

Parents and Carers information

You are receiving this leaflet as information has been received which alleges a child you care for may have been harmed by an adult working in a position of trust.

The majority of people who work with children act professionally and provide a safe and supportive environment. However, sometimes the behaviour of adults who work with children in a paid capacity or as volunteer can result in allegations of harm being made against them.

It is never acceptable for an adult in a position of trust to harm a child and allegations or concerns regarding the behaviour of staff are always taken seriously.

What is the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)?

The Local Authority Designated Officer does not complete investigations but is involved in the management and oversight of individual cases; providing advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, and monitoring cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

The LADO will not be able to share with you specific information regarding the alleged person involved, but will ensure that a nominated person in the organisation undertaking the investigation keeps you informed throughout the process. You will not be in direct contact with the LADO.

What happens?

We understand that this can be a very difficult time for you and this leaflet aims to explain the process of managing these types of allegations. If you need support, there are a number of places you can gain this, including via your GP, or a social worker if appropriate.

The basic process is as follows (full information can be found in our [flowchart](#)):

- The individual raising the allegation / sharing the disclosure should make a **written record** of the incident, sign and date the record and immediately inform the named person for managing allegations.
- Next steps should be agreed with the named person for managing allegations based on considering whether the LADO threshold has been met.
- If the allegation meets the criteria, the named person for managing allegations must contact the LADO within 1 working day. Consent is not required.
- The parents / carers of the child or young person should be informed as soon as possible following the allegation or disclosure. The LADO can provide advice on how this should be managed.
- Where necessary, the LADO will make a referral to Children's Social Care if this has not already taken place. The LADO will also contact the Police where the allegation may constitute a criminal offence.

Investigation Outcomes

At the end of an investigation an outcome is required. The outcome of any investigation can be:

Substantiated

The allegation is supported or established by evidence or proof. The employer is legally obliged to conclude the investigation, even if the staff member resigns, is dismissed or their contract is not renewed. The employer must consult the LADO to discuss whether a referral should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and/or to a professional or regulatory body. The DBS will decide whether the staff member should be barred, or have conditions imposed regarding working with children in the future.

Unsubstantiated

There is insufficient identifiable evidence to prove or disprove the allegation and this does not imply guilt or innocence.

Malicious

For an allegation to be classified as malicious, it will be necessary to have evidence to prove the intention to cause harm.

Unfounded

There is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made, there is evidence to prove that the allegation is untrue, or was misinterpreted.

The outcome of any investigation is final. Unfortunately, detailed information regarding the full extent of the investigation may not be able to be shared with you, other than to tell you that further action has been taken and appropriate safeguarding measures have been implemented. This is due to data protection requirements. Where there is a referral to the relevant professional or regulatory body it is usual for them to publish any subsequent report following their investigation on their website.

Employers should disclose information in references when an allegation is Substantiated or Unsubstantiated.

Further Information

You can find the Managing Allegations procedure within Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board's [procedures](#)

These procedures implement the statutory guidance for the management of allegations, which can be found in [Working Together 2015](#).