

This leaflet provides a brief guide to the process that should be followed if faced with an allegation against any employee, volunteer or professional working with/providing services for children. Even if you are not sure whether it is something you can deal with yourself – where allegations arise you are strongly advised to consult with the LADO at the earliest opportunity. The LADO will be happy to advise whether or not the case needs LADO involvement.

**Local Authority's Designated Officers are
contactable via:**

**Tel: 01472 326118/
Lado@nelincs.gov.uk**

Introduction

This leaflet is about managing cases of allegations of abuse against a person who works with children in any setting. All allegations of abuse of children by a professional, staff member, foster carer or volunteer should be taken seriously and treated in accordance with the procedures set out in the SCP Guidelines and Procedures which can be found on the SaferNEL Website: <http://www.safernel.co.uk/>

The scope of this leaflet covers a wider range of allegations than those in which there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. This leaflet should be used for guidance in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children 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; or,
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Procedure

STEP 1

The person receiving the allegation should immediately notify his/her line manager or the designated child protection person in their establishment, organisation, group etc. or their senior.

That designated person then notifies the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) as soon as possible (within 1 working day) and completes a referral form to undertake an Initial Evaluation. Discussion can then take place to identify if further action is needed.

If it seems to be an extremely serious allegation (i.e. current injury, risk of losing forensic evidence, imminent danger to child/public/staff, crime ongoing etc.) The first contact should be to the Police and then the LADO /Out of Hours Team Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

STEP 2

In all but the most serious cases the LADO and the manager will initially consider:

- Whether it meets the threshold criteria
- Whether or not it needs referring to the police
- Whether it needs a Strategy Discussion and/or an allegations management meeting
- Whether Human Resources need to be involved
- Whether any immediate action needs taking to make the child safe including other children and the organisation.

STEP 3

The LADO will then record the decisions and actions agreed with the line manager and, if required, convene an allegations management meeting.

STEP 6

The LADO will coordinate and review future action as necessary and ensure all relevant parties are involved, informed and that the information and records are made and kept as required.

Key Points

1. If the allegation is clearly false (e.g. if the accused person has never met the child or was not on duty) it should still be reported to the LADO to decide if the alleged victim has other underlying needs.
2. If the allegation is malicious it should still be reported to the LADO with regard to whether the police need to take action regarding the person making the allegation.
3. Regardless of the nature of the allegation and regardless of who receives the allegation it **MUST** be reported to the LADO even if it appears to be of little importance or potentially not very serious. Sometimes it takes further investigations and enquiries to reveal the true nature of concerns.
4. The complaints process is separate to the allegations process and just because a person does not wish to make a complaint does not mean that there is no allegation or possible offence.