



Policy for Allegations of abuse made against staff

If a child makes an accusation that a teacher or adult in school has harmed them in any way, it must be reported to the Headteacher immediately. In the event that he is not available it must be reported to an appropriate senior member of staff who will act on his behalf.

If the accusation is made about the Headteacher then the issue must be brought to the attention of the Deputy Headteacher who will need to contact the Chair of Governors. The Chair of Governors will then decide upon the most appropriate course of action. If necessary the Headteacher will be required to leave the premises whilst investigation take place.

In either of the above scenarios the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher will need to gather together any information relating to the allegation. There must not be a detailed questioning of the accusing child but basic facts can be established by asking what happened. What the child says should be recorded in writing at the earliest opportunity quoting the child as far as is reasonable. The record must be signed and dated by the adult who has written it. Records of details from others who have information about the accusation should also be kept.

The Headteacher (or Deputy Headteacher) will then need to decide on the most appropriate course of action. ***This may include consultation with the Local Authority Allegations Manager. If the matter is of significant concern, Local Authority procedures will apply and the Allegations Manager will advise over this.*** If it seems to be untrue, misrepresented or a accident the child's parents will be contacted and the situation will be discussed with them. Genuine cases of misunderstanding are usually fairly obvious and if the parents are satisfied that this was the case the matter can end. Record in writing the discussion and the agreed outcome. The Headteacher, or Deputy Headteacher, plus the parent should sign and date the agreement. The written records must be filed along with all other Child Protection papers in school.

If the allegation has substance, or with reference to the above scenario the parents feel the matter should be taken further, then the teacher or adult about whom the allegation has been made would need to be informed that a referral to the ***Local Authority Allegations Manager*** is being made. The Headteacher ***may*** require that person to leave the premises at this point. The adult ***could*** then be suspended from duty on full pay, ***depending on the level of severity of the allegation and the potential risk involved to the child / children*** whilst an investigation by the trained personnel is carried out. It would be for them to decide if police involvement was appropriate. It ***will*** be appropriate for the individual against whom allegations have been made, to contact their union for advice at this point. Agencies are aware that this is an extremely stressful time for individuals and attempt to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

If the Child Protection team decide, following investigations, that no further action is appropriate then the individual would be contacted and asked to resume their duties in school. If the allegations cannot be discounted and the police feel a prosecution would be appropriate then the individual would remain suspended on full pay pending the outcome of legal proceedings.

The DfES regulations make it clear that staff offering to resign to avoid investigation is not an acceptable strategy and that written records of allegations and investigations made against staff are kept for 10 years or until the individual retires, which ever is earliest.

Also refer to:

Safeguarding Children Status: November 2005 Ref: DfES/2044/2005