

Managing safeguarding concerns and allegations made about adults working across Creative Education Trust 2025/26

Policy Owner	Director of Safeguarding
Approved by	CEO and Safeguarding Committee
Last reviewed in	October 2025
Next review date	October 2026

Content

1. Policy Statement	3
2. Background	4
2.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold	4
2.2 Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold	5
3. The Role of the Multi-Academy Trust.....	5
Section one: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold	6
Responsibilities.....	6
Initial Response	7
Referral to the LADO	8
Considering Suspension	9
Investigation stage.....	11
1. by Social Services and the Police;	11
2. by the Police under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act	11
3. by Creative Education Trust in line with staff disciplinary procedures.	12
Outcomes	13
Section Two: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold	15
Responsibilities.....	15
Initial response	16
Record keeping	16
Referral to the LADO	17
References	17
3. Resignations and Settlement agreements	18
4. Record Keeping	18
5. References.....	18
6. Learning Lessons from allegations/concerns	19
7. Non-recent allegations	19
8. Complaints	19
Appendix 1 – Suspension risk assessment.....	21

1. Policy Statement

The care and support of all children and young people is of paramount concern to Creative Education Trust.

This policy serves as our Creative Education Trust Low-Level Concerns Policy and is published on individual academy websites.

Creative Education Trust takes the day-to-day care of its pupils, staff, and volunteers very seriously.

Creative Education Trust recognise that teachers and support staff play a key and critical role in influencing and shaping pupils' lives; academically, socially, and morally.

Creative Education Trust takes allegations of any kind against an adult working within Creative Education Trust very seriously, and this policy outlines the steps which should be taken when such allegations arise concerning pupil welfare and safeguarding.

The policy refers to all staff, this includes, teaching staff, support staff, head office staff, consultants, supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.

All adults working across the trust, children and young people and their parents/carers will be made aware of this policy, and it will be available on the trust's websites for public access.

This policy affirms that any allegations should be dealt with robustly, without prejudice and with the cooperation of external agencies where appropriate and necessary.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Individual academy child protection policies;
- Creative Education Trust Safeguarding Policy;
- Creative Education Trust Staff Disciplinary Policy;
- Creative Education Trust whistleblowing Policy;
- Creative Education Trust Code of Conduct;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE, 2025);
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DFE, 2023);
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004;
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017;
- The Education Act 2002.

This document follows statutory guidance from the Department for Education in relation to carrying out duties relating to handling allegations of abuse against adults working within the trust.

When referring to the process for managing the response to allegations/concerns, this policy is split into two distinct sections:

- **Section one:** Allegations that may meet the harm threshold
 - Responsibilities
 - The role of the MAT
 - Initial response
 - Referral to the LADO
 - considering suspension
 - Stages of investigation
- **Section Two:** Concerns and or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold
 - Responsibilities
 - Initial response
 - Record Keeping
 - Referral to the LADO
 - References

2. Background

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) describes two types of allegations/concerns within Part 4¹.

Both allegations that meet the harm threshold for a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (referred to as the 'LADO') and allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold – referred to for the purposes of this policy as 'low-level concerns' – must be reported.

Staff should report their concerns via direct communication with the Principal/Headteacher.

2.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

Where a concern or allegation indicates that an adult has:

1. behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
3. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
4. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children;

These allegations/concerns are considered to meet the 'harm threshold'.

Sometimes, if there are concerns about the behaviour/conduct of a person outside of work who is in a position of trust working/volunteering with children, the headteacher/principal will

consider the transferable risk² to the children they work/volunteer with; and apply that information to the aforementioned threshold test.

2.2 Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

As part of our MAT-wide approach to safeguarding, we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the academy (including supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. These types of concerns are low-level concerns.

The term 'low-level' does not mean that the concern is insignificant; it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harm threshold.

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of Creative Education Trust may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over-friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to academy policy;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- humiliating pupils

3. The Role of the Multi-Academy Trust

A member of the Creative Education Trust Safeguarding Directorate will be notified of any concerns where the principal/headteacher makes a referral to the LADO. This will ensure that support is offered to all relevant parties, including the person against whom the allegation has been made.

