



The Crypt School

STATEMENT OF PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST TEACHERS & OTHER STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

Lead Person: Deputy Head (Safeguarding, Inclusion and Wellbeing)
Governing Body Committee: Pupil Welfare

Contents

Introduction	1
Communicating the Procedures	2
Immediately Reporting an Allegation	2
Duties and Responsibilities of the Case Manager	3
Malicious allegations	4
Records	4
Low Level Concern reporting	4
Contacts	5

Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Procedures follows the DfE Statutory Guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Part Four: Allegations of abuse made against teachers and other staff*, which is available from the school office and online. It is about managing 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 volunteer, or a person with permission to be on the premises or carrying out any activity on behalf of the Crypt School has:

- a. Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- b. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- c. Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children.

- d. Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

1.2 Any allegation of abuse will be dealt with as quickly as possible, in a fair, consistent and thorough 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. The welfare of a child is paramount and this will be the prime concern in terms of investigating an allegation against a person in a position of trust.

Communicating the Procedures

- 1.3. All members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) have a responsibility to ensure that all staff know about and understand these procedures.
- 1.4. In accordance with the DfE Statutory Guidance, all staff must also read at least Part One, Annex B and Part Five of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, which contains Safeguarding information for all staff.
- 1.5. All members of the SLT and the DSL have a responsibility to be familiar with the statutory guidance in its entirety.

Immediately Reporting an Allegation

1.6. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. If you have a concern that a person (as described in paragraph 1.1 above) may have behaved inappropriately or you have received information that may constitute an allegation you must:

- a. Report the facts to the Case Manager, who is the Headmaster, as soon as possible. All concerns will be listened to and managed appropriately; do not withhold information however trivial it may seem. If the Headmaster were subject to an allegation, the Chair of Trustees would be Case Manager.
- b. When reporting an allegation, make a signed and dated written record of your concerns, observations, or the information you have received and give it to the Case Manager straight away.
- c. In the absence of the Case Manager, you must report the matter to the most senior person available who will carry out the Case Manager's duties in his/her absence. This would be the Deputy Headteacher (Safeguarding, Inclusion and Wellbeing) in the first instance. If the Chair of Trustees is involved, the Headmaster will take advice from the Local Authority Designated Safeguarding Officer (LADO).

- d. There are two aspects to consider when an allegation is made:
- Looking after the welfare of the child - the DSL (or a deputy) is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care. If there is cause to suspect a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm, a strategy discussion involving the police and/or local authority children's social care will be convened in accordance with the statutory guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023*.
 - Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation - the case manager should discuss with the LADO, the nature, content and context of the allegation, and agree on a course of action.
- e. When dealing with allegations, we:
- apply common sense and judgement
 - deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently
 - provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation, and
 - maintain strict confidentiality.

1.7. You must not:

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

1.8. The **duties and responsibilities of the Case Manager** are as described in *Keeping Children Safe in Education: Part Four: Allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff* (KCSIE).

These enable the case management team to distinguish between:

1. Allegations that may meet the harms threshold.
2. Allegation/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – referred to and recorded as Low Level Concerns.

No judgement is to be made by staff but is to be made by the Case Management team only. Staff simply must report any concerns. All concerns will be treated with confidentiality and sensitivity in the context of the law (see the Education Act 2011 in this instance) with duty of care in place for all involved.

This policy can also cover concerns beyond the school gates and the Case Manager will take advice from the LADO if that is applicable. As a team they will either decide there is to be no further action or there is a need for further enquiries in terms of concerns raised. The person reporting the concern may not be updated after the initial concern raised due to confidentiality for those involved but can be reassured their concerns will be dealt with in full as per Section 4 of KCSIE.

These processes are also applied to supply and contracted staff as well as those staff who are in the process of leaving the school due to resignation, retirement etc.

The school will co-operate in full with any police investigation.

Malicious allegations

Where an allegation by a pupil is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the Headmaster will consider whether to take disciplinary action in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy.

All staff need to be aware of their vulnerability to allegations and must address their practice accordingly. All staff must adhere to the guidance in respect to safe conduct as set out in the school's Staff Code of Conduct.

Records

Details of allegations found to be malicious will be removed from personnel records.

For all other allegations, full details will be recorded on the confidential personnel file of the person accused.

The purpose of the record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference. It will provide clarification in cases where future DBS checks reveal information from the police about an allegation that did not result in a criminal conviction and it will help to prevent unnecessary reinvestigation if, as sometimes happens, an allegation re-surfaces after a period of time.

An allegation proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be referred to in employer references. In accordance with KCSIE, a history of repeated concerns or allegations which have all been found to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will also not be included in any reference.

The school will retain all records concerning allegations of abuse at least until the accused has reached normal pension age or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer.

Learning lessons

The Case Manager and LADO will review the case on completion to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the school's procedures to help prevent similar events in the future. This should include issues arising from any decision to suspend the member of staff, the duration of the suspension and whether or not suspension was justified.

For all other cases, where the allegation is concluded to be either, unfounded, false, malicious or unsubstantiated, the case manager (and if they have been involved the LADO) should consider the facts and determine whether any lessons can be learned and if improvements can be made.

Low Level Concern reporting

All schools are required to keep records of low level concerns raised about members of staff, including supply staff, volunteers and contractors. The term 'low level' does not mean that it is insignificant. 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 may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the code of conduct (including inappropriate conduct outside of work) but the concern does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

The Crypt School Low Level Concern procedure is outlined in the Safeguarding Policy.

1.9. The contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Lead (case manager in the absence of the Headmaster) are:

Gemma Hargraves - ghargraves@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk

The contact details for the Headmaster are:

Nicholas Dyer - ndyer@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk

The contact details for the Chair of Trustees (case manager in the case of allegations against the Head):

Lee Hill - lee.hill@cryptschool.org

Approved by Head: November 2025

Review cycle: Annual

Date of next review: September 2026