

Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure 2026

Summary

The International British Theatre School (IBTS) is committed to maintaining a motivated, professional workforce that upholds the highest standards of conduct and performance.

This policy outlines the fair, transparent process IBTS follows when disciplinary issues arise, ensuring compliance with **employment law**, **ACAS guidance**, and **Ofsted's safeguarding requirements**.

1. Policy Statement

IBTS aims to resolve most issues informally through supervision and coaching.

Formal disciplinary action will only be taken when informal approaches fail or when behaviour or performance falls below acceptable standards.

No employee will be dismissed for a first breach of discipline except in cases of **gross misconduct**.

All staff have the **right to be accompanied** at disciplinary meetings and to **appeal** any disciplinary decision.

2. Informal Resolution

Minor issues of conduct or performance will normally be addressed informally by the Manager or Director through discussion, guidance, or support.

If informal steps do not achieve improvement, or if the matter is serious, the formal procedure will apply.

3. Formal Disciplinary Procedure

The formal stages are as follows:

1. Formal Verbal Warning

2. **Written Warning**
3. **Final Written Warning**
4. **Dismissal**

Progression through stages may be accelerated depending on the seriousness of the issue.

4. Disciplinary Meetings

A disciplinary meeting will be arranged at each stage where the staff member will have an opportunity to present their case.

Before the Meeting

- The member of staff will receive written notice of:
 - The allegations or concerns.
 - The date, time, and venue of the meeting.
 - Their right to be accompanied by a colleague or trade union representative.
 - Access to any evidence or statements to be discussed.

During the Meeting

- The Manager or Director will present the evidence and invite the staff member to respond.
- Notes will be taken throughout the meeting.
- The outcome will be communicated within **five working days**.

After the Meeting

A written summary will confirm:

- The outcome (verbal, written, or final warning, or dismissal).
 - The reason for the decision.
 - Any expected improvements and the timescale for review.
 - The right to appeal and how to do so.
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5. Record Keeping

All warnings will be recorded in the staff member's file for the following durations:

- **Formal Verbal Warning:** kept for **6 months**.
- **First Written Warning:** kept for **12 months**.
- **Final Written Warning:** kept for **24 months**.

If performance or conduct improves within the retention period, the warning will be disregarded after expiry.

Records will be kept securely in accordance with **UK GDPR** and **Data Protection Act 2018**.

6. Dismissal

If, during the period of a **final written warning**, there is further misconduct or no satisfactory improvement, **dismissal** may result.

A dismissal letter will confirm:

- The reason for dismissal.
- The date employment will end.
- Notice entitlement (if applicable).
- The right to appeal the decision.

7. Gross Misconduct

Staff may be dismissed **without notice** if found guilty of gross misconduct.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Child abuse or safeguarding breaches.
- Serious health and safety violations.
- Physical violence or threats.
- Bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
- Theft, fraud, or falsification of records.
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol at work.
- Refusal to follow lawful management instructions.
- Breach of confidentiality or data protection.
- Behaviour bringing IBTS into disrepute.
- Disqualification under the **Childcare Act 2006** or **Children Act 1989**.

Each case will be investigated thoroughly before any decision to dismiss is made.

8. Investigations

Before disciplinary action is taken, an impartial investigation will be conducted.

This may include witness statements, written evidence, and review of relevant documents.

Staff will have the opportunity to respond to findings before any decision is made.

Suspension may be considered if there is a potential safeguarding concern, risk to others, or risk of evidence tampering.

Suspension is a neutral act and not disciplinary in itself.

9. Safeguarding and Referrals

If a staff member is dismissed (or would have been dismissed had they not resigned) for harming a child or putting a child at risk of harm, IBTS will:

- Make a **referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**.
 - Notify **Ofsted** within 14 days of any event affecting staff suitability.
 - Record all actions and retain documents for inspection.
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10. Appeals Procedure

Staff have the right to appeal any disciplinary decision.

Appeals must be made in writing within **5 working days** of receiving the decision, stating the grounds for appeal.

An appeal meeting will be arranged within **5 working days** of receipt.

Where possible, a senior leader not involved in the original decision will hear the appeal.

A written outcome will be provided within **5 working days**, and the decision will be **final**.

11. Related Policies

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2026**
 - **Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct Policy 2026**
 - **Whistleblowing Policy 2026**
 - **Equal Opportunities Policy 2026**
 - **Safe Recruitment Policy 2026**
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Reviewed: 15 November 2025

Next Review Due: 15 November 2026

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