

Allegation Management Policy



Growth Learning Therapies

Written by:	Joanna Curley	Date:	June 2025
Approved by:	Chair of the board	Date	July 2025
Last Reviewed on:		Next review due by:	July 2026

Section 1:

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- ❖ Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- ❖ Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- ❖ Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- ❖ Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place both inside and outside of school

If we're in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer (LADO).

We will deal with any allegation of abuse quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the advisory board where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

If we receive an allegation of an incident happening while an individual or organisation was using the school premises to run activities for children, we will follow our safeguarding policies and procedures and inform our LADO.

Suspension of the accused until the case is resolved

Suspension of the accused will not be the default position and will only be considered in cases where there is reason to suspect that a child or other children is/are at risk of harm, or the case is so serious that there might be grounds for dismissal. In such cases, we will only suspend an individual if we have considered all other options available and there is no reasonable alternative.

Based on an assessment of risk, we will consider alternatives such as:

- ❖ Redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned
- ❖ Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children
- ❖ Redeploying the individual to alternative work in the school so that they do not have unsupervised access to children
- ❖ Moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the individual, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents/carers have been consulted

If in doubt, the case manager will seek views from the school's HR provider and the designated officer at the local authority, as well as the police and local authority children's social care where they have been involved.

Definitions for outcomes of allegation investigations



- ❖ **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- ❖ **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive, or to cause harm to the subject of the allegation
- ❖ **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- ❖ **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation (this does not imply guilt or innocence)
- ❖ **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis that supports the allegation being made

Procedure for dealing with allegations

In the event of an allegation that meets the criteria above, the case manager will take the following steps:

- ❖ Conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation before carrying on with the steps below
- ❖ Discuss the allegation with the designated officer at the local authority. This is to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action, including whether further enquiries are necessary to enable a decision on how to proceed, and whether it is necessary to involve the police and/or local authority children's social care services. (The case manager may, on occasion, consider it necessary to involve the police *before* consulting the designated officer – for example, if the accused individual is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a possible criminal offence. In such cases, the case manager will notify the designated officer as soon as practicably possible after contacting the police)
- ❖ Inform the accused individual of the concerns or allegations and likely course of action as soon as possible after speaking to the designated officer (and the police or local authority children's social care services, where necessary). Where the police and/or local authority children's social care services are involved, the case manager will only share such information with the individual as has been agreed with those agencies
- ❖ Where appropriate (in the circumstances described above), carefully consider whether suspension of the individual from contact with children at the school is justified or whether alternative arrangements such as those outlined above can be put in place. Advice will be sought from the designated officer, police and/or local authority children's social care services, as appropriate
- ❖ Where the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the individual's family, they will discuss these concerns with the DSL and make a risk assessment of the situation. If necessary, the DSL may make a referral to local authority children's social care
- ❖ If immediate suspension is considered necessary, agree and record the rationale for this with the designated officer. The record will include information about the alternatives to suspension that have been considered, and why they were rejected. Written confirmation of the suspension will be provided to the individual facing the allegation or concern within 1 working day, and the individual will be given a named contact at the school and their contact details
- ❖ If it is decided that no further action is to be taken in regard to the subject of the allegation or concern, record this decision and the justification for it and agree with the designated officer what information should be put in writing to the individual and by whom, as well as what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation



- ❖ If it is decided that further action is needed, take steps as agreed with the designated officer to initiate the appropriate action in school and/or liaise with the police and/or local authority children's social care services as appropriate
- ❖ Provide effective support for the individual facing the allegation or concern, including appointing a named representative to keep them informed of the progress of the case and considering what other support is appropriate. Direct the individual to seek support from the Mental Health Leader, to contact their trade union and to utilise the services of Health Assured.
- ❖ Inform the parents or carers of the child/children involved about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know (following agreement with local authority children's social care services and/or the police, if applicable). The case manager will also inform the parents or carers of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers (where this applies) while investigations are ongoing. Any parent or carer who wishes to have the confidentiality restrictions removed in respect of a teacher will be advised to seek legal advice
- ❖ Keep the parents or carers of the child/children involved informed of the progress of the case (only in relation to their child – no information will be shared regarding the staff member)
- ❖ Make a referral to the DBS where it is thought that the individual facing the allegation or concern has engaged in conduct that harmed or is likely to harm a child, or if the individual otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child

If the school is made aware that the secretary of state has made an interim prohibition order in respect of an individual, we will immediately suspend that individual from teaching, pending the findings of the investigation by the Teaching Regulation Agency.

