

# Managing allegations against people who work or volunteer with children

## Initial consideration guide



### Worried about a young person?

Safeguarding children and young people and keeping them safe is everyone's business.

If you think that a child might be the victim of abuse or neglect or they may be at risk of harm, you should always report your concerns.

Please contact North Lincolnshire's Children's Services Single Point of Contact on:

- 01724 296500 (9am to 5pm Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4.30pm Friday)
- 08081 689667 (free phone)
- 01724 296555 (answerphone – out of office hours and at weekends)

101 – Police non-emergency

999 – Police emergency

You can also read the government advice for practitioners [What to do if you are worried a child is being abused](#), this leaflet will also be helpful to the members of the public who are worried about a child.

### What does the Local Authority Designated Officer need to be notified of?

Every organisation that works with children should have a Named Senior Officer responsible for progressing allegations. When they are informed of an allegation, they must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 24 hours to report it.

The criteria for making a report are that an individual who works or volunteers with children may have:



The above criteria can be in a connection to an individual's employment or voluntary activity, or in relation to a person's private life.

In respect of transferrable risk, where an individual works or volunteers with children and an allegation is made which did not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children then LADO should be notified.

Allegations of a historical nature should be responded to in the same way as contemporary concerns.

## Role of the LADO

The LADO's role is to:

- oversee all safeguarding allegations about individuals who work or volunteer with children and young people
- provide scrutiny and oversight and not to investigate. It is important that the LADO remains impartial to the investigation
- provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations and liaising with police, Children's Services, and other agencies
- chair Joint Evaluation Meetings for allegations which have been deemed to meet the managing allegations criteria
- monitor progress of all investigations to ensure a timely, thorough and fair process
- provide information to the Children's MARS Board

## Initial action by the person receiving or identifying an allegation or concern

The person receiving or identifying an allegation or concern should:

- remain calm and be supportive both emotionally and practically. Take the individual disclosing seriously
- make a factual written record of the information (where possible in the child / adult's own words), including the time, date and place of incident/s, persons present and what was said and sign and date the written record
- immediately report the matter to the Named Senior Officer, or the deputy in their absence or where the Named Senior Officer is the subject of the allegation, report to the deputy or other appropriate senior manager
- ensure the child/adult is safeguarded

They should not:

- investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification
- make assumptions or offer alternative explanations
- promise confidentiality but do give assurance that the information will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis

You should not take photographic evidence and should ensure that any evidence in relation to the allegation/concern is not tampered with.

## Initial action by the Named Senior Officer

The Named Senior Officer should:

- ensure children and young people are safeguarded. Refer to Children's Services and the police if required. If the police or Children's Services receive an allegation, they should without delay report it to the LADO
- obtain details of the concern/ allegation from the person that received the information (not the child/ adult making the allegation)

- record any information about times, dates and locations of incident/s and names of any potential witnesses
- record discussion about the alleged victim and/or member of staff, any decisions made, and the reasons for those decision
- make a referral to the LADO immediately and **within 24 hours (1 working day)**; do not delay notifying LADO in order to undertake fact finding

If an allegation requires immediate attention, but is received outside normal office hours, the Named Senior Officer should consult with Children's Services out of hours or the police if appropriate and inform the LADO the next working day.

They should not:

- investigate the matter or interview the member of staff, child concerned or potential witnesses without first liaising with the LADO (the reason for this is a police investigation may be required)
- delay making a referral to LADO in order to gather information

## Initial consultation with the LADO

In order for an initial consultation to be held with the LADO it is important for the person wishing to consult to have basic details including:

- Name, DOB, employer/work base, job title/role and home address of the person subject to an allegation and if known if they live with or volunteer with children in any other capacity
- Name, DOB, home address of any potential victim(s), how do they know the accused, and any social care involvement known (if known)
- Basic fact finding – factual description of what has resulted in the allegation/concern, date, time, location, any potential witnesses/CCTV, any injuries

This consultation with LADO will inform the next steps and consider whether the circumstances would firstly reach threshold, on the information to hand at that time. There may be a need to seek further clarification of facts or evidence, identify potential witnesses or in some circumstances to speak to the employer/volunteer prior to a decision being made of whether or not threshold has been met.

This initial consultation will also include what actions may need to be taken including immediate safeguards, risk management and if further enquiries are needed.

## Further Information

For further information, see Children's MARS policy and procedure for managing allegations against adults who work with children which is available on the [Children's MARS website](#).

These procedures implement the statutory guidance for the management of allegations which can be found in [Working Together 2018](#).