



The Oak Tree Academy

Allegation of Abuse Against Staff Policy

INTRODUCTION

The procedures at The Oak Tree Academy follow guidance from Safeguarding Children's Board (SCSB) for Managing Allegations against or concerns about adults who work with children and young people. The SCSB provides an independent service which will ensure that all referrals are appropriately investigated or monitored and caters for concerns/allegations of "significant harm" and other concerns which would render an adult unsuitable to work with children.

The key principle for The Oak Tree Academy is that children are appropriately safeguarded, and that the process is proportionate, consistent, transparent and timely. The process of any investigation can be very difficult and stressful for those involved, and it is therefore crucial that support for both the child/ren and adult/s involved is provided.

REFERRAL PROCESS

If a child tells you they have been harmed by a staff member paid or unpaid, or you see a behaviour that gives you cause for concern you **MUST** contact the **Principal** or the Assistant Principal. If the allegation is about the Principal, the Chair of Governors or Stockton's Senior Nominated Officer should be contacted.

The Principal should follow the actions set out in the flow chart 'The First Five Minutes' (see Appendix One) which are also displayed in the Principal's office, Assistant Principal's office and main office.

They will determine following your information sharing whether the allegation meets the following criteria:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may harm a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

If this does meet the criteria the senior member of staff **WILL** report to the Local Authorities Senior Nominated Officer or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) immediately to seek advice.

The **Principal** will

- Obtain written details of the allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving (not the child/adult making the allegation)
- Record any information about times, dates and location of incident(s) and names of any potential witnesses
- Record discussions about the child and/or member of staff, any decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions
- Record details of the parent/carer/siblings

The LSCB policy and procedures will then apply and will be co-ordinated by the LADO.

The leaflet 'Managing allegations against adults who work with or on behalf of children and young people' in Appendix Two explains the role of the LADO, what a strategy meeting is and the possible outcomes of an investigation and will be shared with new staff as part of the induction process and with staff at least annually in September.

SUPPORT FOR THOSE INVOLVED

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. They should also be kept informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution. That includes 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 those concerned should be advised of the outcome.

In cases where a child may have suffered a significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, Children's Social Care or the Police, as appropriate, should consider what support the child or children involved may need.

Whilst acknowledging the needs of the child as paramount, The Oak Tree Academy recognises that staff themselves may be in a vulnerable position and have the right to expect that complaints about their behaviour will be investigated impartially, sensitively and as quickly as possible.

Employers should keep the person who is subject of the allegations informed of the progress of the cases and arrange to provide appropriate support to the individual whilst the case is ongoing.

If the person is suspended, the employer should also make arrangements to keep the individual informed about developments in the workplace. If the person is a member of a union or professional association, they should be advised to contact that body at the outset.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity whilst an allegation is being considered/investigated.

RECORD KEEPING

The principal will keep a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made, details of how the allegations were followed up and resolved, and of any actions taken and decisions made. These should be kept in the employment record and a copy given to the individual. Such information should be retained on file, including for people who leave the organisation, at least until the person reaches normal retirement age, or for 10 years if it is longer.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future requests for reference.

It will provide clarification in cases where a future CRB disclosure reveals information from the Police that an allegation was made but did not result in a prosecution or a conviction. It will also provide unnecessary re-investigation if, as sometimes happens, allegations resurface after a period of time.

Document control sheet:

Key Staff lead for The Oak Tree Academy: Elizabeth Pollitt
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Date	Process	Name	Status
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Governor's signature.....

Chair of Governors

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