



Policy: Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse made against teachers, other staff and volunteers

Policy reference no: 022

1. 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.' This is updated annually.
- 1.2. Dealing with an allegation that a professional, staff member, or volunteer has abused a child is difficult but must be taken seriously and dealt with carefully and fairly.
- 1.3. Every organisation that provides services for children, or works with children, needs to:
 - carry out checks on all new staff and volunteers as part of a safe recruitment process to ensure, as far as is possible, that they are safe to work with children and young people; and
 - have procedures in place for dealing with allegations of abuse against people who work with children.
- 1.4. It is important that all who work with children are aware of these procedures within their organisation or setting and know where to access them should the need arise.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. This statement of procedures is about managing cases of allegations that might indicate that 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 with children at The Corinium Education Trust and/or its schools.
- 2.2. These procedures will be used in respect of all cases where it is alleged that an employee, volunteer or a person with permission to be on the premises or carrying out any activity on behalf of The Corinium Education Trust 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;
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she would pose a risk of harm to children;
 - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates he or she may not be suitable to continue to work with children.
- 2.3. Additionally, these procedures may be used:
 - if there are concerns about the person's behaviour towards their own children, or
 - if there are concerns about the person's behaviour towards children unrelated to their employment or voluntary work, and there has been a recommendation from a strategy discussion that consideration should be given to the risk posed to children they work with, or
 - when an allegation is made about abuse that took place some time ago and the accused person may still be working with or having contact with children.

- 2.4. This statement includes allegations involving any type of abuse or neglect, including 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.
- 2.5. As an employer, The Corinium Education Trust has a duty of care to all of our employees. The Trust will provide effective support for anyone facing an allegation and, where the Trust is not the employer of the individual, we recognise our responsibility to ensure all allegations are dealt with appropriately and we will liaise with relevant parties accordingly.
- 2.6. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching will be referred to the police. Historical allegations of abuse should also be referred to the police.
- 2.7. The Corinium Education Trust's procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.
- 2.8. 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.

3. Communicating the procedures

- 3.1. All members of The Corinium Education Trust's Leadership Group, their respective schools' leadership teams and Designated Safeguarding Leads with responsibility for child protection have a responsibility to ensure that all staff know about and understand the procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers, other staff and volunteers.
- 3.2. In accordance with the DfE Statutory Guidance, all staff should also read at least Part one of 'Keeping children safe in education', which contains safeguarding information for all staff, annually.
- 3.3. All members of The Corinium Education Trust's Leadership Group, their respective schools' leadership teams and Designated Safeguarding Leads have a responsibility to be familiar with the Statutory Guidance in its entirety and any subsequent changes or updates.

4. Reporting an allegation

- 4.1. Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children.
- 4.2. If you have a concern that a person may have behaved inappropriately or you have received information that may constitute an allegation **you must**:
 - Report the facts to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. All concerns will be listened to and managed appropriately; do not withhold information however trivial it may seem.
 - In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Lead you must report the matter to the most senior person available, or the school's Headteacher, who will carry out the Designated Safeguarding Lead's duties in his/her absence. If the allegation concerns the school's Headteacher, or The Corinium Education Trust's Chief Executive, then the matter must be reported to the Chair of the school's local governing body, or in the case of the Chief Executive, the Chair of The Corinium Education Trust's Board of Trustees.
 - Make a signed and dated written record of your concerns, observations or the information you have received and give it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead straight away.
 - Maintain strict confidentiality.

- 4.3. You must **not**:
- Attempt to deal with the situation yourself;
 - Make assumptions, offer alternative explanations or diminish or embellish the seriousness of the behaviour or alleged incidents;
 - Keep the information to yourself or promise confidentiality;
 - 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.
- 4.4. When a report is made to a school's Designated Safeguarding Lead it will be clear in some cases that an immediate referral must be made to social care or the police for investigation.
- 4.5. An immediate referral would be made if a child appears to have been harmed or is at risk of significant harm or a criminal act appears to have been committed.
- 4.6. In many cases it may be difficult to judge on the basis of the information provided; it may be more about unprofessional behaviour or blurred boundaries between a staff member and a child or there may be no foundation in the allegation at all.
- 4.7. All allegations will be taken seriously and objectively and dealt with in a timely manner.
- 4.8. When an allegation is made The Corinium Education Trust will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. This is in line with the reporting restrictions set out in The Education Act 2002.
- 4.9. The following definitions will be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:
- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
 - Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive;
 - False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
 - Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation(s). The term does not imply guilt or innocence;
 - Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

5. Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1. Each school within The Corinium Education Trust has a member of the leadership team who is designated to deal with issues of safeguarding and child protection.
- 5.2. The roles and responsibilities of The Corinium Education Trust's **Designated Safeguarding Leads** in each of our schools are as described in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, Annex B.'
- 5.3. The contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Leads in each of The Corinium Education Trust's schools are published on the schools' websites and in their Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.
- 5.4. Every Local Authority has an identified **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** who has responsibility for:
- managing and overseeing individual allegations from across the children's workforce;
 - providing advice and guidance to senior managers and employers etc;

- liaising with social care, police, Crown Prosecution Service and other relevant agencies;
- monitoring progress of all cases to ensure they are dealt with in accordance with recommended timescales, as set out in these procedures;
- co-ordinating and collating reports to provide information to the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Executive and DfE.

5.5. The LADO should be informed of all allegations and will provide advice and guidance in the management of these.

6. Related documents

6.1. This set of procedures relates to the following:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020;
- Working together to safeguard children DfE publication 2018;
- The Corinium Education Trust's Safeguarding Policy and individual school's Policies for safeguarding children.

Document History

Creation Date May 2021
Trust Lead Chief Executive
Approved by Trustees
First approval date May 2021
Review frequency Annually
Last review/approval date May 2021

Review date	Significant amendments	Made by	Next review
May 2021	New Statement of Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers, other staff and volunteers.	CXH	May 2022