

St Alban's Catholic High School



Allegations of Abuse Against Staff and Volunteers

Approved by Staffing Committee on: 13 May 2019

Recommission Date: May 2021

This document is governed by Statutory Guidelines in the DfE Document
"Keeping Children safe in Education".

1. Introduction

1.1 This statement of procedures follows the DfE Statutory Guidance "*Keeping Children safe in Education*". Governors are clear that this document underpins all work in this area and local policy agreement is not appropriate. Staff will be alerted to this guidance as a natural part of updating their working knowledge and understanding of Safeguarding practice.

1.2 A specific section of the guidance refers to managing cases of allegations that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity. It will be used in respect of all cases where it is alleged that an employee or a volunteer, or a person with permission to be on the premises or carrying out any activity on behalf of the school 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.

This will include allegations involving inappropriate relationships with pupils, grooming behaviour of any kind, possession of indecent photographs or images of children and other offences under the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

1.2 Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with as quickly as possible, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child or children and at the same time deals fairly with the person who is the subject of the allegation.

1.3 All members of the senior leadership team and the Designated Safeguarding Lead with responsibility for child protection have a responsibility to be familiar with the DfE Statutory Guidance "*Keeping Children safe in Education*" and to ensure that all employees and volunteers know about and understand paragraph 2 below.

1.4 The guidance is clear that the procedures for dealing with allegations need to be applied with common sense and judgement. Many cases may well either not meet the criteria set out above, or may do so without warranting consideration of either a police investigation or enquiries by local authority children's social care services. In these cases, local arrangements should be followed to resolve cases without delay.

2. Reporting an Allegation

2.1 If staff have a concern that a person (as described in paragraph 1 above) may have behaved inappropriately or they have received information that may constitute an allegation they must:

- Report the facts to the Headteacher as soon as possible, however trivial it may seem. In the absence of the Headteacher they must report the matter to the most senior person available who will carry out the Case Manager's duties in his/her absence. If the allegation concerns the Headteacher then the matter must be reported to the Chair of Governors.
- Make a signed and dated written record of their concerns, observations or the information you have received and give it to the Headteacher straightaway. Once made aware of an allegation, the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) needs to be notified through the referral process within 24 hours.
- Maintain strict confidentiality.

2.2 Staff must not:

- Attempt to deal with the situation themselves;
- Make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish or embellish the seriousness of the behaviour or alleged incidents;
- Keep the information to themselves or promise confidentiality;
- Take any action that might undermine any police investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses, or informing the alleged perpetrator or parents/carers.

3. Outcomes

3.1 Guidance talks specifically about there being an outcome of an investigation. The specific definitions are recorded in the document. There are five possible outcomes: Substantiated, Malicious, False, Unsubstantiated, and Unfounded.

3.2 The initial sharing of information and evaluation may lead to a decision that no further action is to be taken in regard to the individual facing the allegation or concern; in which case this decision and a justification for it should be recorded by both the case manager and the designated officer, and agreement reached on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom.

4. The Guidance

At the time of writing, this can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education-2>

The guidance comes in two formats; the main full document and a short version aimed at school staff. Part 4 of the main document specifically relates to allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers.

Signed Chair of Governors:.....

Date:.....