

Allegations of Abuse Procedure

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Please note that a record of the changes made to the original issue of this document can be found at Schedule 1 after any Appendices to the Policy/Procedure.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement of Procedure follows the DfE Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education – PART ONE, September 2024.

It is about managing cases of allegations that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity. It will be used in respect of all cases where it is alleged that an employee or volunteer, or a person with permission to be on the premises or carrying out any activity on behalf of the academy has:

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

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

2. COMMUNICATING THE PROCEDURES

2.1 All members of the Senior Leadership Team and the Designated Safeguarding Lead with responsibility for child protection have a responsibility to ensure that all staff know about and understand paragraph 3 below.

2.2 In accordance with DfE statutory guidance, all staff should also read at least Part One – Keeping Children Safe in Education, which contains safeguarding information for all staff.

2.3 All members of the Senior Leadership Team and the Designated Safeguarding Lead have a responsibility to be familiar with the statutory guidance in its entirety.

3. IMMEDIATELY REPORTING AN ALLEGATION

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

- Report the facts to the Headteacher, as soon as possible. All concerns will be listened to and managed appropriately; do not withhold information however trivial it may seem.
- In the absence of the Headteacher, you must report the matter to the most senior person available who will carry out the Headteacher’s duties in their absence. If the allegation concerns the Headteacher, then the matter must be reported to the Chair of the Local Advisory Board (LAB). If the allegation concerns the Chief Executive (CE), then the matter must be reported to the Chair of the Trust Board.

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- Make a signed and dated written record of your concerns, observations, or the information you have received and give it to the Headteacher straight away. Note any other witnesses.
- Maintain strict confidentiality.

3.2 You must not:

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

4. LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

We encourage a culture which is open and transparent in which **all** concerns about adults are shared responsibly. This will allow us to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour at an early stage and ensures that adults who are working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries and in accordance with our values and expected behaviour as set out in the Code of Conduct.

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

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

To safeguard and protect pupils and colleagues, where staff have any concerns about someone who works with children (member of staff, supply staff, volunteer, or contractor) they must immediately report this to the Headteacher or other appropriate person – a form is available at Appendix 2.

The matter will be dealt with in accordance with the process detailed within the Code of Conduct.

5. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Each Academy will detail the contact details for their Designated Lead for Safeguarding in Appendix 1.

5.2 Processes are in place to promote the secure management of safeguarding including:

- 5.2.1 Measures designed to support staff facing an allegation
- 5.2.2 Consideration of options available to avoid suspension (such as temporary redeployment or supervised working)
- 5.2.3 Allegations found to be malicious are removed from personnel records.

APPENDIX 1

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List of Designated Safeguarding Leads for each Academy

Secondary Schools

Mark Bromfield, Kirkby Stephen Grammar School
Geraldine Wade, The Queen Katherine School
Craig Redhead, The Whitehaven Academy
Richard O'Connor, William Howard School
Katie Kinrade, Workington Academy

Primary Schools

Ayesha Weston, Caldew Lea Primary School
Sarah Lee, Castle Carrock Primary School
Ross Knaggs, Castle Park School
Amanda Brotherhood, Hensingham Primary School
Anna Carroll, Longtown Primary School
Mhairi Roberts, Newtown Primary School
Gemma Brierley, Northside Primary School
Jemma Nicholson, Petteril Bank Primary School
Matt Beresford, Stramongate Primary School
Helen Wright, Tebay Primary School
Sarah Davies, Yanwath Primary School
Gemma Brierley, Yewdale Primary School

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LOW LEVEL CONCERN FORM

Please use this form to share any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- is not consistent with the CET Code of Conduct, and/or
- relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult’s suitability to work with children.

Please keep your concerns confidential and submit this form to your headteacher.

You should provide a concise record – including brief context in which the low-level concern arose, and details which are chronological, and as precise and accurate as possible – of any such concern and relevant incident(s) (please use a separate sheet if necessary). The record should be signed, timed, and dated.

YOUR DETAILS	
Name (optional)	
Role	
Date and time of form completion	
DETAILS OF INDIVIDUAL WHOM THE CONCERN IS ABOUT	
Name	
Role	
Relationship to the individual reporting (e.g. manager, colleague)	
Details of the concern. Please include as much detail as possible. Think about the following: Location. Date(s) and time(s) of concern. What behaviour and/or incident are you reporting? What exactly happened? Why does the behaviour and/or incident worry you? Why do you believe the behaviour and/or incident is not consistent with our Staff Code of Conduct? Others present – children and adults.	
Signed:	
Date and time:	

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Name of staff receiving low level concern	
Role of staff receiving low level concern	
Date of receipt of concern	
Consultation with LADO, if appropriate?	
Actions taken, with reasons:	
Signed:	
Date and time:	

This record will be held. Please note that low-level concerns will be treated in confidence as far as possible, but CET may in certain circumstances be subject to legal reporting requirements or other legal obligations to share information with appropriate persons, including legal claims and formal investigations.

DOCUMENT CONTROL – RECORD OF CHANGES

Version Number:	Publication Date:	Nature of, and Reason for, Change(s)
001	March 2020	General review.
002	October 2020	List of DSLs updated.
003	October 2021	Review in light of updated KCSIE 2021 / List of DSLs updated.
004	January 2023	List of DSLs updated / Appendix 2 addition: Low Level Concern Form.
005	September 2023	List of DSLs updated.
006	January 2024	List of DSLs updated.
007	September 2024	List of DSLs updated.
008	January 2025	List of DSLs updated.
009	March 2025	List of DSLs updated.

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