



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

MODEL

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

FOR

EARLY YEARS

AND

CHILDCARE PROVIDERS



www.wokingham.gov.uk

Model Child Protection Policy for Childcare Providers (Including Early Education Providers)

Details in this advice were correct at the time of writing. However, the law, guidance and practice may change from time to time, and providers and their members of staff are encouraged to keep up to date with developments.

These notes should be read in conjunction with
What To Do If You Suspect A Child Is Being Harmed (DfES 2004)
Working Together To Safeguard Children (DfES 2006)
Child Protection Procedures (Berkshire LSCBs 2006)
Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education, (DfES 2007)

Please note that the advice in this document applies to situations where there is reasonable suspicion that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm.

For situations below this threshold, the Common Assessment Framework processes should be used.

If in any doubt about which is the most appropriate, please consult the appropriate Area Team

We would recommend that these procedures should be adopted by all childcare providers and early education providers, including those providing funded early years places. For example: Early Years & Childcare providers/pre schools, playgroups, Day Nurseries, Crèches, Childminders and Out of School, Holiday Play Clubs. This is not an exclusive list, but other settings such as maintained nursery early years & childcare providers and youth services may have their own mandatory procedures.

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NAME OF PROVISION

Willow Bank Pre-School

PRINCIPLES

This early years & childcare provider recognises its legal duty protect children from harm, and respond to child abuse.

We believe that every child regardless of age has at all times and in all situations a right to feel safe and protected from any situation or practice that results in a child being physically or psychologically damaged.

We agree that we have a primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of the children in our charge, and we will carry out this duty through our safeguarding policy. In order to achieve this, all staff and volunteers in this early years & childcare provision, in whatever capacity, will at all times act proactively in child welfare matters, especially where there is a possibility that a child may be at risk of significant harm.

The early years & childcare provider seeks to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards children as part of their responsibility. The early years & childcare provider hopes that parents and children will feel free to talk about any concerns and will see early years & childcare provider as a safe place if there are any difficulties at home.

Children's worries and fears will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff. However, staff cannot guarantee confidentiality if concerns are such that referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

In our early years & childcare provision, if we have suspicions about a child's physical, sexual or emotional well-being, or that they are being neglected, we will take action.

As a consequence, we

- assert that staff in early years & childcare providers are an integral part of the child safeguarding process;
- accept totally that safeguarding children is an appropriate function for all staff in early years & childcare providers, and wholly compatible with their primary pedagogic responsibilities.
- recognise that safeguarding children in this early years & childcare provision is a responsibility for all staff, including volunteers, and the employer;
- will ensure that all staff and volunteers in the early years & childcare provision are alert to the possibility that a child is at risk of suffering harm, and know how to report concerns or suspicions;

- will designate a member of staff with knowledge and skills in recognising and acting on child protection concerns, known as the Child Protection Liaison Person (CPLP). He or she will act as a source of expertise and advice, and is responsible for co-ordinating action within the provision
- CPLP staff with designated responsibility for child protection will receive appropriate training
- will share our concerns with others who need to know, and assist in any referral process;
- if somebody believes that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, they will always refer such concerns to the designated member of staff, who will take appropriate action, as required by the law, national and local guidance and working agreements.
- safeguard the welfare of children whilst in the early years & childcare provision, through positive measures to address bullying, especially where this is aggravated by sexual or racial factors, or disability or special educational needs
- ensure that all staff are aware of the child protection procedures established by the Local Safeguarding Children Boards and, where appropriate, the Local Authority, and act on any guidance or advice given by them;
- will ensure through our recruitment and selection of volunteers and paid employees that all people who work in our early years & childcare provision are suitable to work with children.

DESIGNATED MEMBER OF STAFF

To parallel DCSF Guidance on Child Protection for early years & childcare provision we have nominated the following to be the Child Protection Liaison Person ("CPLP") in this provision.

Mrs Lynda Bolliger

In order to avoid delay in progressing referrals or seeking consultations, in their absence, these matters will be dealt with by:

The Chairperson

The setting recognises that

- the CPLP must be a senior member of staff in the setting
- all members of staff must be made aware of who this person is and what their role is.
- The CPLP is responsible for referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies according to the procedures established by the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

- The CPLP is not responsible for dealing with allegations made against members of staff, this is the employer, but will co-ordinate as appropriate.

