



ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF SCHOOL POLICY

Allegations of abuse against staff, carers & volunteers

Statutory guidance for allegations made against adults who work with children and young people was issued in Oct 2006 and is contained in "Working Together to Safeguard Children", DfES 2006

Scope of procedures:

The procedures will apply where a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed an offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that s/he is unsuitable to work with children

They will also apply where:

- Concerns arise about the person's behaviour with regard to her/his own children
- Concerns arise about the behaviour in private or community life of a partner, member of the family or other household member

INVESTIGATIONS

There may be three strands to an investigation:

- Police investigation of a possible offence
- A child protection investigation by Specialist Children's Services, possibly including the children of the member of staff
- Disciplinary action by the employer

Usually the police investigation and any subsequent prosecution will take precedence. Statements taken by the police and Children's Social Care can now be made available to the employer subject to consent.

Allegations must be reported to: MISS S. ARMSTRONG OR MRS A.BARKER

WENTWORTH CHURCH OF ENGLAND JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

EMPLOYEE CHECKLIST

Is action required to secure the immediate safety or well being of a child/children?

The child/children may need medical attention or to be removed from the scene of an incident. It may be necessary to assign a member of staff to look after them until parents arrive.

Record dates/times of alleged incidents, the names of those involved and those of any potential witnesses. Gather and secure any already existing evidence such as written reports, e-mails or photographs.

Remember that taking statements is a specialist role of the police and you could undermine their work if you are not careful. It is reasonable to listen to a child in a sympathetic way and encourage them to speak but not lead them. Questions such as "tell me what happened" or "what happened next?" are ok, but questions such as "did Mr. X hit you on the head yesterday?" are not. You need to ask just enough questions to make a decision. Do NOT request written reports / 'statements' from any party

Verify that the alleged event(s) could have happened

E.g. was the member of staff on duty and present when the alleged incident took place? Are there credible witnesses who are able to confirm what happened?

Contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

This work is carried out on a day to day basis by child protection coordinators who can be contacted:

Rotherham LADO: Gill Brooks gillian.brooks@rotherham.gov.uk 01709 334186

Be prepared with relevant details of child(ren) and staff member(s). Once agreement is reached that the matter falls within the scope of the procedures, the LADO will determine the nature and scope of the investigation. If a crime is suspected, this will include consultation with the police. Responsibility for employment matters formally rests with the employer but this will form part of the advice given. The HR department of the Children & Young People's Directorate will provide ongoing support to maintained schools and early years' settings. Strategy meetings are often used to manage and monitor investigations particularly in complex cases.

Inform parents where appropriate, but what you say may need to be guided by the LADO/police

The important thing is to get the balance right between the parents right/need to know and the need for confidentiality in respect of police investigations and disciplinary procedures. It may be important to agree the extent to which the child/parent is kept up to date with progress and the final outcomes.

Contact HR if suspension or other action is being considered pending investigation

If the allegation could result in a criminal prosecution and/or dismissal, then suspension of the staff member will need to be given urgent consideration. This is a neutral act until such time as investigation and possible criminal processes are completed when the disciplinary procedure will come into play if necessary.

Decide what, if anything, you can tell other staff members

The need for confidentiality for all concerned is very important, but other staff may have been involved in the discovery of the allegation and, in any case, staff will ask after a colleague who is missing from work. In general, all staff will need to observe a great deal of discretion and they may need to be reminded of this. No details of the case should be discussed but it may be appropriate to inform them that a suspension has occurred because of an allegation/investigation. It may be that this is agreed at the suspension meeting with the member of staff and their representative

Responsible Person for Allegations against staff and volunteers

Sally Armstrong – Head Teacher

Andrea Barker- Deputy Head Teacher

Useful web links/resources:

- o Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, Chapter 5
- o Working Together to Safeguard Children, DfES 2006, Para 6.20 and Appendix 5
- o South Yorkshire Child Protection Procedures 2007, Appendix 4
- o Behaviour guidelines for staff and Volunteers

Effective Date

This policy will reviewed in 2019.