



# Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

## The Chalfonts Independent Grammar School

### CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy applies to all employees, Directors, volunteers, staff working on site employed by other agencies/ contractors and to all staff whilst working away from school on visits and trips. It also applies to before and after school clubs and activities. All members of the school community have a responsibility to read and ensure they understand the policy and the procedures for safeguarding our pupils. All staff must have a copy of this policy and should be familiar with its content.

#### 1. Introduction

This policy has been written in accordance with the requirements in the DfE statutory guidance: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE July 2015), 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (WTSC 2014) and the Education (Independent Schools Standards) Regulations (ISSR April 2014). It is available to parents and prospective parents on the School's website and from the Office on request.

The guidance used provides a sound framework to enable the School to fulfil its statutory duties to every child entrusted to its care. The School is committed to providing the highest standards in protecting and safeguarding its pupils and expects all its Directors, staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

#### 2. Designated Personnel for Child Protection

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr David Shandley, Principal  
The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs Alexandra Iredale  
The Designated person for Child Protection is Mr David Shandley, Principal

#### 3. Aims

In order to safeguard our pupils, the School will aim to prevent their abuse and neglect by:

- providing a safe and welcoming environment for all pupils where they can learn, develop and achieve, whilst feeling secure, valued and listened to by an approachable and caring staff.
- raising the awareness of all Directors, staff and volunteers of the need to safeguard pupils and of their responsibilities in identifying concerns and reporting them without delay to the Designated Personnel.
- ensuring that all staff are sensitive to issues of race, culture, gender and diversity and that these issues should never be a barrier to reporting concerns about children.
- providing all Directors, staff and volunteers with necessary information and guidance to enable them to act on child protection concerns. In addition, ensuring that they each have a copy of *KCSIE Part One: Information for all School and College Staff (July 2015)* as well as *Prevent Duty – Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (June 2015)*.
- operating safe recruitment procedures and ensuring that all adults in the School, who have access to children, have undergone recruitment checks, as required by ISSR as to their



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suitability to work with children, including an enhanced disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) plus a Barred List check, and that a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State (Employer Online service) prior to starting their employment in the School.

- checking that effective child protection arrangements are in place when pupils attend off-site activities.
- ensuring that the School has sufficient Designated Staff for child protection so that one person is contactable at all times during the day.
- ensuring the Designated Personnel have undertaken appropriate training for child protection and inter-agency training, and that this is updated at least every two years in line with the advice of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. See Annexe B of KCSIE (July 2015).
- ensuring that all staff receive appropriate, updated, refresher training to be scheduled in line with the advice of the Local Safeguarding Children Board in order to equip them to follow the school's safeguarding procedures and raise concerns appropriately.
- developing good, effective, working relationships with Buckinghamshire Children's Services and other agencies and allowing access for children's social care or the local authority to conduct or consider whether to conduct an assessment of a pupil in line with the Children Act 1989.
- ensuring that procedures in accordance with KCSIE Part 4: Allegations of Abuse made against Teachers, other Staff, Volunteers or the Principal are followed. In addition, ensuring prompt involvement with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- using the curriculum, PSHE and assemblies to raise pupils' awareness of safety issues and equip them with the skills needed to keep them safe and building their confidence to communicate with someone if they are being harmed in some way.
- monitoring and supporting children at risk or who are subject to child protection plans and knowing who to contact if issues arise.
- taking action as soon as a concern is raised, addressing risks and trying to avoid any escalation of issues. Being prepared to challenge inaction.
- providing a Staff Code of Conduct, which includes Safe Working Practices to protect staff, volunteers and pupils.
- ensuring that the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is regularly monitored by the Principal and Designated Personnel rigorously reviewed annually and that any deficiencies or weaknesses noted in the School's practice are remedied without delay.

The overall aim of the School is to establish a culture, where children's safeguarding and welfare is of paramount importance and ensure that all statutory and regulatory requirements are complied with fully.

#### **4. Pupils**

The staff are well placed, through their day to day contact and knowledge of their pupils to identify if anyone is displaying changes in behaviour and may be a victim of abuse or neglect and to offer



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support to those in need, following the School's procedures and guidance. All staff should be alert to the potential need for early help for all children in need, in particular, those who are disabled and/or have specific additional needs including special educational needs.

Pupils are encouraged to talk to whomever they feel comfortable with and should know who the Designated Person for child protection is. The School will raise their awareness of child protection issues and the potential dangers of the internet and social media through the curriculum, PSHE, IT and assemblies. Parents are helped to appreciate these dangers by the School.

### 5. Staff

All staff, including teaching, non-teaching, domestic, caretaking, volunteers and temporary staff will receive appropriate training in child protection in line with advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. (Volunteers and temporary staff will be made aware of the School's arrangements, policy and procedures by the Designated Personnel.) All new staff will be given a copy of the policy and procedures at their induction and have the policy explained to help them understand and adhere to it. In addition, a copy of KCSIE Part One will be given to all staff together with the Staff Code of Conduct. In order to raise the awareness for particularly new staff, a copy of the *Prevent Duty – Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (June 2015)* is also issued to all new staff. The Designated Personnel will receive updated child protection training, including inter-agency working, participation in case conferences, supporting children in need, record keeping and the promotion of a culture of listening to children at least every two years.

The school's child protection training, which is provided to all members of staff also considers the different types of abuse and the signs of abuse staff should be aware of, and includes reference to the specific safeguarding issues of child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and radicalisation which are referenced on pages 9, 10 and 11 of Part One of KCSIE (March 2015).

Members of staff must always take pupils' worries and fears seriously. However, they cannot guarantee confidentiality if concerns are such that a referral must be made to the appropriate agency in order to safeguard the child's welfare. Contact with parents must be dealt with by the DCP and recorded in writing.