To be effective they will:

- Have the experience and training to act as the point of reference within the provision where there may be child protection concerns.
- ensure that proper procedures and policies are in place and are followed with regard to child safeguarding issues.
- will act as the link between the provision and the Local Authority in child protection matters.
- Cascade advice and guidance issued by the Local Authority to staff
- Ensure each member of staff and volunteers at the early years & childcare provision, and regular visitors are aware of and can access readily, this policy.
- Liaise with the employer or manager to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for the role.
- Ensure that this policy is updated and reviewed annually or as situations or changes in legislation dictate.
- Keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns.
- Ensure parents are aware of the child protection policy in order to alert them to the fact that the setting may need to make referrals.

The CPLP has an important role in ensuring all staff and volunteers receive appropriate training. They should:

- Attend training in how to identify abuse and know when it is appropriate to refer a case
- Have a working knowledge of how the Local Safeguarding Children Board operates and the conduct of a child protection case conference and able to attend and contribute to these when required.
- Attend any relevant or refresher training courses and then ensure that any new or key messages are passed to other staff, volunteers and employers.

Employer Responsibility

Child protection is important. Where appropriate, the employer will endeavour to ensure that sufficient resources are made available to enable the necessary tasks to be carried out properly under inter-agency procedures.

The employer will ensure that the CPLP is given sufficient time to carry out his or her duties, including accessing training.

The employer will review child protection practices in the early years & childcare provider on a regular basis, and no less than annually, to ensure that:

- The early years & childcare provision is carrying out its duties to safeguard the welfare of children attending the early years & childcare provision;
- The CPLP has the capacity to carry out their duties effectively
- Members of staff and volunteers are aware of current practices in this matter, and that staff receive training where appropriate;
- Child protection is integrated with induction procedures for all new members of staff and volunteers
- The early years & childcare provider follows the procedures agreed by the Local Safeguarding Children Boards and any supplementary guidance issued by the Local Authority
- Only persons suitable to work with children shall be employed in the early years & childcare provision, or work here in a voluntary capacity

RECRUITMENT

In order to ensure that children are protected whilst at this early years & childcare provision we will ensure that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, screened, trained and supervised.

We accept that it is our responsibility to

- Before appointing someone, follow up each reference with a telephone call or personal contact during which we will discuss the applicant's suitability to work with vulnerable adults.
- Check that all adults with substantial access to children at this early years & childcare provider have been a Criminal Records Bureau check before starting work, and prior to confirmation of appointment.

In addition, we will ensure that the following checks are satisfactorily completed before a person takes up a position in the early years & childcare provision:

- Identity checks to establish that applicants are who they claim to be¹
- Academic qualifications, to ensure that qualifications are genuine
- Professional and character references prior to offering employment
- Satisfy conditions as to health and physical capacity
- Previous employment history will be examined and any gaps accounted for.

VOLUNTEERS

We understand that some people otherwise unsuitable for working with children may use volunteering to gain access to children; for this reason, any volunteers in the early years & childcare provision, in whatever capacity, will be given the same consideration as paid staff.

¹ e.g., through birth certificate, passport, new style driving licence, etc...

Where a parent or other volunteer helps on a one-off basis, he/she will only work under the direct supervision of a member of staff, and at no time have one to one contact with children. However, if a parent or other volunteer is to be in early years & childcare provision regularly or over a longer period then they will be checked to ensure their suitability to work with children.

INDUCTION & TRAINING

All new members of staff will receive induction training, which will give an overview of the organization and ensure they know its purpose, values, services and structure, as well as identifying and reporting abuse, and confidentiality issues.

All new staff at the early years & childcare provision (including volunteers) will receive basic Child Protection information ("What To Do If You Suspect A Child Is Being Abused) and a copy of this policy within one week of starting their job at the early years & childcare provision.

All staff will be expected to attend training on safeguarding children that will enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in respect of child protection effectively. The early years & childcare provider may provide this training as through the CPLP.

