



A guide for parents & carers

Managing safeguarding allegations against a person who works with children (in a paid or unpaid capacity)

It is likely that the Designated Officer (formally Local Authority Designated Officer, LADO) has received information in relation to an allegation against an adult working with your child or children. This leaflet sets out to provide you with information around the managing allegations / Designated Officer role and its process.

Whilst the majority of people who work with children & young people act professionally and strive to provide a safe and supportive environment, the behaviour of some adults does result in allegations being made against them. It is important to point out that some allegations are intentional, adults do abuse their position, however, some allegations are false and have been made with malicious intent.

It is never acceptable for an adult to harm a child therefore allegations or concerns about unacceptable

or inappropriate behaviour from adults that work with children are taken seriously.

A concern can be in relation to the person's behaviour at work or outside of their workplace.

The Designated Officer should always be made aware of any allegation that an adult, who works with children, has:

- **Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child**
- **Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child**
- **Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they would pose a risk of harm to children**
- **Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children**

What is the Designated Officer (LADO) role?

The role of the Designated Officer is set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*. The Designated Officer (DO) is responsible for overseeing allegations about individuals who work with children. Any adult who works with children in a paid, unpaid / voluntary capacity. (e.g. Schools, Hospitals, Children's Homes, Leisure Centres, Sporting Clubs, such as, Football, Karate. Religious Establishments, Child Minders, Foster Carers, Nursery Workers, Music Teachers, Coach / Taxi Drivers / Escorts who are contracted to transport children & young people.

The Department of Education (DfE) legislation and a detailed explanation of the managing allegations process against Teachers, Members of Staff or Volunteers in Schools / Colleges, or any establishment that provides education for children (under 18 years), is outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021)*.

Role of the Designated Officer:

- **Does not investigate** but is involved in monitoring the management and oversight of each individual case from the onset of the allegation through to the end
- The Police / Children's Social Care or the Employer (whichever is appropriate) has the responsibility to carry out the investigation
- Provides **advice, information and guidance** to employers and voluntary organisations around allegations and concerns regarding paid and unpaid workers
- Manages and **oversees** individual cases from all partner agencies to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible
- Ensures the **child's voice is listened to, valued and heard**, and that they are safeguarded
- **Monitors the progress** of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible for all concerned, there is **consistency and the process is thorough and fair**
- The Designated Officer **will not** be able to share with you specific information regarding the alleged person involved, but will ensure that a nominated person involved in the investigation keeps you informed throughout the process as necessary

What happens next?

There can be up to three elements to consider once an allegation is made:

- A criminal offence has taken place and requires police involvement
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in regards to the individual adult
- Children's Social Care intervention to determine whether a child is in need of protection

Following a referral into the Designated Officer, it may be necessary to hold a Position of Trust Meeting (POT). This is an opportunity for professionals to meet to discuss the allegation and decide next steps and an outcome. Professionals attending such meetings are usually, the Designated Officer (Chair) Police, Head of Human Resources, the Employer and Children's Social Care.

Outcomes from a POT meeting are listed below:

- **Substantiated** -There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- **Unsubstantiated** - It cannot be proven either way that the allegation did or did not happen
- **Unfounded** - Evidence was available to prove that what was alleged did not happen or could not have happened; or that information has been misinterpreted
- **Malicious** - there has been a deliberate act to deceive. For an allegation to be classified as malicious, it will be necessary to have evidence, which proves the intention
- **False** - there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

The outcome of this process is final. Detailed information regarding the full extent of the

investigation may not 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. You will not be in direct contact with the Designated Officer and the Designated Officer will not be able to share specific information regarding the alleged person involved with you as mentioned earlier however you should be kept informed throughout the process of any developments and the outcome to the matter.

Where there is a referral to a relevant professional or regulatory body, such as, Teaching Regulatory Agency (TRA), Health and Care Professional Council (HCPC), Social Work England (SWE) it is common for them to publish any subsequent report following their own investigation on their website.

Where can I obtain support for my child/children and my family?

We understand that this can be a very difficult time for your child, and your family, which is why the Designated Officer's role is to ensure the managing allegations process is transparent, fair and runs smoothly.

If you require support, there are a number of places you can access, such as, a professional person allocated to working with your child /children within school or some other organisation, your GP, or a social worker, particularly if your child or a child you are caring for is in need.

Further information

You can find out more about this service by visiting the Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership - Management of Allegations section. Click on the link below:

<https://safeguarding.dudley.gov.uk/safeguarding/child/work-with-children-young-people/management-of-allegations/>



**Dudley Safeguarding
People Partnership**