If staff observe injuries, which appear to be non-accidental, or significant change in a pupil's behavior, or are told anything significant in relation to child protection by a pupil, they must report their concerns immediately to a Designated Person, who will contact the appropriate agency. In cases of serious harm, the police will be informed from the outset. A factual written record must be made of all actions taken. Staff must not carry out any investigation themselves or make any decisions as to whether the child has been abused.

If there is an allegation of abuse against an adult in the school, then this must be passed to the Principal and in his absence to the Directors. If the allegation concerns the Principal, then this must be passed immediately to the Directors.

Information is confidential and must only be shared on a 'need to know' basis. All child protection records must be detailed, accurate, and kept secure, confidential and separate from other records by the DCP.

To prevent radicalisation, all schools are subject to a duty to have due regard to the need to prevent



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people from being drawn into terrorism. Being drawn into terrorism includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit. The Government has defined extremism in its *Prevent Strategy (June 2011)* as: “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including



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democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs". Schools should be safe spaces in which children and young people can understand and discuss sensitive topics, including terrorism and the extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology, and learn how to challenge these ideas. The Prevent duty is not intended to limit discussion of these issues. Schools should, however, be mindful of their existing duties to forbid political indoctrination and secure a balanced presentation of political issues.

### **Staff Recruitment – for detailed information, please refer to the School’s Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures.**

The procedures for recruiting staff comply with KCSIE Part 3 (July 2015) and ISSR (April 2014) and are detailed in the separate document –‘Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures’. The School recognises that the selection process for new staff is a vital element in safeguarding and protecting children. The Directors recognise their responsibility to minimize risks by applying the ISSR regulations rigorously, ensuring that all necessary checks on provisionally successful applicants, including criminal record checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Barred List checks are carried out and are satisfactory, prior to the applicant starting work at the School. In addition, the School will check that anyone employed as a teacher is not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State using the Employer Online service. The School will keep a Single Central Register (SCR) of appointments in accordance with statutory requirements. All individuals who work in regular contact with children, including volunteers and those employed by third parties, will be included on the SCR.

The School will report to the Disclosure and Barring Service any person, whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or student/ trainee, whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children, within one month of them leaving the School. Compromise agreements will not apply in this situation. The School realises that **failure to make a report constitutes an offence**. Serious consideration to make referral to the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL), where a teacher has been dismissed, or would have been dismissed had he or she not resigned and a prohibition order may be appropriate. Reasons for such action would be: ‘unacceptable professional conduct’, ‘conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute’ or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence. (Where a referral has been made to the DBS, it is not necessary to refer to NCTL as information between the two bodies is shared.) Where a dismissal does not reach the threshold for a DBS referral, separate consideration must be given to an NCTL referral.

### **6. Parents, Guardians and Carers**

The School values its partnership with parents and is committed to working positively, openly and honestly with them to safeguard their children and promote their welfare. We respect parents’ right to privacy and confidentiality and will not share sensitive information without their permission unless it is necessary to do so in order to protect a child. Our first priority is the child’s welfare and therefore there may be occasions when we have to consult other agencies before consulting parents.



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A copy of the School's Child Protection Policy and Procedures is available to all parents, guardians and carers on the website and from the office on request.

### **7. Visitors to School**

All visitors to the school must report to the front desk, show identification (preferably photographic), sign in and receive a visitor badge, which must be worn whilst in the School and surrendered on exit. Parents and visitors are not allowed to wander freely in the School. They must be accompanied by a member of the staff if they need to access areas of the school away from the entrances. At the Principal's professional judgment and with permission, some visitors may access certain areas of the school without escort.

No child must be handed over to anyone unknown to the School during or at the end of the day unless prior information, including the identity of the person collecting, has been given to the School, preferably in writing by the parents or carer.

### **8. Mobile Devices/ Cameras – see Mobile Devices policy**

Effective guidance is in place to avoid the use of mobile devices/cameras causing unnecessary disruption and distraction within the School and to ensure that our safeguarding practice is promoted to protect against misuse. In the interest of equality, and further promote safety, the guidance applies to any individual, who has a mobile device/camera on site, including parents, staff, volunteers and visitors.

- **No personal mobile devices/cameras should be taken into a classroom under any circumstances**
- **Staff are only permitted to take photographs of pupils using school cameras. They should only use their personal telephones during break times and away from areas used by the children.**
- All parents, carers and visitors are strongly requested not to use their mobile devices for personal reasons on school premises at any time. Outdoor areas, which are free from pupils, can be used if necessary.

### **9. Monitoring and Review**

This policy and the following procedures and appendices involved will be monitored termly by the Principal and Senior Leadership Team and updated in accordance with current regulatory requirements. The Directors will undertake a range of checks each term in addition



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to overseeing the Single Central Register. A written record of checks will be kept. In addition, child protection will be an agenda item on all staff meetings.

The above mentioned reports will be presented verbally and in writing to the full Director's meeting annually, when their review of the School's policy and procedures and the efficiency with which the various duties have been carried out takes place. Any deficiencies or weaknesses noted in child protection will be remedied without delay. The Minutes will record this review and also any necessary subsequent action to be taken. The ratified policy and procedures will replace all others and be placed on the School's website.

### **10. Responsibilities, Procedures and Guidance**

#### **The Responsibilities of the Principal – (who is also the Designated Safeguarding Lead at The Chalfonts School)**

The Principal (DSL) aided by a Designated Person and the SLT, is responsible for ensuring that the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures adopted by the Directors are fully implemented and followed by all staff. The Principal will ensure that any deficiencies or weaknesses in the policy or procedures are remedied without delay.

The Principal ensures that:

- the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are readily available to all staff and volunteers and Directors, understood by them, and regularly monitored and updated.
- sufficient resources and time are allocated to enable the Designated Personnel to discharge their responsibilities and that staff are able to attend strategy discussions, child protection conferences, inter-agency meetings and contribute fully to the assessment of children.
- all staff feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children in the School and that concerns to the Designated Safeguarding, Lead, Designated Personnel for Child Protection and Directors will be addressed sensitively and in a timely manner. If they are not satisfied and there is escalation of any problem, then any member of staff can refer a concern to children's social care directly (KCSIE July 2015).
- all staff know that information is confidential and must only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.



