

Key Roles and Responsibilities of the DO, Named Officer and Designated Senior Manager

Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) has responsibility for ensuring there are effective inter-agency procedures in place for dealing with allegations against people who work with children and a process in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of those procedures.

To enable this to occur there are three specific roles:

Named Officer (NO)

Each member agency of the NSCB should have a named senior officer who has overall responsibility for; ensuring that their organisation operates procedures for dealing with allegations in accordance with this procedure; resolving any inter agency issues and liaising with NSCB on the subject.

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that their organisation complies with the standards identified and agreed by the NSCB for managing allegations;
- Ensuring that NSCB procedures for managing allegations are implemented within their own agency procedure;
- Ensuring that the workforce is aware of and implements the procedures in relation to all allegations against adults who work with or on behalf of children;
- Ensuring that the organisation has systems in place to review cases and identify and implement any changes including, whether there are features of the organisation which may have contributed to the abuse occurring therefore improving procedures and practice;
- Resolving any inter-agency issues which impede the implementation of NSCB procedures;
- Ensuring that the roles of Named Officer, Local Authority Designated Officer (and their contact details) and Designated Senior Manager are included in their agency policy and procedures;
- Ensuring that effective reporting and recording arrangements within their agencies are in place.

Meeting these responsibilities will require:

- An identified strategic lead with appropriate authority;
- Access to up to date and relevant information regarding the management of allegations within their own organisation.

Designated Senior Manager

The Designated Senior Manager (DSM) within the organisation has overall responsibility for ensuring procedures are followed at an operational level. This person may be the employer or a senior representative of the agency/organisation.

Responsibilities include;

- Advising the NO as to whether NSCBs procedures are properly applied and implemented in their agency;
- Providing advice, information and guidance for staff within the organisation;
- Being the senior manager within the organisation to whom all allegations or concerns are reported;
- Referring allegations in accordance with the organisation's and NSCBs procedures;
- Gathering any additional information which may have a bearing on the allegation e.g. previous known concerns, care and control incidents, etc;
- Providing the subject of the allegation with information and advise them to inform their union or professional body;
- Should the allegation be unfounded consideration needs to be given to a referral through to social care for support or to the police if the allegation is deemed to be deliberately malicious or invented;
- Attend strategy meetings where required;
- Liaising with the local authority designated officer;
- Liaising with human resources where employer's disciplinary action required;
- Ensuring that risk assessments are undertaken where and when required;
- Ensuring that effective reporting and recording systems are in place which allow for the tracking of allegations through to the final outcome;
- Undertaking appropriate checks with data the agency may hold;
- Providing reports and information as required by the named senior officer;
- Raising the awareness of the need to empower children and young people who are in vulnerable positions by ensuring their agency produce good whistle blowing and complaints procedures for all children;
- Ensuring appropriate and relevant training programmes are in place for all and accessed by all staff;
- Ensuring relevant support programmes are in place for staff, parents and young people.

Meeting these responsibilities will require;

- An understanding of the NSCB procedures for managing allegations against adults who work with or on behalf of children and young people;
- Training in procedural matters;
- Access to a recording and monitoring system;

- Access to advice and guidance from 'someone independent of the organisation'.

Designated Officer (DO)

Local authorities are required to have designated officers with the following responsibilities:

- Management and oversight of individual cases from all partner agencies of the NSCB if the allegation appears to meet the criteria set out in Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers Procedure, Introduction and Criteria;
- Providing advice, information and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations;
- Liaise with the police, social care, cps and other agencies as needed;
- Monitoring the progress of cases, through to their final conclusion to ensure they are dealt with within set timescales;
- Ensuring a consistent, fair and thorough process for all adults working with children and young people against whom allegations are made;
- Responsibility for maintaining information databases in relation to all allegations and concerns through to the final outcome, producing qualitative and quantitative reports for NSCB and DfE;
- Attendance at strategy meetings and initial evaluation meetings and liaising with the chairs of the meetings;
- Contributing to the work of the NSCB and the authority, regarding the content and availability of relevant training;
- Development of relevant single and inter agency policy, procedures and practice;
- Providing support, advice and expertise to senior managers identified in the employers procedures in the consideration of referral of cases to social care and or the police, initiation and conduct of disciplinary procedures, suspension, appropriate action in regard to false and malicious allegations report to the secretary of state for consideration of barring.

Meeting these responsibilities will require:

- A working mandate from the NSCB;
- Sufficient status to liaise with the DSM and NO;
- Access to database programmes;
- Appropriate administrative support.

The DO should, therefore, be informed of all allegations that come to the employer's attention. The DO and the Employer will discuss whether the allegation fits the criteria (see Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers Procedure, Introduction and Criteria) so that the DO can consult Children's Social Care or the Police as appropriate.

It is important to ensure that even apparently less serious allegations are seen to be followed up and that they are examined objectively by someone independent of the organisation concerned