A member of the Creative Education Trust Safeguarding Directorate will ensure that appropriate steps are taken to safeguard the child, and ensure that appropriate support is provided to the adult.

² When the police are involved in a situation that requires intervention, they will contact the LADO service directly, sharing the information by way of a Public Protection Notice (PPN). Examples of these concerns are criminal misuse of substances or alcohol, criminal acts of dishonesty, violence against a person, sexual assaults, or internet crime. Where this information is shared with the Principal/Headteacher, the Principal/Headteacher will align their response with Section one of this policy.

Section one: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

Responsibilities

Where a concern or allegation indicates that an adult has:

1. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
3. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
4. behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children;

a referral will be made to the LADO without delay.

Where staff become aware of a concern/allegation that may meet the threshold, they have a statutory duty to report it to the principal/headteacher (or Chief Executive if the principal/headteacher is the subject of the allegation)³.

These allegations/concerns are considered to meet the 'harm threshold'.

The role of 'Local Authority Designated Officer' (LADO) is a statutory role. The LADO gives advice, support, and consultation on all matters relating to allegations against people in a professional and volunteer role involving children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Staff will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered.⁴.

³ Failure to report a child protection concern could result in disciplinary action.

⁴ The Education Act 2011 amended the Education Act 2002 to introduce reporting restrictions. These provisions made it an offence (except in the limited circumstance expressly permitted by the legislation) for any person to publish any material that may lead to the identification of a teacher in an Academy who has been accused by, or on behalf of, a child from the same Academy (where that identification would identify the teacher as the subject of the allegation).

Initial Response

Where staff have a concern that a child has been harmed, that there may be an immediate risk of harm to a child, or if the situation is an emergency, they should contact children's social care and, as appropriate, the police, immediately, as per the processes explained in their Academy child protection policy.

Whilst the Principal will always be the ultimate decision maker in any allegation management scenario, the role of 'case manager' may be delegated to a suitably senior member of staff.

There are two aspects to consider when an allegation is made:

1. **Looking after the pupil's welfare** - the designated safeguarding lead is responsible for ensuring that the child is not at risk and referring cases of suspected abuse to the local authority children's social care as described in Part one of this guidance.
2. **Investigating and supporting the person subject to the allegation** - the case manager should discuss the allegation's nature, content, and context with the LADO and agree on a course of action.

When dealing with allegations, Creative Education Trust expects staff to:

- apply common sense and judgement;
- deal with allegations quickly, fairly and consistently; and
- provide effective protection for the child and support the person subject to the allegation.
- Record **all** concerns, discussions and decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.

The case manager must consider if a referral to Children's Services is appropriate, in order to support the pupil.

Before contacting the LADO, staff should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation. Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) gives suggestions as to basic lines of enquiry in paragraph 345.

For example:

- was the individual in the academy or college at the time of the allegations?
- did the individual, or could they have, come into contact with the child?
- are there any witnesses? and,
- was there any CCTV footage⁵?

When to inform the individual of the allegation should be considered carefully on a case-by-case basis, with guidance from the LADO and, if appropriate, children's social care and the Police.

⁵ These are just a sample of example questions. Academy should be familiar with what initial information the LADO will require. This information can be found in local policy and procedural guidance provided by the LADO .

In situations where a member of the Creative Education Trust Executive/Central Team is the subject of an allegation, this will be reported to the Chief Executive. Concerns relating to the Chief Executive or a trustee/member must be reported directly to the Chair of the Creative Education Trust Board.

Concerns about the Chair of the Creative Education Trust Board will be reported directly to the LADO at Westminster City Council, the Local Authority covering the borough where the Creative Education Trust Head Office is located. The Director of Education will be responsible for making this referral, and will consult with the Head of Governance in order to notify the members.

Referral to the LADO

Where the allegation/concern suggests that the harm threshold has been met, the Principal/Headteacher must make a referral to the LADO.

A "case manager" will lead an investigation. This should be a member of the academy leadership team. Alternatives could include a member of the senior leadership team of another school within the Creative Education Trust or an external investigator.

Where the principal/headteacher is the subject of an allegation, the Chief Executive will allocate an appropriate Executive Director to lead the investigation. They will be supported by the a member of the HR team.