Where the police are involved, wherever possible the school will ask the police at the start of the investigation to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the school's disciplinary process, should this be required at a later point.

If there are concerns or an allegation is made against someone not directly employed by the school, such as a supply teacher or contracted staff member provided by an agency, we will take the actions below in addition to our standard procedures.

- ❖ We will not decide to stop using an individual due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with our LADO to determine a suitable outcome
- ❖ The governing board will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the individual, or redeploy them to another part of the school, while the school carries out the investigation
- ❖ We will involve the agency fully, but the school will take the lead in collecting the necessary information and providing it to the LADO as required
- ❖ We will address issues such as information sharing, to ensure any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account (we will do this, for example, as part of the allegations management meeting or by liaising directly with the agency where necessary)

When using an agency, we will inform them of our process for managing allegations, and keep them updated about our policies as necessary, and will invite the agency's HR manager or equivalent to meetings as appropriate.

Timescales



We will deal with all allegations as quickly and effectively as possible and will endeavour to comply with the following timescales, where reasonably practicable:

- ❖ Any cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious should be resolved within 1 week
- ❖ If the nature of an allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action should be taken within 3 working days
- ❖ If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, this should be held within 15 working days

However, these are objectives only and where they are not met, we will endeavour to take the required action as soon as possible thereafter.

Specific actions

Action following a criminal investigation or prosecution:

The case manager will discuss with the local authority's designated officer whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed, taking into account information provided by the police and/or local authority children's social care services.

Conclusion of a case where the allegation is substantiated:

If the allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or the school ceases to use their services, or the individual resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the school will make a referral to the DBS for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required.

If the individual concerned is a member of teaching staff, the school will consider whether to refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching.

Individuals returning to work after suspension:

If it is decided on the conclusion of a case that an individual who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager will consider how best to facilitate this.

The case manager will also consider how best to manage the individual's contact with the child or children who made the allegation, if they are still attending the school.

Unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious allegations

If an allegation is:

- ❖ Determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false or malicious, the LADO and case manager will consider the appropriate next steps. If they consider that the child and/or person who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help, a referral to local authority children's social care may be appropriate
- ❖ Shown to be deliberately invented, or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the individual(s) who made it

Confidentiality and information sharing

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.



The case manager will take advice from the LADO, police and local authority children's social care services, as appropriate, to agree:

- ❖ Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- ❖ How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip, including how to make parents or carers of a child/children involved aware of their obligations with respect to confidentiality
- ❖ What, if any, information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- ❖ How to manage press interest if, and when, it arises

Record-keeping

The case manager will maintain clear records about any case where the allegation or concern meets the criteria above and store them on the individual's confidential personnel file for the duration of the case.

The records of any allegation that, following an investigation, is found to be malicious or false will be deleted from the individual's personnel file (unless the individual consents for the records to be retained on the file).

For all other allegations (which are not found to be malicious or false), the following information will be kept on the file of the individual concerned:

- ❖ A clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation
- ❖ Details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved
- ❖ Notes of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome
- ❖ A declaration on whether the information will be referred to in any future reference

In these cases, the school will provide a copy to the individual, in agreement with local authority children's social care or the police as appropriate.

We will retain all records at least until the accused individual has reached normal pension age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

References

When providing employer references, we will:

- ❖ Not refer to any allegation that has been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious, or any repeated allegations that have all been found to be false, unfounded, unsubstantiated or malicious
- ❖ Include substantiated allegations, provided that the information is factual and does not include opinions

Learning lessons

After any cases where the allegations are substantiated, the case manager will review the circumstances of the case with the LADO to determine whether there are any improvements that we can make to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future.

