



HARTWELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy

Hartwell Primary is a Voluntary Controlled academy and, recognising its historic foundation, works to preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England. This includes the active promotion of Christian and British values and the respecting of those of other faiths or none.

'Believe, Aspire, Grow'

Date agreed: Autumn 2020

Review date: Autumn 2021

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Statement of intent

Hartwell Primary School takes its responsibility of care for pupils seriously. We will thoroughly investigate allegations of abuse against staff – this will be done in a fair way that does not prejudice either the pupil or the member of staff. Any investigation of an allegation of abuse will be made in line with this policy and we will provide both the accuser and accused with the support they require during the investigation.

The stipulations within this policy apply to all staff and volunteers currently working in school, irrelevant of whether the school is the location of the abuse. Allegations against a teacher who is no longer teaching will be referred to the police, along with any historical allegations.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- The Children Act 1989
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 2004
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- DfE (2019) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'

1.2. This policy should be followed in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Whistleblowing Policy

2. Definitions

2.1. Significant harm: This is the threshold where compulsory social care intervention must take place – this was introduced by the Children Act 1989. Harm includes not only ill-treatment (including sexual abuse and non-physical forms of ill treatment), but also the impairment of physical or mental health and the impairment of physical, emotional, social or behaviour development.

2.2. Abuse: Abuse can be either physical, sexual, emotional harm, or a form of neglect. Abuse is a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. They may be abused by an adult or adults or another child or children.

2.3. Position of trust: Those working with children and young people should understand that they are in positions of power and trust in relation to these groups. There is potential for exploitation and harm to children and young people, and employees have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. Employees should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others.

2.4. 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. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made

2.5. Publication: Any speech, writing, relevant programme or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public.

3. Initial allegation made to the school

3.1. For the purpose of this policy, 'allegation' refers to where a member of staff is accused of abusing a pupil.

3.2. The headteacher, or the chair of governors if an allegation is made against the headteacher, will be the 'case manager'. They will be responsible for deciding with the designated officer the course of action of each allegation.

3.3. Any allegation of abuse will be reported to the designated officer (formerly known as the LADO, now DO). Should the initial allegation first be made to any other member of staff, then that member of staff will either request the person raising the allegation to report it to the case manager or, if that is not possible, pass details of the allegation to the designated officer immediately.

The contact details for the DO are:

LADOREferral@northamptonshire.gov.uk

Chris York: 01604 362633

3.4. Should the allegation be made against the headteacher, it will be brought to the attention of the chair of governors, Mr Martin Cox, immediately. Mr Cox can be contact in writing, with the letter in a sealed envelope marked 'private and confidential'. Mrs Lara Bruce, School Business Manager' will then ensure Mr Cox receives the letter.

3.5. Allegations should be reported to the designated officer immediately if a staff member or volunteer 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 that they pose or may pose a risk to children.

3.6. Where the allegation is extremely serious, e.g. where a pupil's life may be in danger, immediate intervention by the police or children's social care services will be required.

3.7. Allegations will be investigated in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and, at the same time, supports the staff member or volunteer who is the subject of the allegation.

4. Supply Staff

- 4.1. In some cases, the school will need to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by the school, where the school's disciplinary procedures do not fully apply, e.g. supply staff provided by an employment agency or business.
- 4.2. The school will work with the agency to ensure allegations are dealt with properly.
- 4.3. Under no circumstances will the school decide to cease to use a member of supply staff due to safeguarding concerns without finding out the facts and liaising with the LA designated officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome.
- 4.4. The headteacher will discuss with the agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the member of supply staff, or to redeploy them to another part of the school, whilst an investigation is conducted.
- 4.5. The school will take the lead on investigations, as supply staff, while not directly employed by the school, are under the supervision, direction and control of the headteacher when working in the school. Agencies will be fully involved in the investigation and will be expected to fully cooperate with enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's services.
- 4.6. The member of supply staff subject to an allegation will be advised to contact their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support.
- 4.7. The allegations management meeting will address issues, such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency are taken into account by the school during the investigation.
- 4.8. An agency used by the school will be informed of the process for managing allegations. This will include inviting the agency's HR manager equivalent to meetings and keeping them up-to-date with information about the school's policies.

