



## **Managing Allegations of Abuse against Staff Policy**

### **Introduction**

It is of utmost importance that any allegations of abuse involving staff members, volunteers, or students on placement within our establishment are handled in a manner that is fair, swift, and consistent. Our approach seeks to provide effective protection for the child or young person while also supporting the individual subject to the allegation. This policy works in conjunction with our complaints procedure and safeguarding and child protection policy.

All staff and volunteers must be aware of the necessary actions to take upon receiving an allegation against another staff member or if they have concerns about the conduct of a fellow staff member. Our policy dictates that all allegations be promptly reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

This policy adheres to Government guidance outlined in chapter 5 of 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.' Additionally, Dorset Pathways follows the Government guidance – "Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children," which provides a framework for managing allegations of abuse involving individuals working with children.

### **Purpose**

This policy governs allegations that may suggest an individual is unsuitable to continue working with children, whether in their current position or any capacity. The procedures outlined in this policy work in tandem with our complaints and safeguarding and child protection protocols.

This policy is applicable to all cases where a member of staff (including volunteers, students) is alleged to have:

- Engaged in behaviour that harmed or potentially harmed a child.
- Committed a criminal offense related to or against a child.
- Demonstrated behaviour unsuitable for working with children, including cases of verbal abuse.

### **Considerations and Strands**



The consideration of an allegation may involve up to three strands:

- Police investigation of a potential criminal offense.
- Enquiries and assessment by children's social care to determine if a child requires protection or services.
- Evaluation by Dorset Pathways for potential disciplinary action.

### **Supporting Those Involved**

Parents or guardians of the affected child will be informed about the allegation as soon as possible, if they are not already aware. They will receive updates on the case's progress and be informed of the outcome if there is no criminal prosecution. This includes the outcome of any disciplinary actions taken. It is important to note that the deliberations of a disciplinary hearing, as well as the information considered in reaching a decision, are typically confidential. However, parents or guardians of the child will be informed of the outcome.

In cases where significant harm may have occurred or criminal prosecution is possible, children's social care and/or the police will be involved. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will also ensure that the individual facing allegations is informed of the case's progress and evaluate the need for additional support. If suspension is necessary, the DSL and Directors will maintain communication with the individual regarding developments at the setting. Union or professional association members will be advised to engage with their respective bodies.

### **Maintaining Confidentiality**

Efforts will be made to preserve confidentiality and prevent unnecessary publicity during the investigation of allegations.

### **Resignations and Agreements**

Resignation or cessation of service by an individual will not preclude the investigation of an allegation. The process will continue even if the person refuses to cooperate.



"Compromise agreements" to resign will not be used in cases of alleged child abuse. Such agreements will not override the duty to report to the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) for consideration of placing the person's name on the Children's Barred List where necessary.

### **Record Keeping**

Detailed records of allegations, investigations, actions taken, and decisions reached will be kept in the individual's confidential personnel file. This record aims to provide accurate information for future reference or DBS Disclosure requests.

### **Timescales**

Efforts will be made to resolve cases promptly, considering a fair and thorough investigation.

### **Initial Steps**

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) must be informed by the DSL of all abuse allegations against staff, even if the police are directly contacted. The local Children's Advice and Duty Service (ChAD) Professionals officer will also be notified if appropriate.

### **PDSCP and Strategy Discussions**

The DSL will inform the accused person after consulting the LADO. A strategy discussion may involve children's social care, police, and the DSL to assess the case and determine appropriate action.

### **Suspension**

Suspension will be considered if a child is at risk, if police involvement is warranted, or if the allegation is serious enough for dismissal. However, suspension will not be automatic and will be carefully considered.



## **Concluding a case**

If an allegation is substantiated, steps will be taken based on the outcome, including possible DBS referral. Dorset Pathways will ensure a supported return to work if appropriate. False allegations will also be addressed accordingly.

## **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

All staff members must report concerns of inappropriate behaviour to the DSL. The LADO manages cases of allegations against professionals or volunteers working with children.

## **Completing LADO Referral Forms**

If an allegation involves potential harm or criminal activity, a referral form must be completed and submitted to the LADO immediately.

Safeguarding children is a shared responsibility, and this policy ensures that all allegations are treated with the utmost seriousness, fairness, and diligence.

## **Children's Advice and Duty Service (ChAD) Professionals**

This is a service that allows professionals to report safeguarding concerns to gain advice and support in keep people safe.

## **Contact Details**

### **DSLs**

Mr Rob Halfhide: 07813283956 | [rob.halfhide@dorsetpathways.co.uk](mailto:rob.halfhide@dorsetpathways.co.uk)

### **Deputy DSLs**

Mrs Maryanne Halfhide: 07891825179 [maryanne.halfhide@dorsetpathways.org](mailto:maryanne.halfhide@dorsetpathways.org)

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole - Children's First Response Hub - 01202 735046

[childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

**If the child lives in Dorset contact the Children's Advice and Duty Service (ChAD):**

**Professional's Telephone Number: 01305 228558**

Daytime service is available Monday to Friday between 8am and 10pm, Saturday and Sunday 9am to 10pm and On-Call Out of Hours Service 24/7



**This is a professionals-only number to discuss your concerns, you will no longer complete a referral form.**

For more information on the [ChAD Service](#)

**Families and Members of the Public Number: 01305 228866**

Dorset Families and Members of the Public - 01202228866

**In an emergency or out of hours contact:**

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole - Out of hours contact - 01202 738256  
[childrensOOHS@bcpcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:childrensOOHS@bcpcouncil.gov.uk)

Dorset - Out of hours service - 01305 228558

Police Non-Emergency - 101

Police Emergency - 999

**Referenced Documents and Links**

[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) updated July 2018

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) updated September 2022

[Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership's \(PDSCR\) Procedures](#)

[UK Council for Child Internet Safety \(UKCCIS\), Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Young People](#)

Authored : Directors

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