

Gateway Academy



Managing Safeguarding Concerns and Allegations Against Adults Policy

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INTRODUCTION

Gateway Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and to ensuring that concerns and allegations about adults working with children are managed promptly, fairly and consistently.

The Academy will respond to all concerns in accordance with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026**, relevant local safeguarding procedures and the advice of the Westminster Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

The Academy will balance the need to protect children with the need to ensure that adults who are the subject of concerns are treated fairly and supported appropriately.

This policy should be read alongside the Academy's:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing arrangements
- Data Protection Policy
- Data Retention Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- relevant staff privacy information
- relevant Westminster LADO procedures

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy applies to all adults working in or on behalf of Gateway Academy, whether paid or unpaid.

This includes:

- Employees
- Supply and agency staff
- Trainee teachers and other students on placement
- Volunteers
- Contractors and other professionals working with children
- Governors where applicable
- Other adults working on behalf of or providing services to the Academy

The procedures in this policy apply where an allegation or concern indicates that an adult has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm

- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children, including where behaviour outside work creates a transferable risk

These procedures will also be followed where an allegation concerns an adult's conduct towards a child outside the Academy.

REPORTING A CONCERN OR ALLEGATION

Any concern or allegation must be reported without delay to a CoHeadteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Where the concern relates to a CoHeadteacher, it must be reported to the other CoHeadteacher and the Chair of Governors.

Where an allegation concerns both CoHeadteachers, the Chair of Governors will ensure that the matter is referred appropriately and that an independent case manager is identified where required.

Where the concern relates to the Chair of Governors, it should be reported through the appropriate Trust or local safeguarding arrangements.

Staff must not investigate allegations themselves or attempt to determine whether an allegation is substantiated.

The Academy will contact the LADO without delay and normally within one working day where the allegation meets, or may meet, the harm threshold. Advice will be sought where there is uncertainty.

Where a criminal offence may have been committed, advice will be sought from the police and other relevant agencies.

CASE MANAGEMENT

The CoHeadteachers will normally act as the case manager for allegations concerning staff or other adults working for the Academy.

The case manager will:

- Seek advice from the LADO
- Ensure that appropriate referrals are made
- Liaise with children's social care, police, HR and other agencies as required
- Ensure that the Academy's procedures are followed
- Consider the welfare and support needs of the child and the adult involved
- Maintain appropriate records
- Ensure that any investigation is fair, proportionate and does not prejudice external enquiries

Where a CoHeadteacher is the subject of an allegation, the Chair of Governors will oversee the process and obtain appropriate external advice.

The DSL will support the case manager with safeguarding matters but will not necessarily be the case manager or investigator.

ROLE OF THE LADO

The LADO will provide advice and guidance and ensure that an appropriate investigation is undertaken in accordance with local safeguarding procedures.

Following consultation, the LADO may advise that:

- No further action is required

- The Academy should undertake further enquiries or an internal investigation
- A strategy discussion or meeting is required
- Children's social care or the police should become involved
- Other appropriate action should be taken

The Academy will follow the advice and procedures of the LADO and relevant safeguarding agencies.

INITIAL ENQUIRIES AND INVESTIGATION

The Academy may undertake appropriate initial enquiries to establish the basic facts of an allegation. These enquiries must not prejudice any police or children's social care investigation.

An investigation may be undertaken by:

- The Academy
- Children's social care
- The police
- Another appropriate organisation or professional

Where police or children's social care are involved, the Academy will liaise with the relevant agencies and the LADO regarding the timing and conduct of any internal investigation or disciplinary process. The Academy will not automatically delay its own procedures because an external investigation is taking place. Advice will be sought to ensure that Academy procedures do not prejudice external enquiries.

Where an internal investigation is required, it will be conducted in accordance with the Academy's Staff Disciplinary Policy and relevant employment procedures.

ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING SUPPLY, AGENCY OR CONTRACTED STAFF

Where an allegation concerns a supply, agency or contracted worker, the Academy will inform the person's employer or agency where appropriate and liaise with them throughout the process.

The Academy will continue to fulfil its safeguarding responsibilities and will not rely solely on the employer or agency to manage the concern.

The LADO will be consulted where required.

LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold will be managed in accordance with the Academy's Low-Level Concerns Policy.

A low-level concern may relate to behaviour that:

- Is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct
- Could be viewed as inappropriate or concerning
- Does not meet the threshold for an allegation
- Does not require referral to the LADO

Examples may include:

- Being overly familiar with pupils
- Favouritism
- Inappropriate language or jokes
- Unnecessary physical contact

- Failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries
- Unauthorised or inappropriate one-to-one contact with pupils

Low-level concerns must be reported and recorded in accordance with the Academy's procedures. A pattern of low-level concerns may indicate that the threshold for referral to the LADO has been reached. Records will therefore be reviewed appropriately.

SUPPORTING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Academy will prioritise the welfare and safeguarding of the child.

Parents or carers will normally be informed of an allegation concerning their child unless this would:

- Put the child at further risk
- Jeopardise a police investigation
- Jeopardise a children's social care investigation
- Otherwise prejudice safeguarding enquiries

The Academy will follow the advice of the LADO, police or children's social care regarding the timing and content of communication with parents or carers.

The child will receive appropriate support throughout the process.

Information provided to families will relate to their child and will respect the confidentiality and rights of other individuals involved.

SUPPORTING THE ADULT SUBJECT TO AN ALLEGATION

The Academy recognises that being the subject of an allegation can be extremely stressful.