5. Initial consideration

- 4.1. The case manager, Jamie Pardon (Headteacher), will discuss the allegation with the designated officer, providing details of the allegation and the circumstances in which it was made. The discussion will also consider whether there is evidence or information that establishes whether the allegation is false or unfounded.
- 4.2. The case manager and designated officer will take into account the right of staff to use reasonable force when dealing with instances of physical contact, such as disruptive behaviour, when considering allegations, as per DfE (2013) 'Use of reasonable force in schools.'

- 4.3. Where there is no likely involvement of the police or child social care services, the case manager will inform the accused person about the allegation as soon as possible after consulting with the designated officer – as much information as possible will be shared with the accused.
- 4.4. Where there is involvement of the police or child social care services, or a strategy discussion is required, the case manager will consult with them before disclosing any information with the accused.
- 4.5. If the allegation is not clearly false and there is cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm, the designated officer will immediately refer it to Northamptonshire children's social care or police and ask for a strategy discussion, in accordance with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', to be convened straight away. In those circumstances, the strategy discussion will include the designated officer and the case manager.
- 4.6. If there is not cause to suspect that 'significant harm' is an issue, but a criminal offence might have been committed, the designated officer will immediately inform the police and convene a similar discussion to decide whether a police investigation is needed. That discussion will also involve the school and any other agencies involved with the child.
- 4.7. If the initial sharing of information and evaluation leads to no further action being taken, the decision and justification for it will be recorded by both the case manager and the designated officer. An agreement on what information should be put in writing to the individuals concerned and any follow-up actions will also be reached.

5. Action following initial consideration

- 5.1. All allegations will be investigated without delay and they will be resolved as quickly as possible.
- 5.2. Where the case manager and designated officer decides that the allegation does not involve a possible criminal offence, the designated officer will deal with it.
- 5.3. If the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, the case manager will institute appropriate action within 3 working days.
- 5.4. If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without further investigation, the hearing will be held within 15 working days.
- 5.5. Where further investigation is required, the case manager and designated officer will discuss who will undertake the investigation and how it will be conducted.
- 5.6. The investigating officer aims to provide a report to the case manager within 10 working days.

- 5.7. On receipt of the report of the investigation, the case manager will consult the designated officer and decide whether a disciplinary hearing is needed within 2 working days. If a hearing is needed, it will be held within 15 working days.
- 5.8. The designated officer will take on board any recommendations made by children's social care services or the police with regard to any disciplinary action required.
- 5.9. The school aims to resolve 80 percent of cases within one month of receiving the allegation, 90 percent within 3 months, and all but the most exceptional cases within 12 months.
- 5.10. The designated officer will continue to liaise with the school to monitor progress of the case and provide advice or support when required or requested.
- 5.11. The school will not consider suspension as a default position: the case manager and designated officer will attempt to find alternative outcomes for the accused before they are suspended. When considering whether to suspend the case manager will complete the Suspension Assessment (Appendix 1) and discuss this with the designated officer. Outcomes may include:
 - Redeploying the member of staff within the school to avoid direct contact with the pupil.
 - Providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with pupils.
 - Redeploying the individual to alternative work so they do not have unsupervised access to pupils.

6. Cases where crimes may have been committed

- 6.1. If there is no cause to suspect that significant harm is an issue, but a criminal offence might have been committed, the designated officer will immediately inform the police and convene a similar discussion to decide whether a police investigation is needed. That discussion will also involve the school.
- 6.2. Where the involvement of children's social care services is not required, as the pupil is not assessed to be at risk of significant harm, but a police investigation continues, the designated officer will agree with the police, the school and any other agency involved with the child, the nature of the allegation and how this must be addressed.
- 6.3. This joint evaluation discussion must take place within one working day of the referral and must consider how to progress enquiries, e.g. a criminal process parallel with a disciplinary process, or whether disciplinary action needs to be suspended until police enquiries/prosecution are completed.
- 6.4. These investigations must be reviewed by the police no later than 4 weeks after the joint evaluation discussion has concluded and, thereafter, at fortnightly or monthly intervals, depending on the complexity of the case.
- 6.5. If the police and/or the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) decide not to charge the individual with an offence, decide to administer a caution, or the person is acquitted by a court, the police will pass all information they have which may be relevant to a

disciplinary case to the school without delay. In those circumstances, the case manager will deal with the case in consultation with the designated officer.

- 6.6. If the person is convicted of an offence, the police will also inform the employer straight away so that the appropriate action can be taken.

7. Allegations which are likely to necessitate an immediate referral to children's social care services or the police

- 7.1. The following situations will require immediate referral to children's social care services or the police:
- Where the pupil has suffered, is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant or serious harm
 - Where the pupil alleges that a criminal offence has been committed
 - Any allegation of a sexual nature
- 7.2. The case manager is aware that some other complaints may also be regarded as child protection issues and, therefore, each complaint will be carefully considered in consultation with the designated officer before taking any action.
- 7.3. Where allegations of the above are referred to children's social care services, subsequent action will be in accordance with local safeguarding arrangements.

8. Suspension

- 8.1. The possible risk of harm to children posed by an accused person needs to be effectively evaluated and managed in respect of the child(ren) involved in the allegations. In some cases, that will require the school to consider suspending the person until the case is resolved.
- 8.2. Suspension is not an automatic response when an allegation is reported. If the school is concerned about the welfare of other children in the community or the staff member's family, those concerns will be reported to the designated officer or police, but suspension is highly unlikely to be justified based on such concerns alone.
- 8.3. Suspension will only be considered in a case where there is cause to suspect a child or other children at the school is or are at risk of harm, or the allegation warrants investigation by the police, or is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal; however, a person will not be suspended automatically, or without careful thought being given to the particular circumstances of the case. When considering whether to suspend the case manager will complete the Suspension Assessment (Appendix 1) and discuss this with the designated officer.
- 8.4. The school will consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant a person being suspended from contact with children at the school until the allegation is resolved.
- 8.5. The school will also consider whether the result that would be achieved by suspension could be obtained by alternative arrangements. For example, redeployment so that the

individual does not have direct contact with the child concerned, or providing an assistant to be present when the individual has contact with children. This allows time for an informed decision regarding the suspension and possibly reducing the initial impact of the allegation. This will, however, depend upon the nature of the allegation.

- 8.6. The school will consider the potential permanent professional reputational damage to members of staff that can result from suspension where an allegation is later found to be unsubstantiated, unfounded or maliciously intended.
- 8.7. Where it has been deemed appropriate to suspend the person, written confirmation will be dispatched within one working day, giving the reasons for the suspension. The person will be informed at that point who their named contact is within the school and provided with their contact details.
- 8.8. Children's social care services or the police cannot require the school to suspend a member of staff or a volunteer, although the school will give appropriate weight to their advice.
- 8.9. The power to suspend is vested in the headteacher or the governing board, who are the employers of staff at the school.
- 8.10. In certain circumstances, where a strategy discussion or initial evaluation concludes that there should be enquiries by children's social care services and/or an investigation by the police, the designated officer will canvass police and children's social care services for views about whether the accused member of staff needs to be suspended from contact with children to inform the school's consideration of suspension.
- 8.11. A risk assessment is carried out for each individual case to determine whether the member of staff should be suspended (Appendix 1 – Suspension Assessment). The assessment takes into account the context of the allegation, background information in relation to the member of staff, and any outcome following the strategy meeting. It also takes into account whether a temporary transfer or period of paid leave is appropriate as an alternative to suspension. The assessment is recorded, and a copy kept on file.

9. Strategy meeting

- 9.1. A strategy meeting will be convened within one working day of the referral being made.
- 9.2. The designated officer and all relevant personnel including, where appropriate, the case manager (or nominated representative) and the school HR business partner (EPM), will attend this meeting in order to share information and participate in the planning of any enquiries.
- 9.3. The strategy meeting will be conducted in accordance with local safeguarding arrangements.
- 9.4. The purpose of the strategy meeting is to:
 - Consider the risk to the pupil directly involved and other pupils.

