committed to promoting positive resolutions which recognise the dignity of all workers in schools, minimise damage to relationships and support school progress.

We encourage schools to adopt practices which assist in recognising and reducing tensions that can grow into conflict. Such practices include attitude surveys; individual confidential discussions; and mediation. Where school level trade union representatives have been elected we recommend termly school joint consultative meetings to include the Chair of Governors.

We advocate Conflict Resolution based on the following principles

- That school leaders and staff promote and adopt open and inclusive employee relations practices that provide for informal avenues of communication where individual and collective concerns are expressed and responded to in accordance with the standards of professional behaviour contained in the Teachers Standards 2012 (for teachers) and which respect the right of all workers to dignity at work.
- That a Conflict Resolution Protocol will facilitate the resolution of any collective issues that may arise as quickly as possible at the local level.
- That the Protocol will support schools in reaching a solution that promotes:
  - Collaboration
  - Understanding of views and perspectives of all parties, and
  - Use of organised and clear communication channels
- Issues should be resolved at as local a level and as early as possible.
- That a conflict resolution approach will be pursued wherever possible in preference to referral to formal procedures which however always remain open.

### **Additional Monitoring and Communication Channels**

Standing item (confidential Part 2) on School Staff Panel agenda to track levels of conflict and provide an additional channel of communication.

An additional half termly informal meeting of Panel members to share employee relations intelligence in confidence.