Where appropriate, the adult will:

- Be informed of the allegation at the appropriate stage
- Be provided with a named contact
- Be kept appropriately informed of progress
- Be advised that they may seek support from their trade union or professional association
- Be signposted to the Academy's Employee Assistance Programme or other appropriate support

The timing and detail of information provided will be agreed with the LADO, police or children's social care where necessary.

The Academy will maintain confidentiality and treat the individual fairly throughout the process.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Information relating to allegations will be treated as confidential and shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know.

Information may be shared with the LADO, police, children's social care, HR, the Academy's legal or professional advisers and other relevant agencies where this is necessary and lawful.

Information sharing will comply with safeguarding requirements, UK data protection legislation and the Academy's Data Protection Policy.

The Academy will also comply with statutory reporting restrictions relating to the identification of teachers who are the subject of allegations.

Unauthorised disclosure of confidential information may be dealt with under the Academy's disciplinary procedures and may have legal consequences.

RECORD KEEPING

The Academy will maintain a clear and comprehensive record of allegations and concerns.

Records will include, where applicable:

- A clear summary of the allegation
- How the allegation was followed up
- Actions taken
- Decisions reached
- The outcome
- Any referrals made
- Whether information should be referred to in a future reference

Records will be stored securely with access restricted to those who have a legitimate need to access them.

Records relating to allegations will be retained until the individual reaches normal retirement age or for 10 years from the date of the allegation, whichever is longer, in accordance with KCSIE and the Academy's Data Retention Policy.

Records will be reviewed and securely destroyed when the relevant retention period expires.

SUSPENSION AND ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Suspension will not be automatic and will only be considered where necessary following an appropriate risk assessment.

The Academy will consider whether alternative arrangements could adequately manage the risk, including:

- Adjusting duties
- Removing direct contact with the child or children concerned
- Redeployment
- Additional supervision
- Working from another location where appropriate

Where suspension is considered, the case manager will record the reasons for the decision, including the alternatives considered and why they were not considered appropriate.

Where suspension is necessary, the individual will:

- Be informed in writing within one working day
- Be provided with the reason for the suspension where appropriate
- Be provided with a named contact
- Receive appropriate welfare support
- Have the suspension reviewed regularly

Suspension will be managed in accordance with the Academy's Staff Disciplinary and HR procedures.

RESIGNATION DURING AN INVESTIGATION

If an individual resigns while an allegation is being investigated, the Academy will not normally cease its safeguarding enquiries solely because the person has left.

Where appropriate, the Academy will continue the investigation to its conclusion and record the outcome.

The Academy will not use a settlement agreement to prevent a safeguarding allegation from being investigated or to prevent information being shared or a referral being made where there is a statutory or safeguarding requirement to do so.

The Academy will consider whether a referral to the DBS or Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) is required.

OUTCOMES

Following investigation, allegations will be categorised in accordance with KCSIE as:

- Substantiated – there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- Malicious – there is clear evidence to prove that the allegation was deliberately invented or deliberately misleading
- False – there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- Unsubstantiated – there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation
- Unfounded – there is no evidence or proper basis that supports the allegation

The outcome will be recorded and appropriate action taken.

Where an allegation is substantiated, the Academy will consider:

- Disciplinary action
- Safeguarding action
- Referral to the DBS where the statutory criteria are met
- Referral to the TRA where the relevant criteria are met
- Referral to other professional or regulatory bodies where required

Allegations that are found to be false, unfounded or unsubstantiated will not normally be referred to in employer references. Malicious allegations will also not be included in references.

Where a substantiated allegation is relevant to a future reference, the Academy will ensure that any information provided is factual and appropriate.

NON-RECENT ALLEGATIONS

Where an allegation relates to an incident that occurred some time ago, it will still be taken seriously and reported in accordance with this policy.

The Academy will seek advice from the LADO and, where appropriate, children's social care and the police.

The fact that an allegation is non-recent will not prevent appropriate safeguarding action from being taken.

ALLEGATIONS CONCERNING GOVERNORS

Where an allegation concerns a governor, the Academy will follow the appropriate safeguarding and governance procedures and seek advice from the LADO.

Where an allegation is substantiated, the Academy will consider whether action is required under the Academy's governance arrangements, including whether removal from office should be considered.

ADULTS OR ORGANISATIONS USING ACADEMY PREMISES

Where an allegation concerns an individual or organisation using Academy premises to provide activities or services to children, the Academy will take appropriate safeguarding action and seek advice from the LADO where required.

The Academy will consider whether the organisation's own safeguarding procedures have been followed and whether further action is required to protect children.

REINTEGRATION AND RETURN TO WORK

Where an individual returns to work following suspension or an investigation, the Academy will consider whether additional support or safeguards are required.

This may include:

- A phased return
- Additional supervision
- A support plan
- Adjustments to duties
- Arrangements to manage contact with the child or children involved

Any arrangements will be proportionate to the circumstances and reviewed as appropriate.

LEARNING AND REVIEW

Following an allegation, the Academy will consider whether there are any lessons to be learned.

Where appropriate, this may include reviewing:

- Safeguarding procedures
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Low-Level Concerns arrangements
- Supervision arrangements
- Training
- Risk assessments
- Recruitment or induction procedures

The Academy will cooperate with any review led by the LADO, local authority, police, children's social care or other relevant agency.

POLICY MONITORING AND REVIEW

The CoHeadteachers will monitor the implementation of this policy and ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities.

The policy will be reviewed annually and following significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding procedures.

The policy will be approved and reviewed by the appropriate governing body or delegated committee.

KEY STATUTORY GUIDANCE

This policy has regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Education Act 2002
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Equality Act 2010
- Relevant Westminster safeguarding and LADO procedures
- Relevant Disclosure and Barring Service and Teaching Regulation Agency guidance