

Managing Allegations Against Staff



Policy Statement

Early Years Day Nursery Uxbridge is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and takes all allegations and concerns about staff seriously.

Any allegation or concern that a member of staff, student, volunteer, or any adult working with children has behaved in a way that may have harmed a child must be responded to immediately, professionally, and in line with statutory guidance.

The nursery recognises its duty to protect children while also ensuring that staff are treated fairly, consistently, and with respect throughout any investigation process.

All staff have a responsibility to report concerns without delay. Failure to report a concern may place a child at risk and will be treated as a serious matter.

Reporting Concerns

Any allegation or concern about a member of staff must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) on the same day and without delay.

Where the concern relates to the DSL, a senior manager, or the nursery owner, the concern must be escalated to an alternative safeguarding lead, senior management, or directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Initial Response

Upon receiving a concern or allegation, the DSL will act immediately to establish the basic facts and assess any immediate risk to children.

The safety and wellbeing of children will always be the primary consideration. Where necessary, appropriate action will be taken to safeguard children, which may include temporarily removing the member of staff from duties or adjusting their role.

The DSL will not begin any internal investigation at this stage.

Referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

All allegations that meet the required threshold will be reported to the LADO immediately and, in all cases, within 24 hours.

This includes situations where a member of staff has behaved in a way that has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, may have committed a criminal offence related to a child, has behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, or may not be suitable to work with children.

If there is any uncertainty as to whether the concern meets the threshold, the nursery will seek advice from the LADO before making any decisions.

The LADO provides advice, guidance, and oversight to ensure that allegations are managed appropriately and in line with statutory procedures. The nursery will follow the advice of the LADO at all times.

No internal investigation will take place unless and until the LADO has confirmed that this is appropriate.

Managing the Allegation

Following consultation with the LADO, the nursery will take appropriate action in line with the guidance provided.

Where the matter is returned to the nursery for internal investigation, this will be carried out without undue delay and in accordance with the nursery's disciplinary procedures.

The member of staff will be informed of the allegation at an appropriate stage, in line with advice from the LADO and any other relevant agencies. The process will be managed sensitively, ensuring fairness, confidentiality, and respect.

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Where appropriate, the staff member may be redeployed to non-contact duties. Suspension will only be considered where absolutely necessary and will not take place without prior discussion with the LADO. A risk assessment will be completed before any decision to suspend is made.

Where a member of staff is absent or has left the nursery, reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that they are informed of the allegation and given the opportunity to respond.

Low-Level Concerns

The nursery recognises the importance of identifying and addressing low-level concerns at an early stage.

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working with children may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including behaviour that does not meet the threshold for referral to the LADO.

All low-level concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and will be recorded, reviewed, and, where necessary, followed up.

Recording low-level concerns enables the nursery to identify patterns of behaviour, take appropriate action, and maintain a strong safeguarding culture.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

All allegations and concerns will be handled in the strictest confidence. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis in order to protect both the child and the member of staff.

Records of all concerns, decisions, and actions will be maintained accurately and securely in line with safeguarding procedures.

Outcome and External Reporting

At the conclusion of any investigation, a clear outcome will be recorded and communicated appropriately.

Where required, referrals will be made to external agencies, including the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), and the nursery will notify Ofsted of any significant events or allegations in line with statutory requirements and without delay.

All records relating to allegations will be retained securely in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

Support for Staff

The nursery recognises that allegations can be distressing and will ensure that appropriate support is provided to the member of staff throughout the process.

The employer has a duty of care and will maintain appropriate contact, provide updates where possible, and ensure that the individual is treated fairly.

Where appropriate, a return-to-work or welfare meeting will be held following the conclusion of an investigation.

Safeguarding Culture

The nursery promotes a safeguarding culture where all concerns are taken seriously and acted upon promptly.

Staff are encouraged to raise concerns without fear, and the nursery is committed to managing all allegations in a fair, consistent, and transparent manner, always prioritising the safety and welfare of children.

Linked Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Investigation, Disciplinary and Grievance Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Policy.