

This leaflet provides a brief guide to the process that should be followed, but if faced with an allegation against any employee, volunteer or professional working with/providing services for children, you are strongly advised to consult the LADO at the earliest opportunity.

**Local Authority's Designated Officers are
contactable via:**

Tel: 01472 326118

Introduction

This leaflet is about managing cases of allegations of abuse against a person who works with children in any setting. All allegations of abuse of children by a professional, staff member, foster carer or volunteer should be taken seriously and treated in accordance with the procedures set out in the LSCB Guidelines and Procedures which can be found at www.nelsafeguardingchildrenboard.co.uk

The scope of this leaflet covers a wider range of allegations than those in which there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. This leaflet should be used for guidance in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or,
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm to children.

Procedure

STEP 1

Somebody receives information that an allegation has been made against an employee, volunteer or professional working with/providing services for children, in relation to harm of a child, a criminal act or behaviour that would have implications for working with children.

STEP 2

The person receiving the allegation should immediately notify his/her line manager or the designated child protection person in their establishment, organisation, group etc. or their senior. That designated person then notifies the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) as soon as possible (within 1 working day) and completes a referral form.

If it is an extremely serious allegation (i.e. current injury, risk of losing forensic evidence, imminent danger to child/public/staff, crime ongoing etc.) first contact the Police and then the LADO (or the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub/Out of Hours Team).

STEP 3

In all but the most serious cases the LADO and the manager will initially consider:

- Whether or not it needs referring to the police
- Whether it needs a Strategy Discussion and/or an allegations management meeting
- Whether Human Resources need to be involved
- Whether any immediate action needs taking to make the child, other children and the organisation safe.

STEP 4

The LADO will consult with the police and Children's Services, and the employer or line manager of the accused person if that is different to the person referring it.

STEP 5

The LADO will then convene an allegations management meeting if required, or record the decisions and actions agreed with the line manager and coordinate the next steps.

STEP 6

The LADO will coordinate and review future action as necessary and ensure all parties required are involved, informed and record information as required.

Key Points

1. If the allegation is clearly false (e.g. if the accused person has never met the child or was not on duty) it should still be reported to the LADO to decide if the alleged victim has other underlying needs.
2. If the allegation is malicious it should still be reported to the LADO with regard to whether the police need to take action regarding the person making the allegation.
3. Regardless of the nature of the allegation and regardless of who receives the allegation it MUST be reported to the LADO regardless of it appearing to be of little importance or potentially very serious.
4. The complaints process is separate to the allegations process and just because a person does not wish to make a complaint does not mean that there is no allegation.