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- all child protection records must be kept securely, confidentially and separately from other records.
- the School's safe recruitment procedures are rigorously followed for each appointment and are fully in accordance with current law and regulations. This includes all legal checks being carried out by the School and various agencies and recorded on new Directors, staff, volunteers, contractors' staff and domestic staff, students and supply staff. (See Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedures).
- all new staff, teaching and non-teaching, contractors' and domestic staff, volunteers and students receive induction training in child protection and procedures when they join the School and record their understanding of it. Temporary staff will be made aware of the School's arrangements, policy and procedures by the Designated Personnel when they join the School. All staff will receive a copy of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', Part One and record that they have read it.
- appropriate training for all staff, in line with schedule set and advice from the LCSB – a record of this is kept by the DCP.
- appropriate training for Designated Personnel, in line with advice from the LCSB, takes place at least every two years – a record of this is kept.
- all staff, teaching and non-teaching, contractors' and domestic staff, volunteers and students must comply with the Staff Code of Conduct, which incorporates Safe Working Practices, and record that they have read it.
- parents of pupils and prospective pupils can obtain the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures on the School's website. Parents are alerted to on-line dangers.
- any person, whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student, who is found to be unsuitable to work with children will be reported to the Disclosure and Barring Service, within one month of that person leaving the School, and to Ofsted. Compromise agreements cannot apply in these cases.
- consideration will be given to a referral being made to the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL). 0845 609 0009 where a teacher has been dismissed or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned for 'unacceptable professional conduct' or 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute' or a 'conviction' for a relevant offence.





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- Child Protection is an agenda item for all staff and Directors' meetings and any deficiencies or weaknesses reported in the School's policy and procedures will be remedied without delay.

#### **The Responsibilities of all Staff and Volunteers within the School**

All staff and volunteers in the School will ensure that:

- they read the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures each September, on commencing their contract with the School and when it is updated in accordance with current legislation and regulations. In addition, they must have and read 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Part One.
- they attend induction meetings and regular training sessions in order to know, understand and be able to implement the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures correctly.
- they know the names of the Designated Personnel for child protection in the School.
- they are alert to the signs of harm and abuse of pupils in the School
- **they know that they must report all concerns about children promptly to a Designated Person.**
- they know that they can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice regarding children in the School and that if such concerns are not addressed they can refer their concerns to children's social care directly. (KCSIE 2015)
- **they know that it is neither their responsibility nor role to assess, diagnose or investigate their concerns, but it is essential to report (as above) and record them.**
- **they know how they must respond to allegations of abuse against adults in the School: it is their responsibility to share concerns about actions and attitudes of colleagues with the Principal, and in her absence, the Directors. If their concerns relate to the Principal then they must be shared immediately with the Directors.**
- they know that information is confidential and must only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.
- they will ensure that any weaknesses or deficiencies found in the School's child protection and procedures are recorded and reported to a DCP without delay.
- they will provide a DCP with the names of pupils involved when organising out of school visits to ensure awareness of any essential information relating to the care of these pupils whilst away.



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- they are aware of day to day safe working practices in School and will comply with the Staff Code of Conduct and Safe Working Practice.

#### **Whistleblowing**

All staff must report to the Principal or Nominated Child Protection Director (as appropriate) any concern or allegation about the school's safeguarding practices or behaviour of a colleague which is or is likely to put a pupil at risk of abuse or significant harm. There will be no disciplinary action taken against members of staff who make such a report provided it is done so in good faith.

#### **Specific Responsibilities of the Designated Personnel**

The Designated Child Protection Personnel has the responsibility for:

- ensuring that child protection, safer recruitment and associated policies and procedures are updated in line with current legislation and regulations, disseminated to and adhered to by all staff and volunteers who work with children in the School.
- being a source of support, advice and expertise to all staff.
- ensuring that all staff including teaching, non- teaching, volunteers, domestic and estate staff receive appropriate, refresher training, in line schedule set and advice from LSCB, to ensure that they are up to date with current legislation, policy and practice.
- ensuring that all new staff and volunteers are inducted in Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures within 7 days of the commencement of work at the school and receive the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE Part One and have these documents explained. Following the induction session ensure that each person signs a document to say that they have had the opportunity to read the policy, procedures and guidance and have any confusions clarified.
- ensuring that the Designated Personnel responsible for child protection have undertaken appropriate child protection and inter-agency training, in line with advice from the LCSB, and this is updated at least every two years.
- ensuring that the School has a system for monitoring and recording concerns about children at an early stage and that all staff know the symptoms and signs of a child in need or a child at the risk of harm or at the risk of abuse;
- ensuring that all staff realise that where a child is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action should be taken to protect that child. Action should also be taken to promote the welfare of a child in need of additional support, even if they are not suffering harm or



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are at immediate risk. It is important that children receive the right help at the right time to address risks and prevent issues escalating. For children in need there are local processes including Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Team around the Child (TAC); for children suffering harm or in danger of suffering harm, referral will be made to Children's Social Care. In cases of serious harm to children, the police will be informed at the outset.

- Ensuring that the School monitors and supports those children who are a concern, either because they are deemed to be in need or to be at risk of harm. in line with advice from the LCSB to identify the route that needs to be taken.
- ensuring attendance at child protection conferences and maintaining appropriate links with external agencies and the Buckinghamshire Children's Services.
- ensuring that all adults working with children in the School have undergone all recruitment checks as required by the current *Education Independent Schools Standard Regulations (ISSR April 2014)* to their suitability to work with children in line with DfE statutory guidance. In addition, checking the School's Single Central Register regularly (see Safe Recruitment Policy).
- ensuring that all staff are trained to respond correctly and promptly to inappropriate behaviour displayed by other members of staff or any other person working with children in the School.
- ensuring that appropriate procedures are known and followed where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer in accordance with KCSIE (July 2015) and involving the LADO.
- ensuring that all child protection records are written, detailed, accurate and kept securely, confidentially and separately from other records in school. Inform staff that child protection information must only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.
- ensuring that any weaknesses or deficiencies found in the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are remedied without delay.
- managing child protection concerns and making prompt referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), local agencies seeking appropriate advice and guidance. In cases of serious harm, the police will be informed by the Principal/DCP from the outset.
- ensuring that responses to requests for information from child protection agencies are given promptly and without demur.