DEALING WITH CONCERNS

Generally concerns about children in early years & childcare provision arise in one of three ways:

- direct allegations of abuse and/or neglect;
- observations or information about children, which might suggest they may be experiencing abuse or neglect
- disclosure by a child

All concerns falling into this category will be referred to the Local Authority in accordance with the procedures set out in The Berkshire LSCBs Child Protection Procedures.

Members of staff and volunteers are not required to investigate suspicions; if somebody believes that a child may be suffering, or may be at risk of suffering significant harm, they must always refer such concerns to the CPLP, who will refer the matter to Children's Services and report to OFSTED.

Children's Services and the Thames Valley Police are empowered to carry out carry out investigations and decide whether children have been abused.

To this end, volunteers and staff will follow the procedures below;

- Upon the receipt of any information from a child, or if any person has suspicions that a child may be at risk of harm, or
- If anyone observes injuries that appear to be non-accidental, or

- where a child or young person makes a direct allegation or discloses that they have been abused,
- they must record what they have seen, heard or know accurately at the time the event occurs, and share their concerns with the CPLP and agree action to take

We will ensure that all members of staff and employees are familiar with the procedures for keeping a confidential written record of any incidents and with the requirements of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

SAFEGUARDING IN THE PROVISION

As well as ensuring that we address child protection concerns, we will also ensure that children who attend the provision are kept safe from harm whilst they are in our charge.

To this end, this policy must be seen in light of our policies on:

- Bullying; we will also ensure that bullying is identified and dealt with so that any harm caused by other children can be minimised. We will pay particular attention to sexualized behaviour, or bullying that is homophobic in nature, or may spring from domestic violence
- Racist incidents
- Confidentiality
- Behaviour
- Health & Safety
- Allegations against members of staff

PHOTOGRAPHING CHILDREN

We understand that parents like to take photos of or video record their children in the play, or at other events, or early years & childcare provider presentations. This is a normal part of family life, and we will not discourage parents from celebrating their child's successes.

However, if there are Health and Safety issues associated with this - i.e. the use of a flash when taking photos could distract or dazzle the child, and cause them to have an accident, we will encourage parents to use film or settings on their camera that do not require flash.

We will not allow others to photograph or film children during an activity without the parent's permission.

We will not allow images of children to be used on our website, publicity, or press releases, without express permission from the parent, and if we do obtain such permission, we will not identify individual children by name.

We cannot be held accountable for photographs or video footage taken by parents or members of the public at early years & childcare provision functions.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This provision, and all members of staff at the provision, will ensure that all data about children is handled in accordance with the requirements of the law, and any national and local guidance.

Any member of staff who has access to sensitive information about a child or the child's family must take all reasonable steps to ensure that such information is not disclosed, unless it is to people who need to know.

Regardless of the duty of confidentiality, if any member of staff has reason to believe that a child may suffering harm, or be at risk of harm, their duty is to forward this information without delay to the Designated Person.

CONDUCT OF STAFF

The provision has a duty to ensure that professional behaviour applies to relationships between staff and children, and that all members of staff are clear about what constitutes appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries.

At all times, members of staff are required to work in a professional way with children. All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:

- working alone with a child
- physical interventions
- intimate care
- cultural and gender stereotyping
- dealing with sensitive information
- giving to and receiving gifts from children and parents
- disclosing personal details inappropriately
- meeting children outside the hours that the provision is open.

PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

Members of staff may have to make physical interventions with children. Members of staff should only do this where:

- It is necessary to protect the child, or another person, from immediate danger, or
- Where the member of staff has received suitable training

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST MEMBERS OF STAFF

We will regularly monitor and review our staff selection and supervision and working practices.

If anyone makes has grounds to suspect that any member of staff² in the provision (including any volunteer or committee member) has

² "Member of staff" means anyone who works in the provision, regardless of whether they are paid, or the manner of engagement. It includes employees, volunteers, contracted out, and cover staff.

- harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm; or
- displayed behaviour involving or related to a child that might constitute a criminal offence;
- behaved in a way that raises concern about his/her suitability to work with children

the allegation will be dealt with in accordance with national guidance and agreements, as implemented locally.

Appendix 3 gives details of the referral of such allegations.

