



Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff.

1. Introduction

As a Lewisham SEMH School New Woodland, and the Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) team, is guided by specific legislation and Statutory Guidance, in particular:

- the Children Act 1989;
- section 175 of the Education Act 2002 (local authorities, governing bodies of maintained schools and institutions in the further education sector);
- section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (other agencies);
- Working Together to safeguard children 2023
- KCSIE 2025

All references in this document to 'members of staff' should be interpreted as meaning all paid or unpaid staff and volunteers.

All staff employed at New Woodlands School are subject to DBS and regulatory body checks. All staff should have had or will be provide with Safeguarding training

2. Allegations dealt with by these procedures

These procedures should be applied when there is an allegation or concern that any person who works with children, in connection with his/her employment or voluntary activity with the children's workforce.

When they have:

- 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;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Allegations can be made in relation to restrictive physical interventions and restrain but can also relate to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children or young people, for example:

Having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 if in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual (Section 16 to 19, Sexual Offences Act 2003);

- 'Grooming' (Section 15 Sexual Offences Act 2003) i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence;
- Other 'grooming' behaviour giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature e.g. inappropriate text/ e-mail messages or images, gifts, socialising etc.;
- Possession of indecent photographs/pseudo-photographs of children.

Whether an incident constitutes an allegation and hence needs to be dealt with through these procedures may need to be discussed between the LADO, DSL and the Head teacher.



Detailed records will be kept and stored confidentially in line with Data Protection where required

3. Roles and responsibilities

The Head teacher has overall responsibility for:

- Ensuring that the organisation deals with allegations in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures;
- Resolving any inter-agency issues;
- Making statutory notifications to professional bodies and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- Liaising with the Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) on the subject if appropriate.
- Ensuring advice is sought from the LADO regarding incidents where it is unclear whether it is an allegation or concern
- Ensuring all allegations of harm are reported to the LADO within recommended time frames working hours.

In the absence of the Head teacher then the Deputy Head Teacher will take on this role.

4. Response to an Allegation or Concern

An allegation against a member of staff may arise from a number of sources e.g. a report from a child, a concern raised by another adult, or a complaint by a parent or carer. It may also arise in the context of the member of staff and their outside work or home.

5. Initial Consideration by the Head teacher DSL and the LADO

5.1 Deciding whether it is an allegation of harm or a concern

- Where it is not clear whether the threshold is met, it might be necessary to have a meeting with appropriate parties to evaluate whether the threshold has been met;
- It is essential to keep the employer, in most cases the school, who raised the concern informed whilst the case is being assessed.

5.2 Considering an allegation

There are up to four strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- A Police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- LA Children's Social care enquiries and/or assessment about whether a child is in need of protection or services;
- Consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in relation to possible performance/conduct issues;
- Whether action in regards to the person making the allegation should be considered where the allegation has no foundation and may be malicious

It should first be considered whether further details are needed and whether there is evidence or information that establishes that the allegation is false or unfounded.

If the allegation is not demonstrably false and there is cause to suspect that the adult poses a risk of harm, the LADO should convene a meeting. This will sometimes have to take place immediately but the speed at which it is convened should be commensurate to the risk.



The Police must be consulted about any case in which a criminal offence may have been committed.

6. Historical Allegations

Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching should be referred to the Police, as should historical allegations of abuse.

7. Staff support

Issues of such serious and delicate nature can be difficult to manage. To support staff the school has purchased an Employment Assistant Package which offers a variety of support .