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- ensuring that a written record of staff child protection training and induction is kept.
- where children leave the school, ensure that their child protection records are copied for any new school and transferred to the new Designated Person separately from the main pupil file.
- referring to Annex C in KCSIE should there be any pupils staying with host families on educational visits.

### **The Responsibilities of the Directors**

Whilst the ultimate responsibility for compliance with the statutory requirements and regulations for safeguarding children falls on the Directors of the School, the day to day operational responsibility rests with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Principal, Mr David Shandley or, in his absence, the Designated Person, Mrs Alexandra Iredale, who also has responsibility for child protection, as the DDSL.

The Directors must ensure that:

- the School has a Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures in accordance with current legislation, regulatory requirements and guidance and updated by the DCP termly, reviewed rigorously and ratified by the full Board of Directors annually. In addition, any weaknesses or deficiencies found in policy or practice will be remedied without delay. All Directors must read the policy and procedures together with *'Keeping Children Safe in Education'* (KCSIE 2015).
- there is a nominated Director for child protection, who will liaise with the Designated Personnel on all safeguarding issues and scrutinise a range of practices termly, including checking the School's Single Central Register and speaking with the staff. In addition, the nominated Director will record his/her findings and provide an annual report to the Board of Directors to help them assess the efficiency with which the School's child protection duties are being discharged.
- the School has a written recruitment policy that includes safe recruitment procedures in accordance with current statutory requirements and regulations, KCSIE (2015) and ISSR (April 2014) to be used for every appointment. Prior to starting work in the School, all necessary checks will be carried out on Directors, all staff, volunteers, contractors' and agency staff including enhanced DBS/ barred list, identity, qualifications, right to work in the UK, medical fitness and overseas check where necessary. A check must be made on anyone employed as a teacher to ensure that he/she is not subject to a prohibition order Issued by the Secretary of State (Employer Online). (See Safe Recruitment Policy)



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- the School has management and disciplinary procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against the Principal, staff and volunteers in the School that comply with current legislation and guidance as detailed in KCSIE (July 2015)
- the School has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (the Principal) and 2 Designated Persons for Child Protection, who take day to day responsibility for child protection throughout the School including EYFS pupils.
- the School will fund training for all staff, in line with schedule set and advice from the LCSB, and for Designated Personnel to include inter-agency training at least every two years. In addition there will be funding to provide sufficient time for staff to discharge child protection duties and for appropriate arrangements to inform temporary staff and volunteers on the School's policy and procedures where necessary.
- the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be available to all parents and prospective parents on the School's website or from the School office on request.

The review of the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures will be carried out by the full Board of Directors annually. It will be monitored termly by the Principal and SLT and updated as necessary in accordance with current regulatory requirements. The Nominated Director for child protection will liaise with the DSL and undertake a range of checks termly in addition to overseeing the Single Central Register. A written record of these checks will be kept.

The above mentioned reports will be presented verbally and in writing to the full Directors' meeting for the annual review of child protection procedures and the efficiency with which related duties are being discharged. Any deficiencies or weaknesses in child protection will be remedied without delay. The Minutes will record this review and any subsequent action in detail. The ratified policy and procedures will replace all others and be placed on the School's website.

### **11. Procedures if child abuse is suspected**

If a member of staff suspects that a child may be at risk of harm or if a pupil discloses something that points to this, it is the responsibility of the person concerned to report and record their concerns to a DCP before leaving the School site.

#### **Stage 1: Initial concern or complaint**

If as a member of staff you hear, suspect or have cause for concern that abuse is taking place, you must:

- Listen carefully, without interrupting. Staff must **not** ask leading questions.



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- Make it clear that the matter will be taken seriously.
- Reassure the pupil and explain that you need to pass on the information in order to help. You must not guarantee absolute confidentiality.
- Let them know what may happen next.
- Make an immediate, careful record of what has been said, using the child's actual words wherever possible (not your interpretation of them). The record should include the date, time, place and those present during the conversation and be signed by the person taking the record
- Immediately contact a DCP. If the allegations involve a DCP, immediately contact the Directors without first informing the DCP. Record, in writing, the fact that you have reported the situation.
- Remain caring and supportive to the child.

**If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate, serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral.**

### **Stage 2: Action by the DSL**

The DSL will:

- Keep a full record of reports made in a separate confidential file (separate from the pupil's general file).
- Consider the wishes of the pupil concerned (taking into account the pupil's maturity and understanding) provided they have been properly informed and consulted. Circumstances may arise where the pupil's wishes need to be overridden.
- Consider the parent's wishes, provided informing the parents does not put the pupil at risk and they have no interest which would conflict with the pupil's best interests.

### **Stage 3: Referral to External Agencies**

Once a concern or complaint has been reported to the DSL, the DSL will consult with Buckinghamshire Children's Services Department on a no names basis and make the referral if advised by them.

The school will not do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation. If concern exists that **a child is at risk of significant harm**, the DSL will refer the matter **without delay** to the Local Authority children's social care services (and in any event within 24 hours of disclosure or suspicion of abuse). All further responsibility for gathering information and deciding what happens next will rest primarily with Social Services. The school will not carry out any internal investigation into allegations without prior consultation with the local authority designated officer or the police, if appropriate. **In cases of serious harm, the police will be informed from the outset.**



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### 12. Guidance for Staff

#### Recognition of Child Abuse

Child abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual or neglectful. Recognition of signs and symptoms is dependent upon professionals being open to the possibility of non-accidental injury or other forms of abuse and sharing possible concerns in the best interests of the child.