- Share all relevant information about the person who is the subject of the allegation and about the alleged victim.
- Determine the need for investigation and who is responsible for carrying it out.
- Plan the investigation/enquiries and set timescales for tasks to be undertaken.
- Consider whether any other children are affected by the allegations, e.g. the person's own children, grandchildren, or other children in the agency setting such as children placed with foster carers, childminders or youth clubs.
- Ensure that the person who is the subject of the allegation is kept informed and supported.
- Decide how regular information and support will be provided to the child and family and by whom.
- Plan all interviews and agree who should undertake them so that there is no confusion between a criminal investigation (section 47 enquiry) and disciplinary processes.
- Consider the need to inform relevant parties.
- Jointly consider how to manage any possible media interest.
- Consider whether the circumstances require the person who is subject to the allegation to be suspended from contact with pupils; this may change as the investigation progresses and should be reviewed regularly.
- Consider the appropriate course of action if the allegation is against a governor, a temporary member of staff or a supply teacher.

10. Attendance at the Strategy Meeting

- 10.1. An LA social worker, designated officer, health practitioners and a police representative will be involved in the strategy discussion. A representative from the school will also attend.
- 10.2. The member of staff who is the subject of the allegation will not be invited to attend the meeting; however, the strategy meeting will agree when and how the member of staff will be informed.
- 10.3. The minutes of the strategy meeting will be circulated by the chair of the meeting to relevant parties.

11. Communication following the Strategy Meeting

- 11.1. The following people will be informed of the outcome of the strategy meeting:
- The pupil making the allegation and their parents will be informed of the likely course of action and that the matter is confidential and must not be discussed.
 - The member of staff against whom the allegation has been made will be informed of the likely course of action – a record will be kept on the individual's personnel file.
 - The chair of governors will be informed of the likely course of action.
- 11.2. Subsequent strategy meetings will be held fortnightly, or at a minimum monthly, to review progress.

12. Monitoring progress

- 12.1. The designated officer will regularly monitor the progress of cases, either by reviewing strategy meetings or by liaising with the police and/or children's social care services colleagues or the school, as appropriate.
- 12.2. Reviews will be conducted at fortnightly or monthly intervals, depending on the complexity of the case.

13. Referral to DBS

- 13.1. If, on conclusion of the case, the school ceases to use the services of the person against whom the allegation was made, or the person ceases to provide their services, the school will consult the designated officer about whether a referral to the DBS is required. If a referral is appropriate, the report will be made within one month.
- 13.2. The school will make a referral to the DBS where there is reason to believe that an individual has engaged in conduct that has harmed, or is likely to harm, a child, or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child. This duty applies to all individuals, irrelevant of whether they are working in regulated activity or not.
- 13.3. Referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) are also made where appropriate.

14. Keeping records

- 14.1. A clear and comprehensive record of any allegation is made even if police or disciplinary action is not taken or proven. This includes details of the allegation, how the allegation was followed up and resolved, and a note of any action taken, including any sanctions imposed.
- 14.2. The record will be kept on the member of staff's confidential personnel file.
- 14.3. If an allegation is found to be malicious, it will be removed from the staff member's personnel file – all other allegations will be recorded.
- 14.4. The purpose of this record is to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future reference request if the individual leaves the school.
- 14.5. It is also important that accurate and detailed information is held in the event that the DBS makes requests for further information. This information is given to the DBS, if requested, due to the nature of the allegation. A comprehensive record of all allegations will provide clarification in cases where a future DBS disclosure reveals information from the police about an allegation which did not result in a criminal conviction.
- 14.6. The record will be retained until normal retirement age or for 10 years from the date of the allegation; whichever is longer.

14.7. The school is required to preserve records which contain information about allegations of sexual abuse for the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, for the term of the inquiry.

15. Confidentiality

15.1. Every effort is made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whenever an allegation is made.

15.2. The case manager will have due regard to advice given by the designated officer, police or children's social care services to agree to the following:

- Who needs to know about the allegation and what information can be shared
- How to manage speculation, leaks and gossip
- What, if any, information can be reasonably be given to the wider community to reduce speculation
- How to manage the press and any media coverage

15.3. The school will adhere to the restrictions preventing publication of any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher in a school who has had an allegation made against them. A statement will be released if the accused decides to waive their right to anonymity by going public themselves or by giving written consent for another to do so.

15.4. If the judge lifts the restrictions, the school will release a statement.

15.5. Publication of the case will only be made when the accused has been charged or the Secretary of State publishes information about the investigation.

15.6. The publication of material that may lead to the identification of the accused is prohibited.

15.7. Any enquiries from the press will be directed to the chair of governors, unless it is a freedom of information or subject access request, in which case the school, HR business partner (EPM) or legal representative will be contacted.

16. False and unsubstantiated allegations

16.1. If an allegation made by a pupil is proved to be false, unsubstantiated and/or malicious, action will be taken to determine whether the person who made the allegation needs services or may have been abused by someone else.

16.2. In the case of a pupil deliberately inventing or making a malicious allegation, the case manager will consider action in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and whether the police should be asked if action may be appropriate against the person responsible.

16.3. If it is clear to the case manager and the designated officer that the allegation is demonstrably false or unfounded, the member of staff will be informed orally and in writing of the allegation, that it is without foundation and that no further action will be taken.

- 16.4. Where appropriate, and if requested, support will be offered, which could include occupational health and counselling services.
- 16.5. If an allegation made by a member of staff is proved to be false and/or malicious, an investigation will take place in accordance with the school's Disciplinary Policy. The police may also consider taking action against the individual making the allegation.
- 16.6. Details of allegations that are found to have been malicious will be removed from the staff member's personnel file.
- 16.7. Allegations that are proven to be false, unsubstantiated or malicious will not be included in references.

17. Learning lessons

- 17.1. Where an allegation has been made against a member of staff, lessons can be learned, whether the allegations are proven or not. At the conclusion of a case, relevant parties will discuss what can be learned and, therefore, lead to improved practice, either to the school procedures or to help prevent similar events in the future. The designated officer and the case manager will review the case.

18. Information sharing

- 18.1. In a strategy meeting or initial evaluation of the case, the agencies concerned will share all relevant information they have about the person who is the subject of an allegation, and about the alleged victim.
- 18.2. Staff attending the strategy meeting will be prepared with the appropriate information about the person concerned, e.g. full name, address, when their latest DBS check was completed, start date, involvement in youth activities, children of their own, and any other information that could be helpful.
- 18.3. As per procedures, the police will obtain consent from the individuals concerned to share the statements and evidence they obtain with the school for disciplinary purposes. This will be done as their investigation proceeds rather than after it has concluded. This will enable the police to share relevant information without delay at the conclusion of their investigation or any court case.
- 18.4. Children's social care services adopt a similar procedure when making enquiries to determine whether the pupil named in the allegation needs protection or services, so that any information obtained in the course of those enquiries, which is relevant to a disciplinary case, can be passed to the school without delay.

19. Resignations and 'compromise or settlement agreements'

- 19.1. The fact that a person tenders their resignation, or ceases to provide their services, will not prevent an allegation being followed up in accordance with these procedures.

- 19.2. Every effort is made to reach a conclusion in all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of children, including where the person concerned refuses to cooperate with the process.
- 19.3. Wherever possible, the accused will be given a full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations about it.
- 19.4. The process of recording the allegation and any supporting evidence, and reaching a judgement about whether it can be regarded as substantiated, will continue even if representations cannot be given or the accused does not cooperate. It may be difficult to reach a conclusion in those circumstances, and it may not be possible to apply any disciplinary sanctions if the accused's notice period expires before the process is complete, but it is important to reach and record a conclusion wherever possible.
- 19.5. 'Compromise' or 'settlement agreements' will not be used in cases where the accused refuses to cooperate or resigns and refuses to serve their notice period – this will not prevent a police investigation if necessary.
- 19.6. In any event, such an agreement will not prevent a thorough police investigation where that is appropriate, nor can it override the statutory duty to make a referral to the DBS or the TRA where circumstances require that.

20. Supporting those involved

Supporting the accused

- 20.1. The school has a duty of care to its employees and will act to manage and minimise the stress inherent in the allegations and disciplinary process. Support for the individual is vital to fulfilling this duty.
- 20.2. Individuals will be informed of concerns or allegations as soon as possible and given an explanation of the likely course of action, unless there is an objection by the children's social care services or the police.
- 20.3. The individual will be advised to contact their trade union representative, if they have one, or a colleague for support.
- 20.4. The accused will be given access to welfare counselling or medical advice through Insight Wellbeing @ Work: 0300 131 2033
- 20.5. The school will appoint a named representative to keep the accused informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual; this may include occupational health.
- 20.6. Particular care will be taken when employees are suspended to ensure that they are kept informed of both the progress of their case and current work-related issues.
- 20.7. Social contact with colleagues and friends is not prevented unless there is evidence to suggest that such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of

evidence. In either situation, the accused will be made clear the stipulation of confidentiality.

Supporting parents

- 20.8. Parents involved with an allegation will be kept informed about the case; however, where a strategy discussion is required, or the police or children's social care services need to be involved, the case manager will not inform them until those agencies have been consulted and have agreed what information can be disclosed.
- 20.9. They will also be kept informed about the progress of the case, and told the outcome where there is not a criminal prosecution, including notifying them that the school's disciplinary policy has been applied.
- 20.10. In deciding what information to disclose, careful consideration will be given to the provisions of the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, the law of confidence and, where relevant, the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 20.11. Parents will be reminded of the requirement to maintain confidentiality about any allegations made against teachers whilst investigations are ongoing.

Supporting the child

- 20.12. In cases where a child may have suffered significant harm, or there may be a criminal prosecution, children's social care services or the police will consider what support the child or children involved may need.

21. Monitoring and review

- 21.1. This policy is reviewed annually by the headteacher and the governors.
- 21.2. The scheduled review date for this policy is Autumn 2021.

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Appendix 1: **Suspension Assessment**

Part 1: Suspension should only be considered if one or more of the following apply:

Question	Yes	No	Notes/Considerations
If there is a strong likelihood that if the allegations are substantiated then the matter will amount to gross misconduct?			
Is there a threat or risk of harm to employees?			
Is it possible to fully investigate the allegation if the employee remains at work (e.g. is the employee likely to destroy evidence or attempt to influence/intimidate witnesses?)			
Have relationships at work broken down?			
Is there likely to be a detrimental effect on the employer/school if the employee remains in work or continues to interact with pupils, parents, or employees?			
Is there a risk of harm to pupil(s) or, is the allegation related to safeguarding?			If the answer is yes – please refer to Part 2 of the assessment below, which provides a table for completion with additional considerations in respect of allegations of abuse.
If the answer is yes to any of the above questions, please complete Part 3			

Part 2: Safeguarding

Additional considerations for allegations of abuse made against an employee

Please refer to DfE Statutory Guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education Part Four.

Information About the Allegation	Notes/Considerations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Nature of the allegation.– Duration and frequency of allegation.– Extent of pre-meditation.– Degree and nature of alleged harm or risk to pupils.	
Information About the Employee	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Previous concerns.– Previous allegations.– Disciplinary record.– Length of service.– Contact with pupil(s) concerned.	
Health and Safety	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Potential risks to the person’s health and safety should they remain in school (impact of threats from parents/carers/ potential press interest etc.).	

Part 3: Alternatives to suspension and a record of the decision

Alternatives to Suspension:

Explore and assess any alternatives, e.g. redeployment, supervision, working from home etc.

Particular Views of Those Concerned:

(E.g. Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Designated Officer/HR Adviser etc.)

Decision to Suspend:

Yes: No: Date:

If the decision is to suspend, record your grounds for suspension:

The employee will need to be notified of the reason(s) for suspension in writing.

Name and job title of person responsible for the decision:	
Name and job title of person completing assessment:	
(If applicable) Name of person responsible for communicating decision to suspend the employee: This should be communicated in writing as soon as practicable. Please refer to the EPM template suspension letter available from your HR Adviser:	
Name and job title of person nominated to keep suspension under review:	

Appendix 2: Information Guide for Staff Facing Allegations

This information sheet is designed to provide clarification for staff facing allegations of abuse. This guide provides information on:

- How allegations of abuse may be raised.
- The different stages of handling allegations of abuse, including the initial consideration and strategy meeting.
- The action to be taken where crimes have been committed or a referral to child protection is required.
- Record keeping, information sharing and confidentiality.
- Procedures in respect of false allegations.

