



ALLEGATION MANAGEMENT POLICY

Purpose and Aim

At Southmoor Multi Academy Trust, we seek to ensure that all staff take care not to place themselves in an inappropriate position with a student. Where possible, work with individual students should be conducted in the view of other adults. If staff members have concerns about another staff member, then this should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer / Headteacher.

Part four of KCSIE 2020 (Keeping Children Safe In Education 2020) is provided to give guidance about managing cases of allegations that might indicate a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity. The guidance is used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher or member of staff (including volunteers) within the Trust that provides education for children under 18 years of age 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; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children.

These behaviours should be considered within the context of the four categories of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect). These include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children or young people, for example:

- Having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 if in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual (see ss16-19 Sexual Offences Act 2003);
- 'Grooming', i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence (see s15 Sexual Offences Act 2003);
- Other 'grooming' behaviour giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature (e.g. inappropriate text / e-mail messages or images, gifts, socialising, etc);
- Possession of indecent photographs / pseudo-photographs of children.

If concerns arise about the person's behaviour to her/his own children, the police and/or children's social care must consider informing the employer / organisation in order to assess whether there may be implications for children with whom the person has contact at work / in the organisation, in which case this procedure will apply.

Allegations of historical abuse should be responded to in the same way as contemporary concerns. In such cases, it is important to find out whether the person against whom the allegation is made is still working with children and if so, to inform the person's current employer or voluntary organisation or refer their family for assessment.

All references in this document to 'staff or members of staff' should be interpreted as meaning all paid or unpaid staff / professionals and volunteers, including for example, foster carers, approved adopters and child minders. This chapter also applies to any person, who manages or facilitates access to an

establishment where children are present.

Persons to be notified

The employer must inform the local authority Designated Officer within **one working day** when an allegation is made and prior to any further investigation taking place. The local authority Designated Officer will advise the employer whether or not informing the parents of the child/ren involved will impede the disciplinary or investigative processes. Acting on this advice, if it is agreed that the information can be fully or partially shared, the employer should inform the parent/s. In some circumstances, however, the parent/s may need to be told straight away (e.g. if a child is injured and requires medical treatment).

The parent/s and the child, if sufficiently mature, should be helped to understand the processes involved and be kept informed about the progress of the case and of the outcome where there is no criminal prosecution. This will include the outcome of any disciplinary process, but not the deliberations of, or the information used in, a hearing.

The employer should seek advice from the local authority Designated Officer, the police and / or Children's Social Care about how much information should be disclosed to the accused person. Subject to restrictions on the information that can be shared, the employer should, as soon as possible, inform the accused person about the nature of the allegation, how enquiries will be conducted and the possible outcome (e.g. disciplinary action, and dismissal or referral to the DBS or regulatory body).

The accused member of staff should:

- Be treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved;
- Be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary or related process;
- If suspended, be kept up to date about events in the workplace.

The local authority Designated Officer needs to be informed when a person who works with children 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 that he or she would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children

The information provided in this policy follows the Local Authority guidelines for 'Allegations Against Staff, Carers and Volunteers'.

Staff allegations should be reported to the Headteacher (CEO or Chair of Trustees, where appropriate) in line with the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy, Code of Conduct (Staff) Policy and Child Protection Policy.

Person responsible: Chief Executive Officer

Last review date: 17.03.21