

Allegations of Abuse Policy

Policy Statement

Ofsted requires all registered providers to have a policy regarding allegations being made against an adult working in the setting, whether they are a member of staff or a volunteer.

Appropriate policies and procedures, as well as following the principles of good practice, protect both children and staff.

Procedure to follow when an allegation is made against a member of staff

1. The member of staff against whom an allegation has been made should always be:
 - a. treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns and the processes involved
 - b. kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for themselves, eg disciplinary or related processes
 - c. kept informed about events in the workplace if they have been suspended.
2. Suspension does not need to be automatic. It should be considered in cases where:
 - a. it is suspected that a child(ren) is at risk of significant harm
 - b. the police are investigating the allegation
 - c. there are grounds for dismissal due to the nature of the allegation.

If the individual returns to work following suspension, the employer should consider what help and support might be appropriate and how best to manage the staff member's contact with the child concerned if they are still attending the setting.

3. Any allegation should be treated seriously and objectively, with those concerned keeping an open mind.

They should not:

- a. investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification
- b. make assumptions or offer alternative explanations
- c. promise confidentiality (reassure that the information will only be shared on a "need to know" basis).

They should:

- a. make a written record of the information given, including the time, date and place of the incident(s), persons present and what was said; sign and date the written record
- b. ensure that the setting's procedures are followed.

Procedures to help protect staff from allegations of abuse

Staff should follow the provision's Code of Staff Conduct, particularly ensuring the following.

- The safety and welfare of the child is always paramount.
- Staff must fulfil their responsibilities and duties towards children by working in partnership with parents.
- Staff relationships with children and families are conducted in a professional manner at all times.
- All provision policies and procedures are followed, those listed below are particularly relevant:
 - Parents as Partners
 - Behaviour Management
 - Equal Opportunities/Inclusion/Special Educational Needs.
- Staff must be vigilant in health and safety matters, eg recording any bruises/marks a child has on arrival with a pre-existing injury form (separate page for each child/incident to ensure confidentiality) and keep comprehensive and up-to-date records.
- Comprehensive reporting of all children's' accidents should be made to parents, for their signature. Where possible any written account should be witnessed by a second staff member.
- Any training needs identified in team members should be passed on to their line manager.

Advice, help and/or support is sought if they find a child's behaviour is persistently challenging or difficult to manage.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Policy review date: _____