How are allegations raised?

Allegations may be raised where it is alleged that you have:

- Harmed a pupil or put a pupil at risk of harm.
- Committed a criminal act towards a pupil.
- Behaved in a way that raises concern about the risk you may pose to children or young people.

The initial consideration

Once an allegation has been made, the headteacher (case manager) will consult the designated officer (DO) to discuss the next action points – advice will be taken from social care and the police as required. The police may advise that you **are not told** about the allegation immediately.

After a discussion with the DO, the headteacher will decide upon one, or a combination of, the following:

- A. The pupil is alleged to have suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm – this requires an immediate referral to social care for a strategy discussion.
- B. A criminal offence is alleged – this requires referral to the police for a discussion meeting.
- C. The allegation relates to poor or inappropriate behaviour – this will be dealt with under disciplinary and/or capability procedures, and a referral may be made to the school occupational health advisor, if necessary.
- D. The allegation is clearly and demonstrably without foundation and no further action is required.

After the initial consideration

Outcome 1

If the conclusion relates to either A or B, a strategy discussion will take place between the headteacher, police, social care, DO and HR manager – you are not required to be present. The discussion will:

- Focus on the needs of the pupil(s) who may be at risk; and
- Determine what action should be taken regarding further investigation.

Strategy meeting

This will be convened within one working day of the referral being made. The DO and any other relevant persons, such as the headteacher, will attend the meeting – you are not required to be present. The general purpose of the meeting is to consider evidence and discuss next steps.

Outcome 2

If the conclusion relates to C, an investigation will be initiated under the school's disciplinary and/or capability procedures.

Outcome 3

If the conclusion relates to D, you will be told orally and in writing that the allegation is without foundation and no further action will be taken.

The headteacher will inform you as soon as possible after consulting the DO with as much information as possible regarding the allegation. Where a strategy discussion is required, the headteacher will not update you until the relevant agencies have been consulted.

Subsequent strategy meetings will be held fortnightly, or at a minimum, monthly, to review progress.

Suspension

Suspension is not automatic. Alternatives, transfer of duties and additional supervision, will be considered. Suspension will only occur when evidence outlines that:

- A pupil is at risk.
- The allegation is so serious there is no alternative solution.
- Suspension is necessary to allow the conduct of the investigation to continue unimpeded.

An interview will be arranged if suspension is to be considered, which aims to help you make representations concerning possible suspension. You have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or colleague and will be advised to seek the assistance of your union representative.

Information sharing and records

Suspension

Other staff will only be informed on a 'need-to-know' basis. Notification may be delayed if the police believe it could prejudice an investigation. Those who will be told will likely include: you, the pupil concerned, their parent(s), the individual making the allegation, your manager, the headteacher, HR/School Business manager, the DO and investigating agencies. If you are suspended, those on the disciplinary panel will be given limited information.

Strategy meeting

The individuals outlined above will be informed of the outcome of the meeting, as well as the chair of the governing board.

If a crime has been committed

If a crime has been committed, and there is no reason to suspect significant harm, the DO will immediately inform the police and organise a strategy discussion to decide if a police investigation is needed.

If it is not necessary to work with social care, but a police investigation is required, the DO will then agree with the police, the school and any other agencies the nature of the allegation and how it should be addressed. The discussion will take place within one working day of the referral. The police will continue to monitor the case.

If you are not charged, the headteacher and DO will decide how to handle the case. If a charge is necessary, you will be informed without delay.

If a referral to child protection is required

A referral is required:

- If a pupil has suffered, is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant or serious harm.
- A pupil alleges a criminal offence has been committed.
- Where there is an allegation of a sexual nature.

These referrals are managed in accordance with referral processes and thresholds established by Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partners.

Appendix 3: Flowchart of Allegation Process

Flowchart of allegation process

