



**Information and  
support for staff and  
volunteers working  
in education settings  
who are subject to an  
allegation of abuse**

We understand that any allegation of abuse can be incredibly distressing and cause significant worry. This guide aims to provide you with an overview of the key issues and direct you to appropriate information, advice and support to help navigate through this challenging situation.

## Trade Unions

We strongly encourage you to reach out to your Trade Union to discuss the situation and access support. Trade Unions offer advice, support and legal advice during these difficult circumstances.

The managing allegation process is found in Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE, 2023) and Working Together (2018).

Local guidance can be found in the Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (HIPS) Safeguarding Children Procedures Manual - 6.1 Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers | Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton ([hipsprocedures.org.uk](https://hipsprocedures.org.uk)).

This process is overseen and coordinated by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for Southampton who will also monitor the progress of the investigative process to ensure that it is dealt with as quickly as possible, and is consistent with a thorough and fair process.

## Please find below the contact details of recognised trade unions who can help you:

Your school's HR provider may also provide access to confidential, 24-hour counselling via an Employee Support Line.

### Teachers

**ASCL** Mike Smith, Regional Officer  
[mike.smith@ascl.org.uk](mailto:mike.smith@ascl.org.uk)

**NAHT** Elizabeth Salisbury, Regional Officer  
[elizabeth.salisbury@naht.org.uk](mailto:elizabeth.salisbury@naht.org.uk)

**NASUWT** Simon Pettet, Senior Regional Officer  
[simon.pettet@mail.nasuwt.org.uk](mailto:simon.pettet@mail.nasuwt.org.uk)

**NEU** Scott Barter, Regional Officer  
[scott.barter@neu.org.uk](mailto:scott.barter@neu.org.uk)

### Support staff

**UNISON** Mark Roberts, Regional Officer  
[mark.roberts@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:mark.roberts@southampton.gov.uk)

**UNITE** Hayley Garner, Branch Secretary  
[hayley.garner@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:hayley.garner@southampton.gov.uk)

**GMB** Nicola Nixon, Regional Officer  
[nicola.nixon@gmb.org.uk](mailto:nicola.nixon@gmb.org.uk)

### Welfare & Counselling Support

If you believe that your health is being negatively affected by the situation, we recommend contacting your GP for assistance. If you feel that face-to-face intervention from the Occupational Health Unit is necessary, please discuss this with your Headteacher/Chair of Governors.

### Education Support Network also provides support to school staff 24/7

[educationsupportpartnership.org.uk](https://educationsupportpartnership.org.uk)  
0800 0562 561

## **Suspension**

The school takes into account the opinions of relevant partner agencies such as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Human Resources, the Police, and Children's Social Care (if involved). Suspension does not imply that a conclusion has already been reached. It is considered in cases where:

- An individual's presence on site may pose a risk
- To facilitate an unimpeded child protection or criminal inquiry
- The matter is of such seriousness that it may warrant dismissal

Following a suspension, you may be invited to an investigation meeting with the Headteacher under the Disciplinary Procedure, or you may be invited to a meeting to discuss your return to work, if appropriate.

## **Contact Officer**

If you have been suspended from work due to the allegation, rest assured that a Contact Officer, representing the school, has been assigned to you. They will maintain regular contact, address any queries you may have, and keep you informed about the investigation process.

## **Investigation Processes**

The allegation may be subject to investigation by Children's Social Care (CSC) and/or the Police. Once CSC or the Police conclude their investigation or decide not to proceed with one, the matter will be handed back to the school for further action. If a disciplinary investigation is required, you will receive advance notice of any meetings and the right to be represented by a trade union representative, as mandated by the appropriate Disciplinary Procedure (which you will receive a copy of). You may also receive advice, guidance, training and support related to any emerging issues from the allegation. Please consider what would be most helpful to you and communicate it clearly to the Headteacher.

## **Confidentiality**

Allegations of abuse should be handled with the utmost sensitivity and all reasonable steps taken to handle any information regarding the matter with the strictest confidence and on a "need to know" basis. In the unlikely event that the matter becomes a subject of speculation outside the workplace or in the public domain, appropriate action will be taken to address and manage the situation. Rest assured, this will be done with the utmost sensitivity and in consultation with the relevant parties.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### When will I have the opportunity to respond to the allegation?

The principles of natural justice dictate that any person accused of something should be given the opportunity to know the details of the allegation and respond to it. The timing and method of your opportunity to respond will depend on the nature of the allegation and any ongoing inquiries. As part of the process, you will be provided with information and an opportunity to respond as soon as possible.

### If I need to be interviewed by the Police and/or Children's Social Care, when and where will this happen?

Rest assured that utmost sensitivity and discretion will be exercised when arranging and conducting any necessary interviews. It is recommended that you seek advice from your Trade Union representative regarding any support or advice you may require if a formal interview is scheduled. Interviews can occur formally in a police station and these are likely to be recorded.

### What information about this process, including meetings and investigative processes, will I have access to?

If you are faced with an allegation, you will be provided with a copy of the Procedure for Managing Allegations (Part 4 of the DfE's Keeping Children Safe in Education [KCSIE]). This document outlines the process that your employer and relevant authorities/agencies must follow in addressing the allegation. Minutes of multi-agency strategy meetings are confidential and not routinely disclosed to third parties who were not in attendance. However, upon the conclusion of any inquiries, you can request a summary of such meetings from the Chair. If you wish to make such a request, we recommend seeking advice from your Trade Union representative. Please note that the disclosure of records or potential evidence held by investigative agencies is subject to the usual rules of confidentiality and legislation such as Data Protection and the Freedom of Information Act.

### What records will be kept, by whom, and for how long?

Under KCSIE, the employer and LADO are required to keep records of all allegations for 85 years or until you reach retirement age, whichever is longer, excluding malicious, unfounded and false allegations. These records are maintained to ensure the safety and protection of both adults and children.