It is the responsibility of staff to report concerns promptly and **not** to make their own decisions or investigate.

#### The four key categories of abuse:

##### 1. Physical Abuse

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical abuse includes any practices of female genital mutilation. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

#### Signs of possible physical abuse

- Any [injuries](#) or recurrent injuries not consistent with the explanation given for them
- Marks from an implement, pinch or grab marks.
- Injuries which occur to the body in places which are not normally exposed to falls or rough games.
- Bruising of buttocks, breast, lower abdomen, thighs and around genital or anal area.
- Injuries, eating disorders which have not received medical attention.
- Reluctance to change for, or participate in, games or swimming.
- Bruises, bites, scalds, burns and fractures, for example, which do not have an accidental explanation.
- The child gives inconsistent accounts for the cause of injuries.

The parents or child's reaction to the injury can be significant, including

- Refusal to discuss injury or an improbable explanation.
- Refusal to accept medical help for untreated injuries and eating disorders.
- Keeping their child away from school without reasonable explanation.

The child's behaviour can also be significant, including

- Shrinking from physical contact.
- Unwillingness to undress for PE, swimming, etc.
- Unwilling to go home at the end of the day.
- Panic/ fear of parents being contacted by the School.
- Running away from home.



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### 1. Emotional Abuse

This is the persistent emotional mal-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or valued only so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed in children. These may include interactions which are beyond the child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of mal-treatment of a child, or of a person around them at home. It can involve not giving the child opportunities to express their views, making fun of what they say or how they try to communicate. It may include cyber – bullying causing children to feel frightened, inadequate or under pressure.

#### Signs of possible emotional abuse

- Depression, aggression, extreme anxiety, changes or regression in mood or behaviour, particularly where a child withdraws or becomes clingy
- Obsessions or phobias
- Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration
- Seeking adult attention and not mixing well with other children
- Sleep or speech disorders
- Self-harm and lack of self esteem
- Negative statements about self
- Highly aggressive or cruel to others
- Extreme shyness or passivity
- Running away, stealing and lying
- Thumb sucking/ obsessive rocking
- Lack of trust in anyone, fear of others
- Overly compliant or watchful
- Eating disorders

Emotional abuse will always be present with one of the other categories. Some symptoms will be part of the child's behaviour – you know your children so look for changes and patterns of change. Gather information, monitor and report any concerns to your DCP.

### 2. Sexual Abuse

This involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact including penetrative or non-penetrative acts, or oral sex. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic materials or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. It includes the involvement of a child in electronic sexual material.





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### Signs of possible sexual abuse

- Any allegations made by a child concerning sexual abuse.
- The child has an excessive preoccupation with sexual matters and inappropriate knowledge of adult sexual behaviour for their age, or regularly engages in sexual play inappropriate for their age.
- Sexual activity through words, play or drawing.
- Repeated urinary infections or unexplained stomach pains.
- The child is sexually provocative or seductive with adults.
- Inappropriate bed-sharing arrangements at home.
- Severe sleep disturbances with fears, phobias, vivid dreams or nightmares which sometimes have overt or veiled sexual connotations
- Eating disorders such as anorexia or bulimia.
- Obsession with use of computer and phone + desire for privacy in these activities.

### 3. Neglect

This is the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failure to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate carers or failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. Neglect differs from other forms of abuse in that there is rarely a single incident or crisis which draws attention to the family. It is repeated, persistent neglectful behaviour that can cause **compound** damage. It is likely that agencies will have worked with these families before making a referral.

#### Signs of possible neglect – the most common indicators:

- Dirty skin, body smells, unwashed, uncombed hair and untreated lice.
- Clothing that is dirty, too big or small, or inappropriate for weather conditions.
- Frequently left unsupervised or alone.
- Failure to provide an adequate diet – malnutrition, constant hunger, binge eating when food is available, taking food from others or from bins.
- Child is underweight, under developed and insecure with no day to day routines established by parents/carers.
- Frequent diarrhoea
- Frequent tiredness
- Untreated illnesses, infected cuts or physical complaints which the parent/carers does not respond to.
- Poor peer relationships
- Poor level of stimulation, poor communication skills, poor attendance at School
- Failure to attend medical examinations or immunisations
- Frequent accidents due to poor supervision
- Cares for self, for siblings or parents – often tired, finds it hard to concentrate.



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Staff should be aware of other safeguarding issues, such as domestic violence, faith abuse, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, youth violence, teenage relationship abuse, gender abuse, sexting, cyber-bullying, drugs and trafficking, fabricated or induced illness on behalf of a parent/carer... (further information on these issues can be found at [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk) and the [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) website.)

A child going missing from School is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. **If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate, serious harm to a child, a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Anybody can make a referral.**

It may be suspected that abuse is taking place by one or more pupils against another pupil and there is the likelihood that a child is suffering significant harm, then these concerns should be referred to the DSL as soon as possible. A bullying incident will be treated as a child protection concern where there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. There may be occasions when a pupil's behaviour warrants a response under Child Protection Procedures rather than the school's disciplinary procedures. The school will take advice from Social Services as to the appropriate action to take. Parents will be informed as soon as possible, unless it is in the best interests of the child **not** to do so.

