

What is a Local Authority Designated Officer (DO)?

The role of the DO is set out in the HM Government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015). The NSCB has procedures for managing allegations against people who work with children, for example, those in a position of trust.

The DO works within Children's Services and should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child
- possibly committed a criminal offence against children, or related to a child
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Allegations procedures may also be used where concerns arise about:

- A person's behaviour in their personal life which may impact upon the safety of children to whom they owe a duty of care;
- A person's behaviour with regard to his/her own children;
- The behaviour in the private or community life of a partner, member of the family or other household member.

The DO role applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers in any setting, such as schools, hospitals and nurseries. They capture concerns, allegations or offences; this can include concerns about their own personal life, e.g incidents of domestic violence or child protection concerns relating to their own family.

The DO is involved from the initial phase of the allegation through to the conclusion of the case. They will provide advice, guidance and help to anyone who has concerns about anyone who works with children, to determine what action needs to be taken.

The DO co-ordinates information-sharing with the right people and will also monitor and track any investigation, with the aim to resolve it as quickly as possible – see flow chart on next page.

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Dealing with allegations against people who work with children