Appendix 1 - Types of Abuse

What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is the range of ways in which people harm children significantly.

- Abuse is a “selfish act of oppression and injustice” and the “exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority.”³
- It is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture.
- It is damaging to a child’s health, educational attainment and emotional well-being.
- It is caused by somebody inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Who Abuses Children?

Anyone who has access to children

- Parents, siblings or other family members
- Family friends or neighbours
- Other children
- Professionals and volunteers

In over 90% of cases, the abuser is someone known to (and often trusted by) the child. Abusers can be rich or poor, and from any race or religion, and may be well liked and trusted members of society.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is largely about control or punishment.

Examples include:

- Hitting, whipping, caning, cutting, shaking, throwing, biting, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- Rubbing pepper or chilli into eyes
- Inappropriate restraint
- Giving a child alcohol or inappropriate drugs.
- Fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately causing, ill health to a child.
- Female circumcision

Physical Abuse - Signs

PHYSICAL

- Injuries that the child cannot explain or explains unconvincingly, or where accidental injury is unlikely,
- Bite marks; Cigarette burns;
- Sore or damaged eyes
- Bruising resembling hand or finger prints;
- Blunt-instrument marks or iron burns;
- Broken limbs (particularly in children under 12).

³ “Child Abuse and Islam” - Ali Jan Haider - 2002

- Immersion burns/scalds where tide marks have been left.

BEHAVIOURAL

- Child does not want you to ask parents about the injuries
- Fear of parent on approach, or fear of going home.
- Covering limbs even in hot weather or reluctance to change
- Flinches when touched or approached.
- Depression or mood swings that are out of character.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the most difficult form of child maltreatment to identify and stop. In some instances, an emotionally abused child will show no signs of abuse. Often only manifest itself in adolescence or adulthood, and can lead to insecurity, poor self-esteem, withdrawal, difficulty forming relationships and suicide, destructive behaviour, angry acts (such as fire setting or cruelty to animals) and alcohol or drug abuse.

Examples include:

- Persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child, causing severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development.
- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved
- Telling a child they are evil or a demon
- Constantly shamed, humiliated, terrorized, verbally bullied, frightened or rejected especially where aggravated by race, gender or disability.
- Age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children
- Exploitation or corruption of children;
- Child trafficking.

Emotional Abuse - Signs

PHYSICAL

- A failure to grow or thrive
- Sudden speech disorders
- Delayed development -physical or emotional
- Stress related illnesses

BEHAVIOURAL

- Seeing themselves as unworthy of love and affection.
- Excessive lack of confidence (not just shyness) or low self esteem
- Compulsive nervous behaviour
- Self harming
- Wetting/soiling
- Excessive need for approval, attention, affection
- Forced marriage

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is when an adult, or sometimes another child, uses a child for sexual gratification, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The child may be forced or enticed (groomed) into taking part in the activity.

Examples include:

- Physical contact for sexual purposes between perpetrator and child
- Penetrative or non-penetrative sexual acts.
- Grooming activity preparatory to abuse
- Showing a child pornographic films or pictures
- Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- Indecent Exposure
- Voyeurism
- Making an indecent photograph or pseudo-photograph, or possessing an indecent photograph, of children

Sexual Abuse - Signs

PHYSICAL

- Pain, itching, bruising or bleeding to genital or anal areas
- Sexually transmitted disease or recurrent genital discharge or urinary tract infections without apparent cause
- Stomach pains or discomfort when child is walking or sitting

BEHAVIOURAL

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour
- Nightmares or bedwetting
- Self harming or eating disorders
- Sexual drawings, play or promiscuous language or behaviour (inappropriate to age and understanding)
- Reluctance to change clothes for sports etc
- Sexual bullying of other children.

Neglect

Neglect is the most common causes for child protection investigations. Generally it becomes apparent in different ways over a period of time rather than at one specific point. Neglect is failing to exercise the minimum degree of care required in meeting a child's basic needs to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely harmed.

Examples include:

- Failing to make adequate provision for food, clothing, shelter
- Failing to ensure the child receives a suitable education
- Lack of or inappropriate medical care
- Lack of protection and exposure to danger including moral danger
- Inappropriate supervision - relevant to the child's age and understanding
- Lack of boundaries

Neglect - Signs

PHYSICAL

- Constant hunger - steals food from others, or rummages in dustbins for scraps of food - scurvy

- Underweight - or sometimes obesity
- Unkempt state of dress - dressed inappropriately for weather conditions
-
- Dirty or smelly - unwashed hair/body/arms/legs - particularly younger children, or children with disabilities.
- Untreated medical conditions - illness or injuries

BEHAVIOURAL

- Constant tiredness
- Early years & childcare provider absence or lateness, or not picked up at the end of the day
- Left alone or unsupervised regularly or hardly any friends
- Not attending appointments (GP; Ed psych; Mental health)

Domestic Violence

Over a third of children have witnessed or become aware of domestic violence. Children who grow up in a violent home experience so much added emotional stress that it harms development of the brain, impairing cognitive and sensory growth. They have similar behavioural and psychological problems as physically abused children.

This includes

- Difficulty learning
- Limited social skills,
- Violent, risky or delinquent behaviour,
- Depression or severe anxiety.

Children are more likely to be at risk of physical/sexual/emotional abuse from perpetrators of domestic violence and perpetrators may abuse the child as part of their violence against women.

Appendix 2 - Dealing With An Incident

How You Might Find Out

The ability to recognise child abuse depends as much on a person's willingness to accept the possibility of its existence as it does on their knowledge and information.

- A child discloses to you what has happened or you witness it directly
- You see injury or behaviour consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way;
- You see in it or infer it from artwork, play or creative writing.
- Friends of the child or other parents;

Direct Disclosure

Any member of staff who hears directly from a child that they have been abused physically, sexually or emotionally or neglected or who receives such information from a third party should firstly determine whether the child is in need of emergency medical attention. If so, this should be sought immediately and directly from the appropriate services.

Once the child has been referred for medical attention, continue to follow these procedures.

- Do not to ask the child leading questions.
- Listen to the child very carefully and make accurate notes using the child's words, as soon as possible - even if it's language you wouldn't normally use
- Distinguish clearly between fact, observation, allegation and opinion, and note any action taken.
- Sign and date your record, and notify the CPLP right away.

The CPLP will ensure that there is an accurate and detailed record of events and confirms the referral to the Local Authority in writing by the next working day.

Thereafter, the CPLP may be required to attend and contribute to any strategy discussion or meeting which may take place, and any subsequent assessment.

The CPLP will consider and make arrangements to meet the support needs of the child within the childcare environment and of the person to whom the child initially spoke (if necessary).

Inferred Evidence

Where there is not clear evidence that a child has suffered (or is likely to suffer) significant harm, particularly in the areas of emotional abuse or neglect, a member of staff should still report their concerns to the CPLP.

The CPLP will consult the Local Authority to determine whether there is sufficient evidence for a formal child protection referral.

If there is insufficient evidence for a referral, the member of staff and CPLP will continue to keep accurate records about their concerns, and review frequently. In some cases, an assessment of need under the common assessment framework may also be appropriate.

An accurate record of all such incidents must be maintained and reviewed regularly.

Involving Parents

Where there are concerns that a child may have suffered or may be likely to suffer significant harm, the CPLP should normally notify the parents that they are going to make a child protection referral to the Local Authority.

However, the referral should not be delayed because parents cannot be contacted. In addition, in some circumstances it is advisable not to talk to the parents before making a referral. These are:

- The parent is the suspected perpetrator
- You suspect organised or multiple abuse.

- Informing the parent could
 - lead to evidence being 'lost' or destroyed
 - witnesses intimidation
- You suspect fabricated illness
- The child is at risk of disappearing.

Making Referrals

Referral & Assessment or Duty Teams:

- Wokingham 0118 944 5300
- Bracknell 01344 351 582
- Reading 0118 955 3600/41
- West Berkshire 01635 503405
- Emergency Duty Team⁴ 01344 786543
- Police 0845 8505 505 or 999
- NSPCC Helpline 0800 800 5000

⁴ Emergency Duty Team covers out of hours - 5pm to 9am and Weekends and Public Holidays

Appendix 3 – Allegations Against Staff

On occasions, a member of staff may misuse their adult authority and their relationships with children to intimidate and exploit them, making them vulnerable to physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

Equally, through their daily contact with children, staff can be vulnerable to allegations of abuse made by children or their parents. These allegations may be false, or mischievous. They may also be true.

Complaints about the behaviour of staff towards children can give rise to concern at four possible levels:

- Direct allegations that a child has suffered significant harm
- Information which would suggest that significant harm may have occurred or be likely
- The treatment of children by staff which may be harmful, but not to a significant degree.
- Mischievous and unfounded allegations

These procedures are intended to provide a framework, within which allegations of abuse can be investigated, balancing the need to place the safety and welfare of children above all else with the principles of natural justice and fairness in relation to staff facing such allegations.

Local Authority Designated Officer

Wokingham Borough Council has several Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO). They have responsibility to provide advice and support in the management of allegations of abuse against staff.

These procedures require all allegations (at whatever level) to be discussed initially with the LADO before a decision is made about the appropriate course of action.

The purpose of this requirement is threefold: firstly it introduces an independent element into the decision making process; secondly it provides a measure of consistency into the procedures, so that similar levels of concern attract similar responses throughout Wokingham and thirdly it ensures that the process is transparent, open, fair and safe for both children and staff.

Allegations of Abuse against Staff

Any member of staff who hears about or observes a situation in which a member of staff

- has harmed a child or put a child at risk of harm; or
- has displayed behaviour involving or related to a child that might constitute a criminal offence;
- has behaved in a way that raises concern about his/her suitability to work with children

must follow these procedures.

If the child has suffered significant harm should firstly determine whether the child is in need of emergency medical attention. If so, this should be sought immediately and directly from the appropriate services and parents informed.

Once the child has been referred for medical attention continues to follow these procedures.

The member of staff should clarify that what is being said constitutes an allegation of abuse or possible abuse (but not closely question the child or third party).

If the information is received from a third party, the child should not be spoken to by the person receiving the original complaint.

The person who takes the lead in such matters in any provision is not the CPLP, but the employer. The only exception is when the allegation is against such a person, or nominated committee member. For convenience, these are referred to as the "relevant manager" in this section.

The matter should not be discussed with the person who is the subject of the allegation at this stage.

In all instances the relevant manager should consult with the LADO to make an initial assessment about whether there is sufficient substance to warrant an investigation, and at what level.

If it is clear from the initial information that a referral is appropriate, child has suffered significant harm the relevant manager should refer the matter directly to the Local Authority and inform the LADO and confirm the content of the referral in writing to both by the following working day, in accordance with the processes set out in Part 12 of the Berkshire LSCBs' Child Protection Procedures 2006.

Where a police and/or a s.47 enquiry take place, the setting's disciplinary procedures should be held in abeyance.

If there are no criminal or child protection concerns, the LADO and the setting will need to consider whether there are grounds to decide whether internal disciplinary procedures should be invoked.

Disciplinary Proceedings

If at the conclusion of the consultation between the LADO and the relevant manager it is agreed that the substance of the allegation does not indicate actual or likely significant harm to a child but the behaviour of the member of staff is such as to warrant further enquiry, then the matter will be dealt

with in accordance with the disciplinary codes and procedures.

Unfounded Allegations

If at the conclusion of the consultation between the setting and the LADO it is decided that the allegation is without foundation, the relevant manager should confirm in writing within three working days the decision not to proceed and why.

The setting should:

- Consider whether the allegation was prompted because the child is the victim of abuse by someone else. If so, the relevant manager should consult the Local Authority.
- Inform the member of staff who is the subject of the allegation of its content and the fact that no further action will be taken under Child Protection or Disciplinary Procedures. This should be followed up in a letter to the member of staff.
- Consider whether the member of staff requires counselling/advice and where this might be obtained.
- Inform the parents of the child of the allegation and the decision not to proceed.
- Consider the need for counselling and support for the child and parents, particularly where false or mischievous allegations seem to have been made.
- Consider the implications for the child and member of staff, for their future relationship and provide advice and support as necessary.
- Record the fact that the allegation has been made and the reason for the conclusion that the allegation is without foundation.