The Case Manager will be responsible for:

- contacting the LADO to share the information about the allegation and to discuss the next steps;
- recording decisions (including the rationale behind them);
- informing all parties, if no further action;
- discussing options for the person against whom the allegations are made with the Creative Education Trust Safeguarding Directorate and Human Resources;
- attend, with the support of the Director of Safeguarding and Personal Development, any appropriate strategy meeting if and when called.

Contact details for the LADO service can be found online.

Where the initial discussion leads to no further action, the case manager and LADO should:

- record the decision and justification for it and,
- agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned and by whom.
- Manage the process in line with section two.

Considering Suspension⁶

Suspension should not be an automatic response when an allegation is reported. All options to avoid suspension should be considered prior to taking that step.⁷

It is important to note that suspension is a neutral act that can protect the interests of both parties and is not a presumption of guilt.

The possible risk of harm to children posed by an adult should be evaluated and managed in respect of the child(ren) involved in the allegations.

In some rare cases, that will require the case manager to consider suspending the adult until the case is resolved. In such a case, the Principal/Headteacher **must** consider carefully whether the circumstances warrant suspension from contact with children at the academy, until the allegation is resolved.

Based on that assessment of risk, the following alternatives should be considered by the case manager before suspending the adult against whom the allegation has been made:

- redeployment within the academy so that the individual does not have direct contact with the child(ren) concerned;
- providing another adult to be present when the individual has contact with children;
- redeployment to alternative work within the academy so the individual does not have unsupervised access to children;
- moving the child(ren) to classes where they will not come into contact with the adult,
- making it clear that this is not a punishment and parents have been consulted; or
- temporarily redeploying the adult to another role in a different location, for example, an alternative academy or work within the Trust.

Where suspension is considered necessary, case managers **must** work through and submit to the Trust HR Manager a staff suspension consideration assessment (appendix 1).

Care will be taken where the person is suspended to ensure they are kept informed of both the progress of their case and current work-related issues. Creative Education Trust will not prevent social contact with colleagues and friends unless such contact is likely to be prejudicial to the gathering and presentation of evidence⁸.

If an immediate suspension is considered necessary⁹, the rationale for such a course of action must be recorded by the case manager.

⁶ Section 14 of the Creative Education Trust disciplinary policy, gives clear guidance on suspension in the context of a disciplinary investigation.

⁷ It is important to note that the decision to suspend can be taken at any point during the investigation.

⁸ Any such decisions will be taken in line with the Creative Education Trust disciplinary Policy (section 14).

⁹ In line with point 14.2 of the Creative Education Trust Disciplinary Policy, If necessary, a senior manager can send a member of staff home pending ratification by the Principal or a member of the Leadership team the following day.

This record should include details of any advice provided by the LADO. This will also include what alternatives to suspension have been considered and why they were rejected.

A referral to the DBS will be made for any adult for whom it is decided that they should be suspended ¹⁰or removed from regulated activity and the DBS referral duty is met.

The referral duty criteria is:

1. *You withdraw permission for a person to engage in regulated activity with children and/or vulnerable adults. Or you move the person to another area of work that isn't regulated activity.*
2. *You think the person has carried out 1 of the following:*
 - *engaged in relevant conduct in relation to children and/or adults. An action or inaction has harmed a child or vulnerable adult or put them at risk of harm or;*
 - *satisfied the harm test in relation to children and / or vulnerable adults. eg there has been no relevant conduct but a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable still exists or;*
 - *been cautioned or convicted of a relevant (automatic barring either with or without the right to make representations) offence.*

If at the conclusion of the case, the matter is found to be un-substantiated, false, malicious or un-founded, the DBS will be updated with the outcome.

The harm test referenced in this test, can be found in Section 2.1.

¹⁰ The duty to make a referral may not be triggered by a temporary suspension alone, it depends if there is sufficient information to meet the referral duty criteria. Advice should be sought from the LADO.

Investigation stage

There are three types of investigation:

1. by Social Services and the Police;

If the LADO feels that the matter needs a formal investigation external to the Academy or the trust, this will take the form of a strategy meeting with clear multi-agency discussions and plans taking place.¹¹.