This will include consideration of (as applicable):

- ❖ Issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff
- ❖ The duration of the suspension
- ❖ Whether or not the suspension was justified



- ❖ The use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. We will consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual

For all other cases, the case manager will consider the facts and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Non-recent allegations

Abuse can be reported, no matter how long ago it happened.

We will report any non-recent allegations made by a child to the LADO in line with our local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations.

Where an adult makes an allegation to the school that they were abused as a child, we will advise the individual to report the allegation to the police.

Links to LADO:

Link to refer an adult to LADO:

[Kent Children's Portal](#)

Enquiries Form when seeking advice whether an allegation has met the threshold of harm:

[LADO Education Safeguarding Advisory Service \(LESAS\) Enquiry Form](#)

Section 2:

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all concerns (including allegations) about members of staff, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors, which do not meet the harm threshold set out in section 1 above.

Concerns may arise through, for example:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Allegation made by child during crisis or physical intervention
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Little Acorns Allegation Protocol:

An allegation will be deemed as not meeting the threshold of harm by the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) after conducting initial inquiries in accordance with the school's established procedures to establish the facts. This decision may be made when one or more of the following conditions apply:



- ❖ Multiple witnesses provide statements that counter the allegation.
- ❖ The staff member has adhered to PRICE procedures and risk assessments accurately.
- ❖ All relevant school policies and procedures have been followed appropriately.
- ❖ The child has an established allegation management procedure, which will be followed in the first instance.
- ❖ The allegation has been retracted by the individual making it.
- ❖ The allegation is not repeated when the individual is re-questioned.
- ❖ An allegation is not linked to abuse, then the low-level concerns policy will be followed.
- ❖ The allegation relates to an incident already being investigated by an external agency or already been found to be unsubstantiated, false or malicious.

All allegations will be communicated to the child's parents or carers, as well as the relevant social workers.

If a child has made multiple allegations (3 or more) which are not meeting the 'threshold of harm' then an allegation protocol will be created to safeguard the child and staff working with them.



Appendix 1: Outcome Form

ALLEGATION MADE AGAINST A STAFF MEMBER	
<p>Explanatory Statement</p> <p>It is imperative that an accurate record is maintained on all allegations against professionals for the protection of children and the individual involved. National Guidance requires that the LADO keep clear and comprehensive summary of allegations, how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decision reached. This should be kept on an employee’s confidential personnel file, and a copy provided to the person concerned.</p> <p>The purpose of this record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference if the person has moved on. It will also provide clarification in cases where a future CRB Disclosure reveals information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction. It will also help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time.</p> <p>The record should be retained at least until the person has reached normal retirement age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.</p>	
<p>Name:</p> <p>Employer:</p>	<p>Date of allegation:</p>
<p>Summary of allegation made:</p>	



How allegation was followed up:

Action taken and decisions reached (eg: words of advice, further training, disciplinary procedure, dismissal) :

Will member of staff be referred to the ISA?

Outcome of Management investigation :

Substantiated		Unsubstantiated		Unfounded		Malicious	
----------------------	--	------------------------	--	------------------	--	------------------	--



please print name.....

Definitions:

Substantiated - A substantiated allegation is one which is Supported or established by evidence or proof'

Unsubstantiated - An unsubstantiated allegation is not the same as a false allegation. It simply means that there is insufficient identifiable evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

Unfounded - This indicates that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively they may not have been aware of all the circumstances. For an allegation to be classified as unfounded, it will be necessary to have evidence to disprove the allegation.

Deliberately invented or malicious - This implies a deliberate act to deceive. A malicious allegation may be made by a pupil following an altercation with a teacher or a parent who is in dispute with a school. For an allegation to be classified as malicious, it will be necessary to have evidence, which proves this intention.

Please return this form within two weeks of concluding investigation to:

(insert Area Officer details)

or e.mail:

Form sent:

