

Allegations management Policy –March 2022

All allegations of abuse of children by those who work (staff, students, volunteers, or on site visitors) with children must be taken seriously. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who 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 they may pose a risk of harm to children
- behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

The allegation must be reported to the manager and DSL immediately. Written records must be made. The local authority designated officer (LADO) must be informed within 1 working day, phone the allegations management coordinators for advice first. If coordinators advise referral is to be put in for LADO to review, then allegations management referral is to be completed and sent in immediately. The LADO will inform the DSL/MANAGER of the next step and will decide if the allegation meets harms threshold or not. OFSTED must be informed within 14 days.

- The nursery will follow all instructions from the LADO and Ofsted and ask all staff members to do the same and co-operate where required
- All enquiries/external investigations/interviews will be documented and kept in a locked file for access by the relevant authorities. Said interviews are strictly confidential
- If an allegation meets harms threshold, then an allegations management meeting will take place with multi-agencies, where an outcome and next steps will be decided.
- Founded allegations will be dealt with as gross misconduct in accordance with our disciplinary procedures and may result in the termination of employment, Ofsted will be notified immediately of this decision along with notifying the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to ensure their records are updated.
- Support will be provided to all those involved in an allegation throughout the external investigation in line with LADO's support and advice
- The nursery reserves the right to suspend any member of staff during an investigation. Legal advice will be sought to ensure compliance with the law.
- All safeguarding records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age or for 21 years and 3 months if that is longer. This will ensure accurate information is available for references and future DBS checks and avoids any unnecessary reinvestigation
- The nursery retains the right to dismiss any member of staff in connection with founded allegations following an inquiry
- Unfounded allegations will result in all rights being reinstated following advice from LADO-OFSTED to be updated
- A return to work plan will be put in place for any member of staff returning to work after an allegation has been deemed unfounded. Individual support will be offered to meet the needs of the individual staff member and the nature of the incident; this

may include more frequent supervisions, coaching and mentoring and external support.

Please also refer to allegations management referral flowchart