



Managing allegations against or concerns about people who work or volunteer with children Policy

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteers associated to Trevonne Stage School are dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child/young person and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

This policy will be adopted in respect of allegations that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity.

All staff and volunteers should understand what to do if they receive an allegation against another member of staff or they themselves have concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff. It is our policy that all allegations will be reported straight away, to the Welfare Officer.

Legal framework

We subscribe to IDTA and RAD Policy and Procedures, and committed to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, recommendations including the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE), Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018.

This policy will be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a member of staff or volunteer 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 is unsuitable to work with children. This will include cases of verbal abuse.

There may be up to 3 strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child needs protection or in need of services;
- consideration by the Trevonne's Principal and Artistic Director of disciplinary action in respect of the individual.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated/considered.



Resignations and “Compromise Agreements”

The fact that a person tenders his or her resignation, or ceases to provide their services, will not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with these procedures. Every effort will be made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing in mind the safety or welfare of children including any in which the person concerned refuses to cooperate with the process.

Wherever possible the person will be given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations about it. The process of investigating the allegation, and reaching a judgement about whether it can be regarded as substantiated will continue even if the person does not cooperate.

In any event, such an agreement will not prevent a thorough police investigation where that is appropriate. Furthermore, it will not override the statutory duty to make a referral to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) for consideration of placing the person’s name on the Children’s Barred List where circumstances require that.

Record Keeping

A clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached, will be kept on a person’s confidential personnel file, and a copy provided to the person concerned. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference if the person has moved on.

It will provide clarification in cases where a future DBS reveals information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction. In addition, it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time. The record will be retained at least until the person has reached normal retirement age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation, if that is longer.

Timescales

It is in everyone’s interest to resolve cases as quickly as possible consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. Every effort will be made to manage cases to avoid any unnecessary delay.

Initial Considerations

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO, Local Authority Designated Officer) should be informed, by the Principal/Artistic Director or the Welfare Officer of all allegations of abuse against staff on the same day, even where the police are contacted directly.

The Welfare Officer will inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer). However, where a strategy discussion is needed, or where police or children’s social care need to be involved, the Principal/Artistic Director or the Welfare Officer will not do that until those agencies have been consulted, and have agreed what



information can be disclosed to the person. If the person is a member of a union or professional association s/he will be advised to contact the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) at the outset.

If the allegation is not demonstrably false or unfounded, and there is cause to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion will be convened by the Principal/Artistic Director or the Welfare Officer with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) and other appropriate agencies, such as the police and social services.

In cases where a formal strategy discussion is not considered appropriate because the threshold of “significant harm” is not reached, but a police investigation might be needed, the Principal/Artistic Director or the Welfare Officer will consult with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), police and any other agencies involved with the child to evaluate the allegation and decide how it should be dealt with. (NB. The police will be consulted about any case in which a criminal offence may have been committed.)

Suspension

Suspension will be considered in any case where there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm, or the allegation warrants investigation by the police, or is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. However, a person will not be suspended automatically, or without careful thought.

Action on Conclusion of a Case

If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or Trevonne ceases to use the person’s services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his/her services, the Principal/Artistic Director or the Welfare Officer will determine with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) whether a referral to the DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) is required, or advisable.

Action in Respect of False Allegations

Methods of reporting:

Safeguarding children is everybody’s responsibility. All staff members have a responsibility to report a concern if they believe a member of staff has behaved inappropriately towards a child.

All concerns should be escalated to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)- 0116 3057597

NSPCC 24-hour Helpline 0808 800 5000 or text 88858 or email help@nspcc.org.uk

The Police 101/999

Children’s Social Care - Leicestershire 0116 3055500/ Leicester City 0116 4541004/ Rutland 01572 758407/ Out of hours 0116 3050005