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Background

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is the person who should be notified when it has been alleged that a person who works or volunteers 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
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicated they **may pose a risk of harm to children**
- Behaved or **may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.**

You can find more information [here](#).

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Why it matters

The LADO is responsible for providing advice, information and guidance to employers about allegations or concerns regarding both paid and unpaid workers, including:

- Managing and overseeing individual cases from all agencies.
- Ensuring there is a consistent, fair and thorough process for all adults working with children against whom allegations are made.
- Managing the process of cases to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible.

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Information

The LADO does NOT investigate the allegation. However, advice can be sought from, or referred to, the LADO directly if there is a concern about how a professional or volunteer has behaved. It is often also useful to inform your line manager/safeguarding officer that you are raising an allegation. Further information about reporting, including Local Authority LADO contacts can be found [here](#).

Risk indicators may include:

- A pattern/history of low level incidents
- Historical concerns

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- A breach of safer working practices
- Not following established policies and procedures of the workplace
- Staff not being properly trained regarding Safeguarding policies and procedures
- Little or no culture of openness, transparency, and support.

Important: DBS checks cannot be solely relied upon to identify unsuitable people. It is essential to follow safer recruitment practices.

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Legislation and Government guidance sets out the processes to be followed by agencies when responding to allegations against adults who work with children and young people. All organisations should therefore have procedures for dealing with allegations which are consistent with guidance in [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#). It is essential that any concern/allegations of abuse made are dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently to protect the child and support the adult.

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What to do

All allegations that meet the allegation criteria must be reported to the relevant LADO within one working day.

If a child has been (or is at risk of being) harmed by a professional or volunteer, the local Children's Social Care (CSC) Team needs to be notified and the LADO informed.

If CSC complete a strategy, then the LADO needs to be invited.

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Questions to consider

- Have all staff signed up to safer working practices and can this be evidenced?
- Do ALL staff know who they should raise concerns with?
- Are all policies and protocols consistent with Government guidance and best practice? How do we know?
- Is there a culture of openness and transparency?
- Are senior leaders expressly familiar with statutory guidance?
- Do key staff know how and when to make a referral to the LADO?

