

STATEMENT OF PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF

Allegations about safeguarding children (Child Protection)

Policy Level:	
	2 ODBST Statutory and Mandatory Policy All schools must adopt these policies with local amendment strongly discouraged. These policies are centrally amended and binding on LGBs from the date of Board approval. They must be displayed on the school's website. Approval for all proposed local amendments must be sought from the ODBST Governance Lead prior to Local Governing Body resolution.
Other related ODBST policies and procedures:	
Committee responsible:	AEC
Approved by:	LGB
Date Approved:	3.2.22
Date for Next Review:	3.2.25

Allegations about the safeguarding and protection of children must be handled in accordance with statutory guidance and the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) Procedures Manual (BSCP Procedures”). This document can be accessed at [Welcome | Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board Procedures Manual](#). The relevant statutory guidance can be found in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges) dated September 2021 and 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' dated 2018. These documents can be accessed at [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Any allegation that a member of staff has:

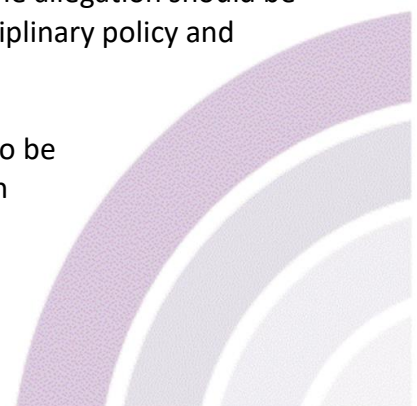
- behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child.
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or;
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates that he/she is unsuitable to work with children should be dealt with in accordance with BSCP procedures.

Schools should appoint a designated safeguarding lead (DSL), also known as 'designated senior person' (DSP) from the school's senior leadership team who has appropriate authority and is given the time for training and resources in order to provide support and advice to other staff on child protection matters. There should always be cover for this role should the DSL be away for any reason.

Schools should ensure they are familiar with their Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who handles child protection/safeguarding allegations. The LADO has a statutory duty to ensure that allegations about safeguarding are handled properly and expeditiously.

The key points for all responsible individuals (typically the Headteacher, chair of governors and DSL) to follow when made aware of a safeguarding allegation are:

- read and be familiar with chapter 7.2 [Managing Allegations against Staff and Volunteers](#) of the BSCP Procedures.
- if it is believed or suspected that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a referral must be made immediately to the police.
- inform the LADO within one working day of any allegation meeting the criteria above that comes to the school's attention and any referral made to the police. Whilst a preliminary assessment of the available evidence can be made in order to inform the LADO, no attempt should be made to carry out an investigation. The standard referral form must be used, and a decision is usually made within 24 hours and often within just a few hours.
- a strategy meeting should be arranged within two working days in circumstances where the child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm which will then determine whether the allegation should be investigated by the police or by some other agency or by the school under this disciplinary policy and procedure.
- in circumstances where significant harm is not suspected to be suffered or likely to be suffered by the child, an evaluation meeting may be called with the DO to ascertain next steps.
- if the matter is handed back to the school, whether at the first strategy meeting, an evaluation meeting or at some later stage, consideration should be given to any recommendations from the strategy/evaluation meetings.



The BSCP procedures contain clear timelines for management of **safeguarding** cases. Where it is clear straightaway that the allegation is unsubstantiated or malicious, these should be resolved **within one week**. If a disciplinary hearing is required in relation to a safeguarding case and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held **within 15 working days**. If further investigation is required, an investigation report should be aimed to be produced **within 10 working days**. On receipt of the investigation report, the school should decide **within two working days** if a disciplinary hearing is needed, and, if so, it should be held **within fifteen working days**. If formal disciplinary action is not required, the school should still consider any other appropriate action **within three working days**. These time limits apply only to safeguarding disciplinarys.

Where the harm test is or may be met allegations concerning the safety and welfare of children must be investigated and heard even if the employee has resigned. The employee should be given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations about it. It may be difficult to reach a conclusion and it may not be possible to apply any disciplinary sanctions if a person leaves employment before the process is complete. However, the disciplinary process should still be completed. If the decision is that the member of staff would have been dismissed or a sanction imposed had they still been in employment, there is a legal duty to make a referral to the DBS.