### 13. Important Contacts

The Designated Safeguarding Lead **Mr David Shandley**, Principal.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is **Mrs Alexandra Iredale**

The Chairman of Directors is **Mr Ali Khan** to be contacted through the Registrar, Mr Julian Fenton

Local Police:101

Disclosure and Barring Service: 0870 909 0811

Darlington DL1 9FA

NSPCC: 0808 800 5000

Ofsted: 0300 123 4666/4234

[www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

ISI: [www.concerns@isi.net](mailto:www.concerns@isi.net)



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### 13. Appendix 1 – Recording a Disclosure

Pupil's Name:	Date and time of disclosure:
Location where abuse took place, date and time:	Names of other persons present:
Nature of the alleged abuse:	Description of injuries observed:
Exact words spoken by pupil:	Continued:

### 14. Appendix 2 - Information Sharing

**Practitioners' Guide** (Re-produced from HM Government Guide – *Information Sharing ; Practitioners' Guide 2006*)

**Six key points on information sharing:**

- You should explain to children, young people and families at the outset, openly and honestly, what and how information will, or could be shared and why, and seek their agreement. The exception to this is where to do so would put that child, young person or others at increased risk of significant harm or an adult at risk of serious harm, or if it would undermine the prevention, detection or prosecution of a serious crime including where seeking consent might lead to interference with any potential investigation.



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- You will always consider the safety and welfare of a child or young person when making decisions on whether to share information about them. Where there is concern that the child may be suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm, the child's safety and welfare will be the overriding consideration.
- You should, where possible, respect the wishes of children, young people or families who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information, if in your judgment on the facts of the case, there is sufficient need in the public interest to override that lack of consent.
- You should seek advice where you are in doubt, especially where your doubt relates to a concern about possible significant harm to a child or serious harm to others.
- **You should ensure that the information you share is accurate and up-to-date, necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, shared only with those people who need to see it, and shared securely.**
- You should always record the reasons for your decision – whether it is to share information or not.

### **15. Appendix 3 - Managing Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff in the School**

*This section is in accordance with the guidance from the DfE – 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015)' part 4, and ISSR (April 2014). It applies to all teachers and other staff who work with children in the School, whether in a paid or voluntary position, including those who work with children on a temporary, supply or other agency basis.*

*All adults working at the School are expected to comply with the School's Code of Conduct, which incorporates Safe Working Practices*

**The School's statutory responsibility and commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and to supporting any child who has allegedly been harmed by an adult is paramount in this commitment.**

The Directors have a duty of care to their employees and pupils. They should ensure they provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation and provide the employee with a named contact if they are suspended.

This policy is about managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity. It should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) in the school has:

- a. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- c. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children.



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It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer in the school is dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Children's Services: Out of Hours: 03001234043

### Initial Considerations

The procedures for dealing with allegations need to be applied with common sense and judgement. Many cases may well either not meet the criteria set out above, or may do so without warranting consideration of either a police investigation or enquiries by local authority children's social care services. In these cases, local arrangements should be followed to resolve cases without delay.

Some rare allegations will be so serious they require immediate intervention by children's social care services and/or police. **The LADO should be informed of all allegations** that come to the school's attention and appear to meet the criteria so they can consult police and children's social care services as appropriate.

**The following definitions** should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- a. **Substantiated:** there is sufficient identifiable evidence to prove the allegation;
- b. **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- c. **Malicious:** there is clear evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation is entirely false;
- d. **Unfounded:** there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made. It might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively they may not have been aware of all the circumstances;
- e. **Unsubstantiated:** this is not the same as a false allegation. It means that there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

### Procedure

1. In the first instance, **the Principal or Directors, (hereafter known as the "case manager")** should immediately discuss the allegation with the LADO. The purpose of an initial discussion is for the LADO and the case manager to consider the nature, content and context of the allegation and agree a course of action. The LADO may ask the case manager to provide or obtain relevant additional information, such as previous history, whether the child or their family have made similar allegations and the individual's current contact with children. There may be situations when the case manager will want to involve the police immediately, for example if the person is deemed to be an immediate risk to children or there is evidence of a criminal offence. Where there is no such evidence, the case manager should discuss the allegations with the LADO in order to help determine whether police involvement is necessary.



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2. The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern; in which case this decision and a justification for it should be recorded by both the case manager and the LADO, and agreement reached on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom. The case manager should then consider with the LADO what action should follow both in respect of the individual and those who made the initial allegation.
3. The case manager should inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting the LADO. It is extremely important that the case manager provides them with as much information as possible at that time. However, where a strategy discussion is needed, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the case manager should not do that until those agencies have been consulted, and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the accused. Employers must consider carefully whether the circumstances of a case warrant a person being suspended from contact with children at the school or whether alternative arrangements can be put in place until the allegation or concern is resolved. All options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step. (Please see further information on suspension below).
4. If the allegation is not demonstrably false or unfounded, and there is cause to suspect a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion should be convened in accordance with *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2013). If the allegation is about physical contact, the strategy discussion or initial evaluation with the police should take into account that teachers and other school staff are entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances, including dealing with disruptive behaviour.
5. Where it is clear that an investigation by the police or children's social care services is unnecessary, or the strategy discussion or initial evaluation decides that is the case, the LADO should discuss the next steps with the case manager. In those circumstances, the options open to the school depend on the nature and circumstances of the allegation and the evidence and information available. This will range from taking no further action to dismissal or a decision not to use the person's services in future. Suspension should not be the default position: an individual should be suspended only if there is no reasonable alternative.
6. In some cases, further enquiries will be needed to enable a decision about how to proceed. If so, the LADO should discuss with the case manager how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken. In straightforward cases, the investigation should normally be undertaken by a senior member of the school's staff.
7. However, in other circumstances, such as lack of appropriate resource within the school, or the nature or complexity of the allegation will require an independent investigator. Many local authorities already provide for an independent investigation of allegations. In such circumstances The Chalfonts will refer to the School's legal adviser.

