



Allegations Against Staff, Volunteers and Students Policy

Policy Statement

Our pre-school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.

We recognise that children can be harmed by adults who work or volunteer with them, and that all allegations must be taken seriously and handled fairly, quickly, and consistently in accordance with statutory guidance.

This policy outlines how we respond to allegations made against any member of staff, volunteer, student, or other adult working within our setting.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, students, volunteers, agency staff and visitors working in our pre-school.
- Any allegation that an adult has:
 - Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, 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 they may pose a risk of harm.It also includes behaviour outside work that could pose a “transferable risk” to children.

Legal Framework

This policy is based on:

- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) procedures
- Education Act 2002 (Section 175)
- Guidance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

Roles and Responsibilities

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The DSL (and Deputy DSL) are responsible for managing all safeguarding concerns, including allegations against staff.
- They will immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice before taking any further action.

Manager/Committee

- The Manager or Chair of the Committee will act in place of the DSL if the allegation concerns the DSL.
- The Committee will ensure procedures are followed and that confidentiality is maintained.

Procedure for Managing an Allegation

Step 1: Immediate Action

- Any allegation or concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer must be reported immediately to the DSL or Manager.
- The DSL will:
 - Record the concern in detail (date, time, name of person reporting, exact words used).
 - Take steps to ensure the child is safe and receives support.
 - Not investigate or question the child or alleged person at this stage.
 - Contact the LADO without delay to discuss next steps.

If the allegation concerns the Manager, it should be reported directly to the Chair of the Trustees who will contact the LADO.

Referral and Consultation

- The LADO will advise whether the allegation:
 - Meets the threshold for police/social care involvement, or
 - Should be dealt with under internal disciplinary procedures, or
 - Is a "low-level concern."
- The setting will follow the LADO's guidance and cooperate fully with all agencies.

Suspension

- Suspension will only be considered if:
 - The child or other children are at risk of harm,

- It is necessary to allow a proper investigation, or
 - It is advised by the LADO or police.
- The decision to suspend will be made in consultation with the LADO and, if appropriate, the Committee.

Investigation and Outcome

Once advised it is appropriate, an internal investigation may take place.

Possible outcomes are:

- Substantiated – sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- Unsubstantiated – insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation;
- False – evidence shows the allegation is not true;
- Malicious – deliberate act to deceive;
- Unfounded – no evidence or basis for the allegation.

The LADO will confirm when it is appropriate to conclude the case internally.

Where an allegation is substantiated and the individual is dismissed or resigns, a referral to the DBS will be made.

Low-Level Concerns

A “low-level concern” is any behaviour that does not meet the threshold for an allegation but is inconsistent with staff conduct expectations.

Examples include:

- Being over-familiar with children;
- Using inappropriate language;
- Failing to maintain professional boundaries.

Staff should report low-level concerns to the DSL, who will record and monitor them in line with our safeguarding and whistleblowing policies.

Record Keeping

- Detailed records of allegations, investigations, and outcomes will be kept securely and confidentially on the individual's personnel file.
- Records will include dates, discussions, decisions and actions taken.
- Information will be retained in accordance with data protection requirements and safeguarding record-keeping guidance.

Confidentiality

- Information about allegations will be shared only with those who need to know in order to protect children and ensure fair process.
- Media enquiries will be directed to the Chair/Manager only, and no information should be shared publicly while an investigation is ongoing.

Support for Those Involved

- The child or children involved will receive appropriate pastoral and emotional support.
- Staff who are the subject of allegations will be offered support and kept informed of progress and outcomes in line with HR and employment guidance.

This policy forms part of our safeguarding suite of policies, alongside:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Complaints Procedure

Contacts:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Suzanne MacGregor

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Delyth Corry

LADO Contact: Catherine Ballans (0771 670 2034) and Pauline Trubshaw (0784 172 7309)

This policy was adopted in: November 2025

It will be reviewed annually or as required.

Signed by Chair of Trustees:



Signed by Operations Manager:

