

Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff

Taken from our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, section 7, page 39

What staff should do when they have concerns and /or allegations about another staff member (including supply staff, contractors and volunteers)

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding **all** concerns and or allegations about adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, contractors and volunteers) will be reported and dealt with promptly and appropriately.

By doing so everyone in the school will:

- Create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency
- Help to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour at an early stage
- Minimise risk of abuse
- Ensure that school staff are clear about professional boundaries and act within these, in accordance with the ethos and value of the institution

The school recognises there are two levels of allegation/concern

1. Allegations that may meet the harms threshold
2. Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold, also known as 'low level concerns'

Our response to concerns/allegations is consistent with the DDSCP Safeguarding Children Procedures; [Allegations against Staff, Carers and Volunteers](#).

1. Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

This is where an allegation might indicate that a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school. Where it is alleged that anyone working in the establishment, including supply teachers, contractors and volunteers 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 he or she 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 any behaviour that may have happened outside school and is known as transferable risk.

If you have concerns about another staff member

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague (including supply staff, contractors and volunteers) towards a child are undoubtedly placed in a very difficult situation. However, all staff must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported without delay to the Headteacher. Where there are concerns allegations about the headteacher this should be referred to the chair of governors. In a situation where there is conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher this should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The member of staff should make a record which will include time, date, place of incident, persons present, what was witnessed, what was said etc; this should then be signed and dated (see Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy Appendix 2 Concerns Form).

Looking after the welfare of the child

Where a child has been harmed, or there is an immediate risk of harm to a child or if the situation is an emergency, children's social care should be contacted and where appropriate the police. It is the Designated Safeguarding Lead's responsibility to ensure the child is not at risk and refer cases of suspected abuse to Children's Social Care.

Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation

A case manager will lead the investigation. This will be the headteacher or where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation, the chair of governors.

Allegations will be dealt with

- By applying common sense and judgement
- Quickly, fairly and consistently
- Providing effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation

Before contacting the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) the case manager will conduct basic enquiries in line with DDSCP procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation; being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

- The Headteacher or Chair of Governors should complete the [Derby and Derbyshire LADO Referral Form](#) and email to the responsible local authority; see other key safeguarding contacts list on page 12. The LADO on duty will then contact them within one working day to discuss their referral. The discussion will consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action.
- When to inform the individual will be on a case by case basis, with guidance from the LADO, and where appropriate children's social care and the police.
- Where the subject of the allegation is a member of supply or contracted staff, the employment agency should be fully involved in any enquiries however the school will usually take the lead.
- Consideration will be given throughout to the support and information needs of pupils, parents and the subject of the allegation.
- Details of the allegation, any investigation, actions taken and the outcome category will be recorded as outlined in national and local guidance. Records will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with data protection legislation.
- If consideration needs to be given to the individual's employment, advice will be sought from HR or equivalent.

Non recent allegations

Non recent allegations by a child will be reported to the LADO in line with DDSCP multi-agency safeguarding procedures. Where an adult makes an allegation to a school they were abused as a child, the DDSCP [Adults who Disclose Non Recent Abuse procedure](#) should be followed.

For further information about concerns which may meet the harms threshold see the Staff Code of Conduct, Managing Allegations against Staff Policy, Complaints and Whistleblowing Policy.

2. Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold are referred to as 'low level concerns'. Low level concern does not mean it is insignificant, rather that the behaviour towards the child does not meet the harm threshold as outlined above.

A low level concern is a concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is:

- Inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and does not meet the allegations threshold or
- Not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum. Further information about distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be found in the school staff code of conduct policy.

Staff should share low level concerns with the Headteacher, this may include self-referral where staff have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others and or on reflection they believe they have behaved in a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Reports about supply staff or contractors will be notified to their employers.

All low level concerns will be recorded in writing by the Headteacher. The records will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with data protection legislation.

For further information about the procedure for responding to low level concerns see the Staff Code of Conduct, Complaints Procedure and Whistleblowing Policy.