#### **Support for those involved**

8. The Directors have a duty of care to their employees. They should act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations process. Support for the individual is key to fulfilling this duty. Individuals should be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless there is an objection by the children's social care services or the police. The individual should be advised to contact



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- their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support.
9. The case manager should appoint a named representative to keep the person who is the subject of the allegation informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual. Particular care needs to be taken when employees are suspended to ensure that they are kept informed of both the progress of their case and current work-related issues. Social contact with colleagues and friends should not be prevented unless there is evidence to suggest that such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence.
  10. Parents or carers of a child or children involved should be told about the allegation as soon as possible if they do not already know of it. However, where a strategy discussion is required, or police or children's social care services need to be involved, the case manager should not do so until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed to the parents or carers. Parent or carers should also be kept informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including the outcome of any disciplinary process. The deliberations of a disciplinary hearing, and the information taken into account in reaching a decision, cannot normally be disclosed, but the parents or carers of the child should be told the outcome in confidence.
  11. Parents and carers should also be made aware of the prohibition on reporting or publishing allegations about teachers in section 141F of the Education Act 2002. If parents or carers wish to apply to the court to have reporting restrictions removed, they should be told to seek legal advice.
  12. In cases where a child may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, children's social care services, or the police as appropriate, should consider what support the child or children involved may need.

### **Confidentiality**

13. It is extremely important that when an allegation is made, the school or makes every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. The Education Act 2011 introduced reporting restrictions preventing the publication of any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a pupil from the same school (where that identification would identify the teacher as the subject of the allegation). The reporting restrictions apply until the point that the accused person is charged with an offence, or until the Secretary of State or the General Teaching Council for Wales publishes information about an investigation or decision in a disciplinary case arising from the allegation. The reporting restrictions also cease to apply if the individual to whom the restrictions apply effectively waives their right to anonymity by going public themselves or by giving their written consent for another to do so or if a judge lifts restrictions in response to a request to do so. The provisions commence on 1 October 2012.
14. The legislation imposing restrictions makes clear that "publication" of material that may lead to the identification of the teacher who is the subject of the allegation is prohibited. "Publication" includes "any speech, writing, relevant programme or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public". This means that a parent who, for example, published details of the allegation on a social networking site would be in breach of the reporting restrictions (if what was published could lead to the identification of the teacher by members of the public).



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15. The case manager should take advice from the LADO, police and children's social care services to agree the following:
  - who needs to know and, importantly, exactly what information can be shared;
  - how to manage speculation, leaks and gossip;
  - what, if any information can be reasonably given to the wider community to reduce speculation; and
  - how to manage press interest if and when it should arise.

### **Resignations and “Compromise Agreements”**

16. If the accused person resigns, or ceases to provide their services, this should not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with this guidance. A referral to the DBS must be made if the criteria are met (see page 18). If the accused person resigns or their services ceases to be used and the criteria are met, it will not be appropriate to reach a settlement/compromise agreement. A settlement/compromise agreement which prevents the school from making a DBS referral when the criteria are met would likely result in a criminal offence being committed and the school would not be complying with its legal duty.
17. So-called ‘compromise agreements’, by which a person agrees to resign if the employer agrees not to pursue disciplinary action, and both parties agree a form of words to be used in any future reference, should not be used in these cases. Such an agreement will not prevent a thorough police investigation where that is appropriate. Nor can it override the statutory duty to make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where circumstances require that.
18. It is important that every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of children, including any in which the person concerned refuses to cooperate with the process. Wherever possible the accused should be given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations about it. But the process of recording the allegation and any supporting evidence, and reaching a judgement about whether it can be substantiated on the basis of all the information available, should continue even if that cannot be done or the accused does not cooperate. It may be difficult to reach a conclusion in those circumstances, and it may not be possible to apply any disciplinary sanctions if a person's period of notice expires before the process is complete, but it is important to reach and record a conclusion wherever possible.

### **Record keeping**

19. Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious should be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, it is important that a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken and decisions reached, is kept on the confidential personnel file of the accused, and a copy provided to the person concerned.
20. The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference, where appropriate. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS Disclosures reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time. The record should be





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retained at least until the accused has reached normal retirement age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

21. The Information Commissioner has published guidance on employment records in its Employment Practices Code and supplementary guidance, which provides some practical advice on employment retention.

#### References

**Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated, unfounded or malicious should not be included in employer references. A history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be unsubstantiated, malicious etc. should also not be included in any reference.**

22. It is in everyone's interest to resolve cases as quickly as possible consistent with a fair and thorough investigation. All allegations must be investigated as a priority to avoid any delay. Target timescales are shown below: the time taken to investigate and resolve individual cases depends on a variety of factors including the nature, seriousness and complexity of the allegation, but these targets should be achieved in all but truly exceptional cases. It is expected that 80 per cent of cases should be resolved within one month, 90 per cent within three months, and all but the most exceptional cases should be completed within 12 months.
23. For those cases where it is clear immediately that the allegation is unfounded or malicious, they should be resolved within one week. Where the initial consideration decides that the allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence it will be for the employer to deal with it, although if there are concerns about child protection, the employer should discuss with the LADO. In such cases, if the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the employer should institute appropriate action within three working days. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing should be held within 15 working days.

#### Oversight and Monitoring

24. The LADO has overall responsibility for oversight of the procedures for dealing with allegations; for resolving any inter-agency issues; and for liaison with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) on the subject. The LADO will provide advice and guidance to the case manager, in addition to liaising with the police and other agencies, and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible consistent with a thorough and fair process. Reviews should be conducted at fortnightly or monthly intervals, depending on the complexity of the case.
25. Police forces should also identify officers who will be responsible for:
  - liaising with the LADO;
  - taking part in the strategy discussion or initial evaluation;
  - subsequently reviewing the progress of those cases in which there is a police investigation; and
  - sharing information on completion of the investigation or any prosecution.
26. If the strategy discussion or initial assessment decides that a police investigation is required, the police should also set a target date for reviewing the progress of the investigation and consulting the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) about whether to:
  - charge the individual; continue to investigate; or close the investigation. Wherever possible,



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that review should take place no later than four weeks after the initial evaluation. Dates for subsequent reviews, ideally at fortnightly intervals, should be set at the meeting if the investigation continues.

