



Friday Bridge Primary School

Allegations against a Member of Staff Policy

POLICY DOCUMENT	Allegations against a member of staff policy
Policy Number	P1
Type of Policy –	Non Statutory Policy
Governor Committee	Full Governing Body
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Chair of Governing Body signature	Maggie Barwell
Date	14.11.2024

1. Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Procedure follows the DfE Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education Part four: Allegations made against/concerns raised in relation to teachers and other staff which is available from school office.

This statement explains how we manage allegations that might indicate a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity. It will be used in respect of all cases where it is alleged that an employee or volunteer, or a person with permission to be on the premises or carrying out any activity on behalf of the school 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
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they would pose a risk of harm to children, or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

This will include allegations involving any type of abuse or neglect, including inappropriate relationships with pupils, grooming behaviour of any kind, possession of indecent photographs or images of children and other offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

1.2 Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with as quickly as possible, in a fair, consistent and thorough way that provides effective protection for the child or children and at the same time deals fairly with the person who is the subject of the allegation.

1.3 It will also be used where low-level concerns are raised. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct,
- including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favorites;
- taking photos of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy;
- engaging with a child on a 1:1 basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- humiliating children.

2. Communicating the Procedures

2.1. All members of the senior management team and the designated safeguarding lead with responsibility for child protection have a responsibility to ensure that all employees know about and understand paragraph 3 below.

2.2. In accordance with the DfE Statutory Guidance, all employees should also read at least Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education, which contains safeguarding information for all employees.

2.3. All members of the senior management team and the designated safeguarding lead have a responsibility to be familiar with the Statutory Guidance in its entirety.

3. Immediately Reporting an Allegation

3.1. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Be vigilant; and If you have a concern that a person (as described in paragraph 1.1 above) may have behaved inappropriately or you have received information that may constitute an allegation or a low-level concern,

you must:

- Report the facts to the Case Manager normally Headteacher as soon as possible. All concerns will be listened to and managed appropriately; do not withhold information however trivial it may seem
- In the absence of the Case Manager you must report the matter to the most senior person available who will carry out the Case Manager's duties in their absence. If the allegation concerns the Case Manager, then the matter must be reported to the Chair of Governors
- Make a signed and dated written record of your concerns, observations or the information you have received and give it to the Case Manager straight away
- Maintain strict confidentiality.

You must not:

- Attempt to deal with the situation yourself
- Make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish or embellish the seriousness of the behaviour or alleged incidents
- Keep the information to yourself or promise that you will do so
- Take any action that might undermine any investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as disclosing confidential information, interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses, or informing the alleged perpetrator or parents/carers.

3.3. In the event that an adult has found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, **might** appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards the adult should self-refer

this to those with designated safeguarding responsibilities. The governing body is committed to creating an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer.

4. Duties and Responsibilities of the Case Manager

1. 4.1. The duties and responsibilities of the Case Manager are as described in Keeping Children Safe in Education Part four: Allegations made against/concerns raised in relation to teachers and other staff
2. 4.2. The contact details for the Designated Officer for Safeguarding are: Michael Elliott 01945 860220. Mobile number:

5. Low-Level Concerns

1. 5.1. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:
 - is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct,
 - including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
 - does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- Humiliating children.

5.2. Low-level concerns will be dealt with in accordance with Part Four of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

5.3. All low-level concerns should initially be shared with Headteacher.

5.4. Where concerns are raised, the Headteacher will collect as much evidence as possible, this will usually involve speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
- to the individual involved and any relevant witnesses.

5.5 The information collected will help to categorise the type of alleged behaviour and determine whether any further action needs to be taken.

5.6 All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. The record will include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and any action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concern(s) will also usually be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

5.7 Records of low-level concerns raised will be retained for [insert time frame which should be at least until the individual leaves their employment/in accordance with the School's document retention schedule]

1. APPENDIX 1: Dealing with Allegations or Concerns about an Adult

Allegation or concern raised about a member of staff or adult

Does it meet the harm threshold? The harm threshold is met where it is alleged that an adult working (or volunteering) in the school has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (see KCSIE Part 4)
- You may wish to consider the questions in Box A below, to help you answer the question

YES

NOT SURE

NO

Contact CCC LADO on
01223 727967 or via
LADO@cambridgeshire.gov.

The LADO will ask for specific information about the issue and confirm whether or not it meets the harm threshold. If it does they will begin a formal process to manage the allegation. If it doesn't meet the threshold, then they will record the information and advise you to treat the issue as a Low Level Concern. You will need to inform the staff member that LADO hold information on them.

This is a Low Level Concern. Consider carefully what action to take in response, taking advice from your HR Provider as appropriate. Keep a record in a secure central file. An example form for this purpose is available for use if required.

If you need **further advice** on any aspect of this, please contact either:
Phil Nash on 01223 699448 or 07920 270820 or
Sara Rogers on 01223 729045 or 07990 936820

Box A

1. How long has the adult or member of staff worked for you?
2. Have there been any previous concerns raised?
3. Is this a one off, or part of a pattern of behaviour?
4. Has the member of staff previously been given advice in this area?
5. Would an associated pattern of behaviour (if it exists) be seen by others. How closely do they work with other colleagues?
6. Might this be a planned action or event?
7. Could this behaviour be inadvertent? What is the likelihood of this?
8. Could this be a precursor to more concerning behaviour?
9. Did it occur in a 'public' or a 'private' place? Was this in school or out of school?
10. If electronic devices are involved, have any relevant files been deleted and is there any evidence of this?
11. if this relates to inappropriate language, what is the precise nature of the language used? How inappropriate is it? What was the context – where was this, and who were the listeners? Could this be seen as 'banter', or might it have more serious undertones?