

Managing Allegations Against Employees/Volunteers in Dudley

What is an allegation in respect of someone in a Position of Trust? If it is deemed a person 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 or children in a way which indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.
 - *(Taken from working together 2018)*

These behaviours should be considered within the context of the definitions of 'abuse and neglect' and should include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff/adults and young people -

- Having a relationship with a child under 18 even if this is consensual
- Grooming – meeting with child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence
- Other behaviour indicating concern –i.e. Contacting child via social media, sharing of images, inappropriate text/email messages possession of indecent photos or fake photos of children

The role of Dudley's Designated Officer (LADO)

What Dudley's Designated Officer (LADO) does?

The Designated Officer (LADO) is Social Work Qualified who on the behalf of Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) oversees all allegations against any person who is working with children and vulnerable young people.

Included in this group are agency staff, foster carers as well as people who are in a position of authority and have regularly contact with children such as religious leaders, political figures or school governors (this is not a exhaustive list) and whether in a paid or unpaid capacity

The appointment of the Designated Officer (LADO) is in response to 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' March 2018, Chapter 2 pg 52; and Children Act 2004 Section10 and S11.

The DSCB and its partner agencies are under a duty to inform and assist the Designated Officer (LADO) in managing this process from referral to conclusion.

Designated Officer (LADO) has the authority to (or inform employers to) refer individuals in a Position of Trust to Governing Bodies or to relevant authorities for consideration of barring an individual from working with children e.g. HCPC, Ofsted, TRA and so forth.

What are the LADO's responsibilities?

- To coordinate the safeguarding and investigative process in response to allegations made against people working with children
- Provide advice and guidance to employers or voluntary organisations.
- Monitoring the progress of cases to ensure they are dealt with within agreed timescales.
- To scrutinise and challenge employers where procedures are not followed.
- Ensuring a consistent and fair process for all those working with children and young people where allegations have been made.
- Maintains information on a secure database in respect of all allegations.
- Produce an Annual LADO report for Dudley Safeguarding Children Board.
- Chairing of Position of Trust meetings,
- Contribute to training and development programmes and raising awareness of the Management of Allegations process across Dudley's workforce.
- Liaise with Strategic Leads for Safeguarding e.g. Ofsted, Police, Education, Health and other partner agencies in respect of governance and leadership.
- Supporting employers in and/or referring identified individuals to the DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) when they are deemed to pose a risk of harm.

**THE DESIGNATED OFFICER
(LADO) DOES NOT CONDUCT
THE INVESTIGATION**

Position of Trust Principles

- Child's welfare paramount.
- Covers whole of Children's Work Force including volunteers.
- Adults about whom there are concerns should be treated fairly and honestly and provided with support by their employer.
- Responsibility of all adults to promote welfare of children and young people. This responsibility extends to a duty of care for those adults employed, commissioned or contracted to work with children and young people.
- It is important to note that situations in a personal environment are considered in the wider context of safeguarding children.

Managing Allegations should be fair, balanced and proportionate

- If a concern is raised that a person may have behaved inappropriately or information is received that may constitute an allegation the following actions should be taken:
- Report it to the designated Senior Manager as soon as possible, however trivial it may seem; this person needs to have management responsibility for the employee/volunteer & service.
- Make a signed and dated written record of the concerns, observations or the information received to pass on to the Designated Safeguarding lead
- The employer should ensure the person who the allegation/concern is raised, is informed of the allegation (**unless it is not safe to do so i.e. it may place a child/young person at risk – you must ensure you record your reasons for not doing so**)

- Maintain confidentiality, guard against publicity while an allegation is being considered or investigated, and follow local information sharing protocols.

Don't Delay - Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility

- Challenge poor practice in the workplace; it may prevent an allegation being made
- If you suspect a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, referral to MASH needs to be made; they are contactable on:0300 555 0050
- ask the question 'is a Strategy Meeting needed', if not why not.
- Monitoring and progressing of cases is essential – Outcomes must be fed back to the LADO

Do not

- make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish the seriousness of the behaviour or alleged incidents.
- keep the information and promise confidentiality.
- take any action that might undermine any future investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses, or informing the alleged perpetrator who may be a parent or carer.

The same action should be taken if the allegation is about abuse is non-recent, as it will be important to find out if the person is still working with or has access to children.

You can ask the LADO for advice or consultation prior to submitting the referral form. Please be reminded not to ask individuals to complete statements if this is subject to police investigation (these are done by the

Police) however, internal incident logs/reporting mechanisms need to be completed. Do not start internal investigations and/or dismiss the Person of Concern when in a POT Process.

You can find the POT referral form and Guidance as well as the MARF on the DSCB website. Send completed POT referrals to: allegations@dudley.gcsx.gov.uk

Staff should also familiarise themselves with the guidance to Safer Working Practices Oct 2015 for those working with children and young people.

<https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Oct%202015.pdf>

If you are requested to attend a Position of Trust Meeting - please come prepared with any information your agency may hold in respect of the children and family and especially in respect of the Employee/Volunteer concerned.

This information can be forwarded to the LADO in advance of the meeting but your attendance is still important.

Contact Details:

**Mrs Yvonne Nelson-Brown
Designated Officer (LADO)
General line: 01384 813061**

[Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility - you have a duty of care and accountability to the DSCB to refer Position of Trust issues](#)