### **Suspension**

27. The possible risk of harm to children posed by an accused person should be evaluated and managed in respect of the child(ren) involved in the allegations. In some rare cases that will require the case manager to consider suspending the accused until the case is resolved. Suspension must not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported; all options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step. If the case manager is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the teacher's family, those concerns should be reported to the LADO or police. But suspension is highly unlikely to be justified on the basis of such concerns alone.
28. Suspension should be considered only in a case where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the school is/are at risk of significant harm or the case is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal. However, a person should not be suspended automatically: the case manager must consider carefully whether the circumstances warrant suspension from contact with children at the school or until the allegation is resolved, and may wish to seek advice from their personnel adviser and the LADO.
29. The case manager should also consider whether the result that would be achieved by immediate suspension could be obtained by alternative arrangements. In many cases an investigation can be resolved quickly and without the need for suspension. If the LADO, police and children's social care services have no objections to the member of staff continuing to work during the investigation, the case manager should be as inventive as possible to avoid suspension. Based on assessment of risk, the following alternatives should be considered by the case manager before suspending a member of staff:
  - redeployment within the school so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child or children concerned;
  - providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children;
  - redeploying to alternative work in the school so the individual does not have unsupervised access to children;
  - moving the child or children to classes where they will not come into contact with the member of staff, making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted; or
  - temporarily redeploying the member of staff to another role in a different location, for example to an alternative school.
30. These alternatives allow time for an informed decision regarding the suspension and possibly reduce the initial impact of the allegation. This will, however, depend upon the nature of the allegation. The case manager should consider the potential permanent professional reputational damage to employees that can result from suspension where an allegation is later found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded or maliciously intended.
31. If immediate suspension is considered necessary, the rationale and justification for such a course of action should be agreed and recorded by both the case manager and the LADO. This should also include what alternatives to suspension have been considered and why they were rejected.



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32. Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation should be dispatched within one working day, giving as much detail as appropriate for the reasons for the suspension. It is not acceptable for an employer to leave a person who has been suspended without any support. The person should be informed at the point of their suspension who their named contact is within the organisation and provided with their contact details.

33. Children's social care services or the police cannot require the case manager to suspend a member of staff or a volunteer, although they should give appropriate weight to their advice. The power to suspend is vested in the governing body of the school who are the employers of staff at the school. However, where a strategy discussion or initial evaluation concludes that there should be enquiries by the children's social care services and/or an investigation by the police, the LADO should canvass police and children's social care services for views about whether the accused member of staff needs to be suspended from contact with children in order to inform the school consideration of suspension. Police involvement does not make it mandatory to suspend a member of staff; this decision should be taken on a case-by-case basis having undertaken a risk assessment.

#### **Information Sharing**

34. In a strategy discussion or the initial evaluation of the case, the agencies involved should share all relevant information they have about the person who is the subject of the allegation, and about the alleged victim.
35. Where the police are involved, wherever possible the employer should ask the police to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the employer disciplinary process. This should be done as their investigation proceeds and will enable the police to share relevant information without delay at the conclusion of their investigation or any court case.
36. Children's social care services should adopt a similar procedure when making enquiries to determine whether the child or children named in the allegation are in need of protection or services, so that any information obtained in the course of those enquiries which is relevant to a disciplinary case can be passed to the employer without delay.

#### **Action following a criminal investigation or a prosecution**

37. The police or the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) should inform the Directors and LADO immediately when a criminal investigation and any subsequent trial is complete, or if it is decided to close an investigation without charge, or not to continue to prosecute the case after person has been charged. In those circumstances the LADO should discuss with the case manager whether any further action, including disciplinary action, is appropriate and, if so, how to proceed. The information provided by the police and/or children's social care services should inform that decision. The options will depend on the circumstances of the case and the consideration will need to take into account the result of the police investigation or the trial, as well as the different standard of proof required in disciplinary and criminal proceedings.

#### **On conclusion of a case**

38. If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the Directors cease to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide his or her services, the LADO should discuss with the case manager and their personnel adviser whether to refer the case to the DBS for consideration of inclusion on the barred lists; or to refer to the Teaching



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Agency.

39. The school will report to the Disclosures and Barring Services within a month of leaving the school, any person whether employed, contracted, a volunteer or a student whose services are no longer used because he or she is considered unsuitable to work with children. The school is also under a duty to consider making a referral to the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) and a prohibition order may be appropriate. The reasons such an order would be considered are: 'unacceptable professional conduct', 'conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute' or a 'conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence'. Where a referral has been made to the DBS, it is not necessary also to make a referral to the NCTL. Where a dismissal does not reach the threshold for DBS referral, separate consideration should be given to an NCTL referral.
40. Where it is decided on the conclusion of a case that a person who has been suspended can return to work, the case manager should consider how best to facilitate that. Most people will benefit from some help and support to return to work after a stressful experience. Depending on the individual's circumstances, a phased return and/or the provision of a mentor to provide assistance and support in the short term may be appropriate. The case manager should also consider how the person's contact with the child or children who made the allegation can best be managed if they are still a pupil at the school.
41. At the conclusion of a case in which an allegation is substantiated, the LADO should review the circumstances of the case with the case manager to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's procedures or practice to help prevent similar events in the future. This should include issues arising from the decision to suspend the member of staff, the duration of the suspension and whether or not suspension was justified. Lessons should also be learnt from the use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated. The LADO and case manager should consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

### **In respect of malicious or unsubstantial allegations**

42. If an allegation is determined to be unfounded or malicious, the LADO should refer the matter to the children's social care services to determine whether the child concerned is in need of services, or may have been abused by someone else. If an allegation is shown to be deliberately invented or malicious, the Principal should in consultation with the Directors, consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate against the pupil who made it; or whether the police should be asked to consider if action might be appropriate against the person responsible, even if he or she was not a pupil. (Further information: In September 2010 the Crown Prosecution Service published guidance for the police on harassment under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997.)
43. At the conclusion of a case, this policy will be reviewed by the Principal and Directors to determine whether the School's procedures could be improved to help to prevent similar events happening in the future.