



Thomas Telford University Technical College

Safeguarding and Allegations of Abuse against Staff Policy

The governing body believe that it is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a teacher or other member of staff is dealt with properly and promptly. This means quickly, fairly and consistently, and in a way that provides effective protection for the child whilst protecting the rights and livelihood of the person accused. Our procedures must aim to strike a balance between the need to protect young people from abuse and the need to protect staff and volunteers from false and unfounded accusations.

Author	Av Gill	Version	3.0
Governor Approved Date	10/05/2015	Last Review Date	20/10/2021
Comments	This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy		
Monitoring, Evaluation and Review	The Governing Body will review this document at least once every year and assess its implementation and effectiveness in consultation with key stakeholders. Monitoring and Evaluation shall be conducted by the Vice Principal and produce a report to the governors annual or as requested. Staff must all read this policy and must declare in writing that they have done so.		

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1. Guidelines

- 1.1. Students who report that they have been abused by a member of staff must be listened to and heard, whatever form their attempts to communicate might take.
- 1.2. If a student does not wish to take the matter further, very careful consideration must be given to the student's age and level of understanding and to whether the student or others might be at risk of significant harm. The member of staff hearing the allegation must always report the allegation as in 1.3 below in any case.
- 1.3. Members of staff who hear an allegation of abuse against another member of staff should report the matter immediately to the Principal **and** the designated safeguarding lead (DSL). Where the allegation is against the Principal, then the member of staff should notify the Chair of Governors.
- 1.4. A written, dated record should be made of the allegations as soon as practicable, and certainly within 24 hours. If the allegation is against the Principal it should be reported to the Chair of Governors **and** the designated safeguarding lead.
- 1.5. All allegations should be referred to the Local Authority Allegations Manager (Designated Officer) within one working day. The Designated Officer will decide if any further action is required.
- 1.6. Threshold for Action - Action will be taken when a member of staff has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a young person or;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against a young person or;
 - behaved in a way that indicates unsuitability to work with young people.
- 1.7. If the allegation has been reported to the police or Children's Services, they will inform the Designated Officer immediately who will then contact the Principal.
- 1.8. The UTC will not inform the member of staff of the allegation prior to speaking with the Designated Officer.
- 1.9. The UTC will not conduct any investigation before speaking with the Designated Officer.

- 1.10.** Once the accused adult is informed they should be informed of the process and be treated fairly and honestly. They should be advised to contact their trade union and should also be offered support from a colleague. In serious cases they may be required/advised to take paid leave. The Principal, in discussion with the Designated Officer, may determine that there is a need to suspend the member of staff but this will not be an automatic response to an allegation and the decision to suspend will be taken only when the particular circumstances require it.
- 1.11.** The Principal or the designated safeguarding lead should speak with the student's parents or carers and keep regular contact throughout.

2. Low Level Concerns

- 2.1.** At the UTC we create a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold) are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical.
- 2.2.** The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral.
- 2.3.** A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:
 - 2.3.1.** is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
 - 2.3.2.** does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.
- 2.4.** Our Governing Board will set out their low-level concerns policy within the staff code of conduct and safeguarding policies.
- 2.5.** Low-level concerns about a member of staff, supply staff, volunteer or contractor will be reported to the Principal. Reports about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.
- 2.6.** We will create an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

- 2.7.** All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and the action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible. Records will be retained by the Headteacher and will be reviewed regularly so that potential patterns of concerning behaviour can be identified.
- 2.8.** Should the level of concern reach the harms threshold the case will be referred to the LADO. Records will be retained until the individual ceases to be employed at the UTC.
- 2.9.** For references we should only provide substantiated safeguarding allegations in references. Low level concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference, for example, misconduct or poor performance. It follows that a low-level concern which relates exclusively to safeguarding (and not to misconduct or poor performance) should not be referred to in a reference. However, where a low-level concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated, it should be referred to in a reference.

3. Dissemination

- 3.1.** The outcome of any investigation will be determined as one of:
- **Substantiated:** there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
 - **Malicious:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive;
 - **False:** there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
 - **Unsubstantiated:** there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- 3.2.** Staff must be advised how to protect themselves from allegations. A staff training session specifically related to allegations of abuse will be provided.
- 3.3.** If the allegation is involving a member of supply staff either through an agency or from another school, Agencies or other schools should be fully involved and co-operate in any enquiries, but TTUTC will take the lead in gathering the necessary information. When using an agency/other school, TTUTC will inform them of the process for managing allegations, including inviting the agency's/other school's HR manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about TTUTC policies. Governing boards should discuss with the agency/other school whether it's appropriate to suspend the supply teacher,

or redeploy them to another part of the school, while they carry out their investigation. The allegations management meeting should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure previous concerns or allegations known to the agency/other school are taken into account.

This policy is available on request to the LA and OFSTED through the Principal. Staff will have access to the full policy in Staff files.

- 4. DfE Guidance and other documentation** has been used to create this document. The specific guidance documents include:

[Keeping children safe in education \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)