

St Helens Primary School



Statement of Procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against Staff

Reviewed by: FGB

On: 7th February 2024

Next review due: February 2025

Co-Chairs of Governors: Gary Booth Matthew Searle

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G Booth', written in a cursive style.

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Dealing with allegations against staff

If a concern is raised about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff this information will be recorded and passed to the Head teacher.

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be contacted and the relevant guidance will be followed. (See appendix 1)

If the allegation is against the Head teacher, the person receiving the allegation will contact the LADO or the nominated governor directly.

Dealing with allegations against pupils

If a concern is raised that there is an allegation of a pupil abusing another pupil within the school, the 'dealing with allegations against pupils' guidance will be followed (See appendix 2).

Appendix 1

Allegations against staff Procedure This procedure should be used in all cases in which it is alleged a member of staff or volunteer working for 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**

In dealing with allegations or concerns against an adult in the school staff:

- **Report any concerns about the conduct of any member of staff or volunteer to the DSL as soon as possible**
- **If an allegation is made against the Head Teacher, the concerns need to be raised with Safeguarding Governor or LADO as soon as possible.**
- **Once an allegation has been received by the Head Teacher, Chair of Governors or Safeguarding Governor they will contact the LADO on 01983 823723 as soon as possible and before carrying out any investigation into the allegation other than preliminary enquiries.**
- **Inform parents of the allegation unless there is a good reason not to. In liaison with the LADO, the school will determine how to proceed and if necessary the LADO will refer the matter to Children's Services and/or the Police. If the matter is investigated internally, the LADO will advise the school to seek guidance from their HR provider in following procedures set out in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and the Isle of Wight LSCB procedures.**

Appendix 2

Managing allegations against other pupils Policy and Procedure DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education') says the 'governing bodies should ensure that there are procedures in place to handle allegations against other children'. The guidance also states the importance of minimising the risks of peer-on-peer abuse. In most instances, the conduct of students towards each other will be covered by the school's Behaviour Policy. Some allegations are most likely to include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation. It is likely that incidents dealt with under this policy will involve older students and their behaviour towards younger students or those who are vulnerable.

The safeguarding implications of sexual activity between young people.

The interventions of Child Protection agencies in situations involving sexual activity between children can require difficult professional judgements. Some situations are statutorily clear – for example, a child under the age of 13 cannot consent to sexual activity. But it will not necessarily be appropriate to initiate Safeguarding procedures where sexual activity involving children and young people below the age of legal consent (16 years) comes to notice. In our society, generally the age at which children become sexually active has steadily dropped. It is important to distinguish between consensual sexual activity between children of a similar age (where at least one is below the age of consent), sexual activity involving a power imbalance, or some form of coercion or exploitation. It may also be difficult to be sure that what has or has been alleged to have taken place defiantly does have a sexual component. As usual, important decisions should be made on a case by case basis, based on an assessment of the children's best interests. Referral under safeguarding arrangements may be necessary, guided by an assessment of the extent to which a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Key specific considerations will include:

- **The age, maturity and understanding of the children;**
- **Any disability or special needs of the children;**
- **Their social and family circumstances;**
- **Any evidence in the behaviour or presentation of the children that might suggest they have been harmed;**
- **Any evidence of pressure to engage in sexual activity;**
- **Any indication of sexual exploitation; There are also contextual factors. Gender, sexuality, race and levels of sexual knowledge can be used to exert power. A sexual predator may sometimes be a woman or girl and the victim a boy.**