

The Grange School

Allegations Against Adults Policy

March 2019

To be reviewed: March 2022

Allegations Regarding Person(s) Working In or On Behalf of The Grange **(including Volunteers)**

Investigations will be carried out under the guidance of Local Authority procedures, with union representatives and with Human Resources support.

Whilst we acknowledge such allegations, (as all others), may be false, malicious or misplaced, we also acknowledge they may be founded. It is, therefore, essential that all allegations are investigated properly and in line with agreed procedures.

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of staff/volunteer may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child; either inside or outside of school
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in such a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk if harm if they worked regularly or closely with a child.

When an allegation is received the Head Teacher will:

- take the matter seriously and keep an open mind.
 - not investigate initially
 - not promise confidentiality to the informant
 - make a written record of the allegation using the informant's words (including time, date and place where the alleged incident took place, what was said and anyone else present; sign and date)
 - be mindful that employers have a duty of care to their employees and ensure they provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation
 - provide the employee with a named contact if they are suspended, but will not automatically suspend staff from their duties
 - give priority to resolving this issue (usually within one month, although there may be circumstances where it takes longer than this)
 - ensure that any unfounded or malicious allegations are removed from the member of staff's personnel file
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- If the concerns are about the Headteacher, then the Chair of Governors or the Vice Chair should be contacted, in the absence of the Chair.
 - The Designated Safeguarding Officer or Headteacher must immediately contact the local authority Designated Officer(s) (DO)
 - Decisions must not be made without a discussion with the DO
 - Make a written record of discussions with DO and others
 - Make sure DO has full details of the person against whom a concern has been expressed

Initial Considerations

Where the concern meets the criteria, the designated person should immediately contact the local authority Designated Officer(s) (DO). The DO is responsible for the oversight of allegations against adults working in the local authority, liaising with a range of agencies and ensuring such matters are dealt with consistently and in a timely fashion. The initial discussion with the DO will consider the nature of the allegation and the course of action.

DO Contact Details:

Designated Officer Administrator - 01604 364031

Designated Officer Andy Smith - 01604 367862

Designated Officer Christine York - 01604 362633

Actions to be agreed:

- What further information is required?
- Whether any immediate action needs to be taken to protect pupils
- When and what should the parents be told
- What should be said to the adult facing the allegation?
- Whether suspending the member of staff is required
- Suspension should not be an automatic response

- Suspension should only be considered where:
 - o children are at risk of serious harm
 - o where the concern is so serious that it would result in immediate dismissal
 - o The reason for suspension must be communicated to the person in writing within one day.
 - o Alternatives to suspension might include alternative work, the deployment of another adult to work alongside the accused person, moving the children or reallocating the classes involved.

Possible outcomes of the initial discussion:

- Strategy Meeting to be normally held within three days
- Referral to Social Care
- Referral to Police for investigation
- No further action (NFA)

In the case of NFA, the school will then decide how to proceed further, which may include internal disciplinary action. Informal action will be resolved within a timely fashion. Most cases should be concluded within one month. Any school investigation will be undertaken by a senior member of staff, HR professional or occasionally an independent person.

After the DO has been consulted, the accused person will be told about the allegation. The amount of detail will be agreed with the DO and will range from the minimum (where a Strategy Meeting is to be held) to the greatest amount of detail following an 'NFA' decision.

The person will be told about the likely courses of action. They will be advised to contact their professional association. The school will appoint a named person to offer support to the affected person.

It is important that confidentiality is maintained. No information will be offered to the media nor will any details be published that would identify any person under investigation, unless or until the person has been charged with an offence.

Outcome of Allegations

The outcome of allegation investigations should be identified as one of the following:

Substantiated:

There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.

False:

There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.

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.

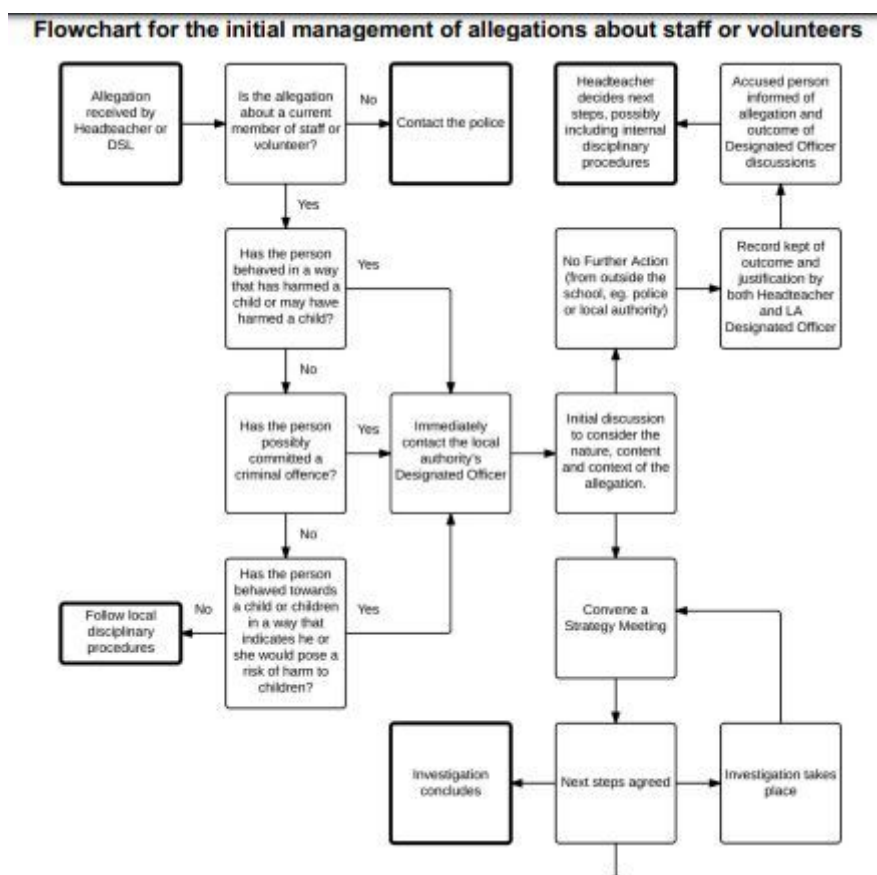
Malicious:

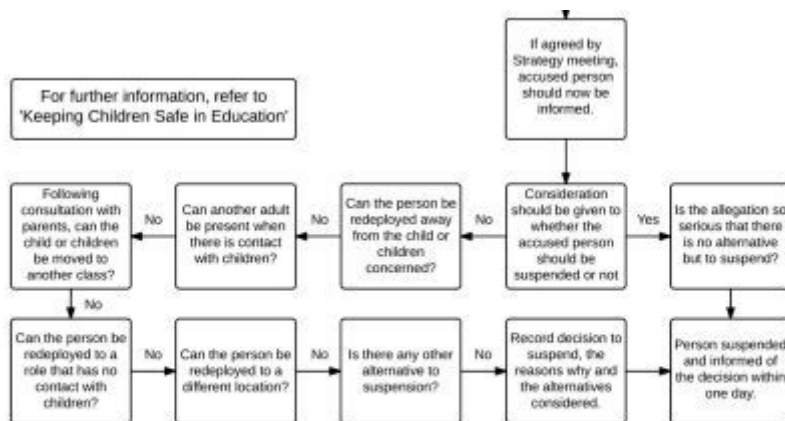
There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive.

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 around the witnessed behaviour.

Appendix 1:





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