



Guidance for an Internal Investigation Report for an Allegation against a person working in a position of trust with children and young people

To help you complete a fair and robust investigation it will be helpful for the following to be considered in planning your investigation –

- Do you have knowledge and experience of safeguarding?
- As the investigator are you able to be sufficiently impartial? if this cannot be assured you should consider commissioning an investigator.
- Do you have access to the organisations safeguarding policies and employee Code of Conduct?
- Are you clear what the allegation to be investigated is and what areas the LADO has identified to be addressed?
- How will the investigation include the “child’s voice” and their “lived experience”?
- How will you include the member of staff’s voice and their knowledge and understanding of risk, safeguarding practice and professional conduct?
- Are there witnesses to be interviewed or CCTV to be viewed?
- What is the timescale for the completion of this investigation?

In Writing the Report

- Use headings, subheadings and clear numbered paragraphs.
- Be clear what information is factual, what information is disputed, what information is missing.
- If there have been any previous allegations of a safeguarding nature you should reference these.
- Explain any mitigating factors you have identified.
- Do not make assumptions, express your own opinion, or use emotive language.
- Ensure there is a clear link between the evidence and your findings and be clear re your findings and the basis on which you have reached your conclusion.
- Record the outcome you have reached against the LADO outcomes specified in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2020 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

Substantiated – there is sufficient identifiable information based on the balance of probability to prove the allegation.

Unsubstantiated - An unsubstantiated allegation means that there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.

Malicious – there is clear evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation has been entirely false.

Unfounded – there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made. It might 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 of the circumstances.

Recommendations

You should recommend what further action the employing or voluntary organisation should consider, this should be either

Formal action i.e. a disciplinary hearing and/or changes to the organisation's policies and practices, investigations into other issues identified. You should not suggest a possible sanction or prejudge what the outcome of any formal disciplinary hearing may be.

Informal action i.e. additional safeguarding training, other training, or development i.e. coaching, mentoring.

Rarely will there be a situation where no further action is identified.