Allegations and concerns against adults in education settings – September 2025 (including schools, early years and alternative provision settings)

If you become aware that a member of staff/volunteer/supply/contractor/ bank staff and those from organisations or individuals using the school premises, MAY have:

- **behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child** and/or
- **possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child,** and/or
- **behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children,** and/or
- **behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children**

If you have 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 staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and**
- **does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.**

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a scheduled area or behind a closed door; or,
- Humiliating pupils

Where a child also discloses abuse or neglect by a member of staff/volunteer/supply/ contractor/bank staff and those from organisations or individuals using the school premises:

- Listen; take their allegation seriously; reassure that you will take action to keep them safe
- Inform them what you are going to do next
- Do not promise confidentiality
- Do not question further or approach/inform the person/alleged abuser

Staff should self-refer to their line manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead where they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Report immediately to the person in charge: David Cook (headteacher)

Any concern or allegation against the person in charge will be reported to: Andrew Mulligan (Chair of Governors)

Eg chair of governor, owner, chair of committee, nominated trustee

Unless there is clear evidence to prove that the allegation is incorrect, the person in charge **will decide on the nature of the allegation/concern:**

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

If the behaviour towards the child may have met the harm threshold (KCSiE 2025, p.92) report the allegation **within one working day** to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and your HR provider

- Email the referral to LADOservice@wiltshire.gov.uk
- To discuss follow-up and outcomes telephone the Integrated Front Door (IFD) 0300 456 0108 and select Option 6.
- Out of Hours Emergency Duty Service: 0300 456 0100 (5pm to 9am weekdays, 4pm Friday to 9am Monday)

Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (low-level concerns)

Refer to the allegation/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold, or 'low level' concerns addendum flowchart (below).

Allegation/concerns guidance for persons in charge – September 2025

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

KCSIE 2025 Part 4 Section 1

The LADO will:

1. Consider the relevant facts and concerns regarding the adult and child or children, including any previous history
2. Decide on next course of action - usually straight away, sometimes after further consultation with other multi-agency parties such as the Police and HR.

If the allegation threshold is met:

- A strategy meeting will normally be held.
- Usually, a senior manager/safeguarding lead, the LADO, HR, Police and social care are invited to attend.
- Relevant information is shared, risks to children are considered and appropriate action agreed eg child protection and other enquiries, disciplinary measures or criminal proceedings.
- A record of the meeting will be made, and regular reviews will take place until a conclusion is reached.

If the allegation threshold is NOT met:

The LADO will agree an appropriate response, eg for the setting to undertake further enquiries or an internal investigation.

Refer to the low-level concerns procedures on the right-hand-side.

Allegations/concerns that do NOT meet the harm threshold ('low level' concerns)

KCSIE 2025 Part 4 Section 2

The person in charge will take the following actions:

- Reports about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers.
- Collect information to help them categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken.
- If the concern has been raised via a third party, the person in charge (or a nominated deputy) should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:
  - directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously, and
  - to the individual involved and any witnesses.
- All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and will include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose along with the rationale for decisions and action taken.
- Records will be kept confidential and held securely; it is recommended that it is retained at least until the individual leaves their employment.
- Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.
- Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the school or college should decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a low-level concern to meeting the harm threshold, in which case it should be referred to the LADO (as per Part 4, Section 1).
- Consideration should also be given to whether there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies could be revised, or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.
- The person in charge will seek advice from HR adviser and/or LADO consultation as appropriate.