



Dealing with Allegations against School Personnel, School Volunteers, the Principal or Students

1 Scope

We recognise that all school personnel are vulnerable to accusations of abuse because of their daily contact with children. We acknowledge that dealing with allegations against school personnel is a stressful, demanding, complex and delicate process for all involved. But we will ensure that all allegations will be taken seriously and investigated immediately and impartially in order to provide instant and effective protection for the child concerned and to provide support for the person who is the subject of the allegation.

We wish to create a culture of openness that will allow children and school personnel to make truthful reports of any inappropriate behaviour and in the knowledge that all allegations will be taken seriously.

We encourage all school personnel to protect themselves against false accusations by treating all children with dignity and respect, and to ensure that they never work alone with a child, always maintaining a safe and appropriate distance, avoiding physical contact and being cautious when dealing with sensitive moments.

We understand that we have a legal duty once an allegation has been to undertake a full investigation, to record the decisions reached and action taken.

Aims

- To investigate all allegations against school personnel seriously and impartially by providing protection for the child and support for the named person in the allegation.
- To work with other schools to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

2 Requirements

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors has:

- the responsibility to investigate any allegation against the Principal;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Principal to investigate allegations against any member of the school personnel;
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Principal to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;

- the responsibility of involving the School Council in the development, approval, implementation and review of this policy;
- nominated a link Director to visit the school regularly, to liaise with the Principal and the coordinator and to report back to the Board of Directors;
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

Role of the Principal

The Principal will:

- investigate all allegations against any member of the school personnel;
- consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer when an allegation has been made;
- appoint an independent investigator if the allegation is deemed to be serious;
- share information about the named person in the allegation and the alleged victim with all agencies involved in the investigation;
- keep the person who is the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the investigation;
- provide support for the person who is the subject of the allegation;
- keep parents informed of the investigation and outcome;
- provide appropriate support and counselling for the child and parents during the whole process;
- consider suspending the person who is the subject of the allegation;
- consider suspending the child if it is felt there is a risk of significant harm to the child from the person accused;
- make every effort to maintain confidentiality and to prevent unnecessary publicity;
- provide return to work support such as Occupational Health support for a member of the school personnel returning to work after suspension following a positive conclusion to the investigation;
- consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer what action should be taken such as referral to children's social care or disciplinary action if the allegation was found to be false;
- work closely with the link Director and the Designated Child Protection Officer;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy

Role of the Designated Child Protection Officer

The Designated Child Protection Officer will:

- ensure the implementation of this policy;
- ensure everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
- work closely with the Principal and the nominated Director;
- provide guidance and support to all staff;
- provide training for all staff on induction and when the need arises regarding;
- keep up to date with new developments and resources;
- undertake risk assessments when required;
- review and monitor;
- annually report to the Board of Directors on the success and development of this policy

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy;
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes;
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community

Procedure to Report Allegations

School personnel must:

- make a dated and timed written record of the disclosure or incident causing concern about a member of the school personnel or a school volunteer;
- inform the Designated Child Protection Officer;
- make a dated and timed written record of the disclosure or incident causing concern about the Principal;
- inform the Chair of Board of Directors who will deal with the allegation;
- make a dated and timed written record of the disclosure or incident causing concern about a pupil;
- inform the Designated Child Protection Officer;

The Designated Child Protection Officer will:

- follow up the referral;
- make records of any discussions and any investigation that takes place;
- decide whether to take the referral further or to monitor the situation;
- keep the person informed who initially reported the allegation of the decision made

The Chair of Board of Directors will:

- make a dated and timed written record of the disclosure or incident causing concern if no written record has been presented to the Chair of Board of Directors;
- inform the Local Authority Designated Officer

The Local Authority Designated Officer will:

- work with and alongside the school when dealing with allegations against school personnel;
- call for the intervention of the police and children's care services if they feel the allegation is very serious;
- advise the school of the course of action if they consider the intervention by police and children's care services is not necessary;
- consult with the school what action should be taken such as referral to children's social care or disciplinary action if the allegation was found to be false

The Named Person in the Allegation

The named person in the allegation will:

- be kept informed of the course of action after the initial consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer;
- be kept informed of all stages of the investigation;
- be advised to contact their union or professional association as soon as an allegation has been made;
- be advised by their union or professional association at all stages of the investigation

Suspension of the Named Person in the Allegation

Suspension will only take place if:

- a child or children are at risk;
- the allegation is of a very serious nature;
- it will help in the smooth running of the investigation

Records of Allegations

A detailed record of each allegation must be kept which clearly shows the:

- nature of the allegation
- follow-up action
- decision reached
- action taken

Written records must be:

- kept on the person's confidential personnel file with a copy given to the person concerned
- kept for a period of 10 years

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the School Handbook/Prospectus
- the Staff Handbook
- the school website
- meetings with school personnel and volunteers
- reports such as the annual report to parents and Principal reports to the Board of Directors
- information displays in the main school entrance

Training

We ensure all school personnel have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.

Periodic training will be organised for all school personnel so that they are kept up to date with new information and guide lines concerning equal opportunities.

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Effectiveness of the Policy

Annually (or when the need arises) the effectiveness of this policy will be reviewed by the Designated Child Protection Officer, the Principal and the nominated Director and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be made to the Board of Directors.

Important Telephone Numbers	Local Authority Designated Officer – Rachel Wright	01392 384964
	Multi –Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)	0345 155 1071
	Police	101

ACRONYM	TERM	DEFINITION

Amendment Record

VERSION #	DATE	AMENDED BY	NATURE OF CHANGE
1	18.03.2013	G Warne	