A member of the Creative Education Trust central team and/or Trust HR Manager should attend all such meetings in support of the Principal/Head Teacher¹².

The Academy will support the multi-agency process. The Academy will maintain contact with the LADO to update them on the progress and outcome of any action taken.

If appropriate, an agreement will be reached with the LADO (and the Police / Children's Social Services) and HR as to how information is shared and maintained with the adult concerned throughout the investigative process.

The case manager will record all agreed actions and the strategies used, including the rationale behind them, throughout the investigation process.

2. by the Police under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act

The police should inform the LADO and the employer immediately when:

- a criminal investigation and any subsequent trial is complete,
- it is decided to close an investigation without charge, or
- it is decided not to continue with prosecution after the person has been charged.

Where the police are involved, staff should ask them to obtain consent from the individuals involved to share their statements and evidence for use in the employer's disciplinary process.

Where the Principal/Headteacher becomes aware of a Police investigation¹³ into an adult, they must notify the LADO, and Creative Education Trust Safeguarding Directorate without delay.

This should be done as their investigation proceeds and will enable the police to share relevant information without delaying the conclusion of their investigation or any court case.

¹¹ This is sometimes referred to as a 'Position of Trust' or 'Strategy Meeting'.

¹³ A 'Police Investigation' is defined for the purpose of this policy, as any enquiry by the police where the adult is the subject of the enquiry, following a complaint being raised with the police.

3. by Creative Education Trust in line with staff disciplinary procedures.

Sometimes, the LADO will request that the academy to undertake an investigation¹⁴.

Where further enquiries are required to enable a decision about how to proceed, the LADO and case manager should discuss how and by whom the investigation will be undertaken.

The case manager should monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible in a thorough and fair process. Reviews should be conducted at fortnightly or monthly intervals, depending on the complexity of the case.

A quick resolution of that allegation should be a clear priority to the benefit of all concerned. All unnecessary delays should be eradicated at any stage of consideration or investigation.

The discussions with the LADO will help the case manager know the best options to deal with the allegations. If the matter is to be dealt with internally within the academy or setting, the Principal/Headteacher will, with the necessary support from the HR Manager, make very clear plans for managing the allegations, the impact on others and the preventative steps needed to avoid such a situation occurring again.

Investigations will be conducted under the: Creative Education Trust Disciplinary Policy, as it is the only trust policy that captures investigations.

The Director of Safeguarding and Personal Development will generally chair disciplinary hearings relating to safeguarding allegations, where there is not a conflict of interest identified. An awareness of the allegation, or the immediate actions taken, is not considered a conflict of interest. The composition of the panel will be as per the Creative Education Trust Disciplinary Panel.

¹⁴ Internal investigations must only be carried out once the LADO and Police have concluded their involvement or at their request.

Outcomes

Ultimately the options open depend upon the nature and circumstances of the allegations and the evidence and information available.

The definitions that will be used by the academy when determining the outcome of an allegation are set out below:

- **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 or cause harm to the person subject of the allegation;
- **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; or,
- **Unfounded:** to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Where a case progresses to a disciplinary hearing, the outcome will be decided by the panel of a disciplinary hearing; in all other cases, it will be agreed by the Principal/Headteacher/HR and Director of Safeguarding and Personal Development In a recorded meeting.

If the allegation is substantiated and:

- the person is dismissed; resigns, or otherwise ceases to provide their services; or
- the employer ceases to use the person's services.

Creative Education Trust will make a referral to the DBS¹⁵ for consideration of whether inclusion on the barred lists is required; and in the case of a member of teaching staff, refer the matter to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) to consider prohibiting the individual from teaching. This includes adults who solely teach in 16-19 settings attached to an academy.

When it is decided on the conclusion of a case that a person who has been suspended can return to work, the Case Manager, with the support of the Creative Education Trust HR team, will consider how best to facilitate that. The Case Manager will also consider how the person's contact with the child(ren) who made the allegation can best be managed if they are still a pupil at the academy.

Where the trust/academy considers pupils have made malicious allegations, they are likely to have breached academy behaviour policies. Leaders will therefore consider whether to apply an appropriate behaviour sanction.

Any allegations made by staff and other workers that are considered to be malicious may be deemed a breach of the trust's code of conduct and could lead to disciplinary action being taken against the member of staff or termination of their services.

¹⁵ There is a legal requirement for employers to make a referral to the DBS where they consider an individual has engaged in conduct that harmed (or is likely to harm) a child or if a person otherwise poses a risk of harm to a child (see Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) paragraph 142 for further information).

End of Section one.

Section Two: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

A low-level concern is any concern about an adult's behaviour towards a child that does not meet the allegation threshold set out above or is not otherwise serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

This section aims to support academies in creating and embedding a culture of openness, trust, and transparency in which the academy's values and expected behaviour, as outlined in the staff code of conduct, are constantly lived, monitored, and reinforced by all staff.

The purpose of this section of the policy is to ensure that all staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour in themselves and others;

- empowering staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy);
- addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage;
- providing responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised; and,
- helping identify any weakness in the Academy safeguarding system.

Responsibilities

Low-level concerns about an adult should be reported, without delay, to the principal/headteacher.

Where the principal/headteacher receives a referral, they should create a record; and track concerns locally to establish any patterns. Records are held by the Principal in a secure tracking spreadsheet.

The MAT recognises that it is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the allegation/harm threshold, are shared responsibly and with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of our academy from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions must be recorded.

Initial response

Low-level concerns and or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold should be reported to the principal/headteacher. Where the concern relates to the Principal/Headteacher they should be reported to the Chief Executive.

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the principal/headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been submitted anonymously;
- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

The principal/headteacher should investigate the concern, but can delegate this to a suitably senior member of staff. If, during the course of the investigation, information uncovered suggests that the adult 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 he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children;

Without delay, a referral will be made to the Local Authority LADO by the principal/headteacher.

The principal/headteacher is the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns.

Low-level concerns which are shared about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Record keeping

A record of all low-level concerns must be maintained by the principal/headteacher. Records are held in a secure tracking spreadsheet.

When making an entry on the tracking spreadsheet, such record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action(s) taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted; if the individual wishes to remain anonymous, then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible.

The information collected will help to categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may need to be taken. All of this needs to be recorded.

These records will be retained at least until the individual leaves their employment.

Records will be reviewed by the principal/headteacher regularly so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Consideration will also be given to whether there are broader cultural issues within the academy that enabled the behaviour to occur and where appropriate policies could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

Once the principal/headteacher has contacted the LADO, they must make a record that captures any discussions (including internal discussions and meetings) and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions.

This record must be kept confidential and stored securely.

Referral to the LADO

Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, leaders should decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harm threshold outlined in section one, in which case it should be referred to the LADO .

Where a referral is made to the LADO , the process is outlined in Section one.

If the academy is in any doubt whether the information shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern meets the harm threshold, they will consult with their LADO .

References

Our academy will refer to substantiated safeguarding allegations in references.

Low-level concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to issues typically included in a reference, such as misconduct or poor performance; however in cases where an adult is disciplined for a safeguarding-related concern, that doesn't reach the threshold for a referral to the LADO when they are found to be substantiated, we will provide a reference that reflects the fact that a disciplinary process has taken place and refer to the sanction.

Sometimes a pattern of behaviors can meets the threshold for referral to the LADO. Where on review, a low-level concern (or group of concerns) meets the threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated, it will also be referred to in a reference.

End of Section two.

3. Resignations and Settlement agreements

A settlement agreement will never be made, nor a resignation accepted, where the allegation against the adult meets the threshold outlined in section 1.

If the adult resigns or ceases to volunteer, this will not prevent an allegation from being followed up in accordance with the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (2025).

Creative Education Trust will make every effort to conclude all cases of allegations bearing on the safety or welfare of children, including any in which the person concerned refuses to cooperate. Wherever possible, the individual/person who is the subject of the allegation should be given full opportunity to answer the allegation and make representations about it.

The person concerned will be notified of the outcome.

Reaching an outcome about whether a concern/allegation can be substantiated or otherwise based on all the available information will continue even if the individual/person who is the subject of the allegation does not cooperate.

4. Record Keeping

Details of allegations found to have been malicious will be removed from personnel records. However, for all other allegations, Creative Education Trust recognises the importance of

- a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation;
- details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved;
- a note of any action taken and decisions reached;

being kept on the confidential personnel file of the adult. A copy of such a record will be provided to the person concerned.

The record will be retained in line with the trust data retention policy.

5. References

Other than where allegations are false, malicious, unsubstantiated, or unfounded, the outcome of a substantiated concern that met the threshold for a referral to the LADO will be made clear when providing references to prospective employers.

Creative Education Trust recognises that this is particularly important when the person moves into another position involving working with children.

Cases in which an allegation was proven to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious should not be included in employer references. A history of repeated concerns or allegations that have been found to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious should also not be included in any reference.

6. Learning Lessons from allegations/concerns

Learning lessons from safeguarding cases is a fundamental part of an effective culture of safeguarding, and Creative Education Trust commits to engaging in any such learning process.

Throughout the process of handling allegations and at the conclusion of a case in which an allegation is substantiated, the LADO should review the circumstances of the case with the case manager.¹⁶ to determine whether there are any improvements to be made to the Academy's procedures to help prevent similar events in the future.

The LADO and case manager should consider how future investigations of a similar nature could be carried out without suspending the individual.

Any learning review should include issues arising from any decision to suspend a member of staff, the duration of the suspension and whether the suspension was justified.

Where an internal investigation relating to a safeguarding allegation leads to a disciplinary hearing being held, Creative Education Trust will undertake a learning review of the case with the intention of identifying any broader learning points for Creative Education Trust or the Academy.

Lessons should also be learnt from the use of suspension when the individual is subsequently reinstated.

Where the LADO does not undertake a learning review¹⁷, the MAT will always consider the facts with the case manager and determine whether any improvements can be made.

Where the LADO is involved in a case, they will always be updated on any learning points identified.

7. Non-recent allegations

Where an adult makes an allegation to any Creative Education Trust Academy that they were abused as a child, the individual will be advised to report the allegation to the police.

Non-recent allegations¹⁸ made by a child will be reported to the LADO in line with the local authority's procedures for dealing with non-recent allegations and this policy.

8. Complaints

Where a person makes a complaint under the Creative Education Trust Complaints Policy, which involves Safeguarding, it will be referred to the Creative Education Trust Safeguarding Directorate who will triage the complaint to ensure that any safeguarding matters are addressed with the school. Where it is decided that the safeguarding matters are resolved, or the complaint is not in fact about safeguarding

¹⁶ With the support of the Director of Safeguarding and Personal Development.

¹⁷ This includes any cases where a referral has been made to the LADO or in a case where an adult has been dismissed from the organisation and a referral has been made to the DBS.

¹⁸ The LADO will coordinate with children's social care and the Police. Abuse can be reported no matter how long ago it happened.

or child protection, it will be referred back to the Governance and Compliance team to manage it in line with the Creative Education Trust Complaints Policy.

Appendix 1 – Suspension risk assessment

The following factors need to be considered and discussed with Human Resources prior to suspension taking place.

	Consideration notes
Nature of the alleged incident • Degree and nature of of the allegation • Duration and frequency of allegation • Extent of pre-meditation • Degree of any threat or coercion	
Information re: member of staff • Previous concerns • Previous allegations • Contact with child(ren) / young person / people concerned and generally	
Advice from other stakeholders • Police • LADO etc.	
Investigation • Possibility of the investigation being impeded or corrupted should the person remain in work • Possibility of further allegations being made / issues arising for person if in school/Head Office during investigation.	
Health and Safety • Potential risks to the person's health and safety should they remain in school (impact of threats from parents / carers / potential press interest etc) • Potential risks to the health and safety of others.	
Alternatives to suspension Explore and assess all other potential options e.g. redeployment or supervision or working from home etc.	



Risks identified and action plan:

•

Decision to Suspend:

Date:.....

Human Resources sign off.....

Principal sign off.....

A copy of the letter communicating the decision to suspend should be retained with the investigation file.