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Achieving, Caring & Respecting with Confidence

**Thorpedene Primary School**

**Recruitment and Selection**

**Policy**

**Signed by Chair of Governors**

Thorpedene Primary School

**RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY**

**Introduction**

This document is a statement of the aims and strategies for recruiting and selecting staff\* at Thorpedene Primary School. A schedule for the review of this and all other policy documents is set out in the School Development Plan.

\*The term ‘staff’ relates to all people at the school whether in paid or unpaid employment.

**Our policy supports**

* Whole school aims and all school policies.
* **‘Recruitment and Selection Guidance Notes’** Southend on Sea Borough Council, July 2009
* **‘Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education’** DfES, 2006
* **Implementing ‘working together to safeguard children’\*** ECC Jun 2007

\*Guide attached at the end of this policy

**Aims**

* To ensure the safeguarding of children through safer recruitment practices
* To deter unsuitable applicants
* To facilitate the transition from one post to another
* To support professionally and personally newly appointed members of staff
* To ensure that newly appointed members of staff take up their posts with confidence
* To ensure that new members of staff are aware of the aims and ethos of the school and that these are reflected in their professional responsibilities
* To minimise staff turnover and absenteeism
* To maintain high staff morale
* To achieve effective management and supervision

**Strategies**

* + To include in all advertisements and job descriptions the following phrase: **‘Thorpedene Primary School aims to effectively safeguard and promote the welfare of children/pupils (Education Act 2002). This post will require an enhanced disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau’**
	+ **Safer Recruitment Time Line ~ [Children’s Workforce Development Council]**
		1. Train and brief those who are carrying out the interview or other assessments
		2. Design job description and person specification
		3. Choose selection criteria
		4. Choose methods of assessment (interview, role play etc)
		5. Advertise the post
		6. Give information about safeguarding policies, procedures and checks carried out
		7. Send out information pack
		8. Ask for an Electronic Criminal Records Bureau (E-CRB) self-disclosure
		9. Read application form and check information
		10. Short list
		11. Request references
		12. Design interview questions, role play or other assessment
		13. Carry out an interview, role play or other assessment
		14. Check qualifications and professional registration
		15. Check identity documents
		16. Discuss criminal convictions history with the candidate
		17. Check gaps or issues on the application form with the candidate
		18. Probe candidate’s attitudes and motives towards safeguarding and children
		19. Scrutinise references
		20. Make a decision to offer the post conditionally to the individual
		21. Request E-CRB check
* Before a new member of staff takes up a post he/she will be invited to the school to meet informally the Headteacher and staff.
* New members of staff will be teamed with a colleague. This mentor colleague will be responsible for helping with organisational procedures.
* Opportunities for discussing training will be made by the Headteacher/Deputy.
* New members of staff will be encouraged to contribute to staff discussion and participate in decision making relating to all aspects of the work of the school.
* Professional portfolios will be established or continued, as appropriate.
1. All new members of staff will be issued with an individual ‘Induction Checklist’, containing information relating to the school.

**Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure Application Procedure**

**1. Purpose**

The purpose of the procedure is to ensure that Thorpedene Primary School complies fully with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Code of Practice [Revised April 2009].

**2. Applicability**

This procedure applies to every employee, and volunteer who is engaged in a job working with children, or who has a role which is based on premises attended by children.

Applicability includes roles where normal duties include supervising or managing an individual who works with children even where the supervisor/manager may not have direct contact with children.

**3. Responsibilities**

**CRB applicants** are responsible for:

* Declaring if they have spent or unspent convictions (including driving offences), cautions, warnings or reprimands. This will normally be requested on the application form;
* Completing the E-CRB electronic application fully and accurately in accordance with the CRB Applicants’ Guide;
* Ensuring that they have sufficient original identification documents as set out in the CRB Applicants’ Guide.

**The Finance Officer who verifies information on the E-CRB electronic application form** is responsible for**:**

* Identifying if the role requires an E-CRB check.
* Ensuring that all identification documents presented by the applicant are original, appropriate and relevant.
* Completing two verification boxes pages on the electronic application form accurately and completing sections w and x at the end.

**The Headteacher** is responsible for:

* Ensuring that everyone who commences activities within the school which fall within the CRB guidelines has completed and submitted an E-CRB disclosure application prior to appointment;
* Ensuring that no employee commences work without an E-CRB disclosure being received where this is an absolute requirement of the job;
* Ensuring that employees for whom a E-CRB disclosure has not yet been received work under a suitable system of supervision pending receipt of the disclosure and only after a ‘List 99’ check has been done;
* Ensuring that all other recommended pre-employment checks have been carried out satisfactorily prior to appointment when employing a member of staff;
* Receiving notification from the Recruitment team in HR, confirming the outcome of the disclosure;
* In conjunction with the Human Resources Team Manager and the Governing Body Personnel Committee, making a decision about employment when a positive E-CRB disclosure is returned, using a risk assessment approach as necessary;
* Signing off the decision sheet for positive E-CRB disclosures;
* Ensuring the Personnel Committee meeting minutes, the decision and reasons for it on the Positive Disclosure Decision Sheet, are retained in a sealed envelope in the employee’s personal file.

**The School’s Human Resources Advisor** should be contacted for:

* Advice to the Headteacher on receipt of a positive E-CRB disclosure;
* Providing advice and guidance to the Headteacher on the risk assessment process in making decisions about and dealing with positive disclosures;

**The Finance Officer** is the Lead Countersignatory with responsibility for ensuring that Criminal Records Bureau disclosures are managed appropriately in accordance with this agreed procedure, and with the CRB Code of Practice and Guidance.

**4. Principles**

Thorpedene Primary School complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants fairly and not to discriminate unfairly against anyone on the basis of conviction or other information revealed. Having a criminal record will not necessarily prevent an individual from working at Thorpedene. This will depend on the nature of the role, professional suitability and the circumstances, nature and background of the offences.

The school recognises that access to criminal record information has to strike a balance between the rights of children, an individual’s right to privacy, and the rights of ex-offenders to become rehabilitated into society. It is essential that confidential and sensitive information about an individual's criminal record is handled fairly and properly.

**5. CRB Application Procedure**

* Finance Officer to send E-CRB Disclosure Appointment to applicant;
* Applicant to provide documentary evidence of identity (as set out in CRB Applicants’ Guide) to the Finance Officer;
* Finance Officer completes verification process on the E-CRB Essex website to confirm details of original identification documents seen;
* Finance Officer submits the Disclosure Application details to E-CRB;
* Human Resources E-CRB Countersignatory checks the Disclosure Application Form, requesting an Enhanced Check, and forwards it to the Criminal Records Bureau;
* Criminal Records Bureau sends a Disclosure Certificate to the applicant;
* Criminal Records Bureau sends a copy of the Disclosure Certificate to Finance Officer (Where additional local police force information is considered relevant this will be sent separately to the Finance Officer);
* E-CRB contacts the school via e-mail to inform them of the outcome of the process; [e-mails the Finance Officer if the outcome is negative or telephones the Headteacher if the outcome is positive].

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Disclosure Certificate is negative** | **Disclosure Certificate reveals convictions, cautions or other relevant information** | **Applicant is barred from working with children and/or vulnerable adults** |
| Appointment proceeds subject to all other pre-employment checks | Human Resources advises the Headteacher of the implications of the information revealedHeadteacher completes Positive Disclosure Decision Sheet after discussion with the school’s Human Resources provider.Head of Safeguarding must be involved in this decision if a child protection issue | Offer of employment is voidAppointment is unlawful and must not proceed |

**6. Standards for E-CRB Checks for Employees**

The DfE strongly recommends that disclosures are obtained on staff before they take up post. However, they recognise that in certain exceptions staff may need to be employed at short notice. In these circumstances, Headteacher has the discretion to employ staff who have not yet received their disclosure, provided that:

* they have been checked against the DfE’s list of people unsuitable or banned from working with children in education (previously called List 99); and
* all other relevant pre-appointment checks have been carried out on them; and
* they do not have unsupervised access to children until their full disclosure is received.

**7. Casual Employees and Volunteers**

All casual staff, volunteers and carers who require a ECRB check must receive their clearance before they commence work.

Where there is a break in their service of 3 months or more, then a new ECRB check must be applied for.

**8. Service Providers and Contractors to the Council**

Managers who have a responsibility for securing services for the school must take responsibility for ensuring that the service provider has clear vetting procedures where their role comes under one or more of the E-CRB's categories.

Where possible, these procedures should be explicitly written into a Service Level Agreement or contract.

The Headteacher should ensure that checks are made with the agency that there are secure arrangements for E-CRB checks in place before accepting the member of staff.

**9. Re-checking ECRB**

The school will apply for a new E-CRB Disclosure every three years for employees.

**10. Dealing with Positive Disclosures**

A positive disclosure is a certificate that shows cautions, warnings or convictions. It may show spent convictions and also unspent convictions, and for Enhanced checks, it will also show information that a police force deems relevant to disclose based on the nature of the job that the individual will be employed to do.

**Please note that in some cases, the Countersignatory/Recruitment Team may be prohibited from passing on information disclosed by local police forces, as it might risk undermining current police investigations.**

Before a decision is reached on whether to offer or confirm employment to an individual, the individual will be offered the opportunity to discuss the content of the disclosure with the Headteacher. The Headteacher will make a balanced decision on whether he/she is satisfied to employ the person/service provider, based on:

* whether they are barred from appointment under PoCA (Protection of Children Act), POVA (Protection of Vulnerable Adults) or List 99;
* whether the conviction is relevant to the position;
* the circumstances surrounding the offence, and any explanations provided by the applicant;
* the seriousness of the offence;
* the length of time since the offence occurred;
* whether there is a pattern to the offending behaviour, or whether it was a one-off;
* whether the applicant's circumstances have changed.

Further discussion should take place regarding:

* whether the applicant disclosed the conviction(s)/cautions, warnings or reprimands at application or at interview stage;
* what level of supervision will the post-holder receive;
* does the post involve responsibility for finance or items of value;
* will the nature of the role allow the applicant to potentially re-offend.

The Headteacher, in consultation with the Governing Body Finance and Personnel Committee, will make the overall decision about whether to employ or not employ the person. If the disclosure has child protection implications the Safeguarding and Child Protection Co-ordinator must be involved in the decision.

The decision, and the reasons for it, will be recorded on a Positive Disclosure Decision Sheet, signed by the Headteacher, and the Head of Safeguarding where necessary, and be stored on the personnel record.

If an applicant has made a false declaration on the application form, or anywhere else, about convictions and cautions (or lack of them), this may render the offer of a contract of employment void. Advice should be obtained from the school’s Human Resources provider on this.

The CRB Code of Practice which includes consideration of positive disclosures can be found in the list of guidance for employers at http://www.crb.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=311

**11. Single Central Record**

The school is required to complete, and keep up to date, a Single Central Record for Staff and any other regular visitors to school. This is to ensure that all the necessary information about the school's recruitment and vetting checks is contained in one central record. The aim of this process is to ensure that a summary of all the checks are kept together in one place so that any gaps, or the need for updating records, can be easily checked by the school.

* **Identity ~** Each person's name, address, date of birth, the evidence (e.g. birth certificate, passport, driving licence combined with proof of address and some form of photographic evidence) and date of the check and a record of who carried out the check should be recorded.
* **Qualifications ~** If qualifications are legally required for the post (and for some posts are not required), the evidence of the relevant certificate obtained, the date of the check and a record of who carried out the check, should be recorded.
* **List 99 and E-CRB Checks ~** The evidence and date of the List 99 or **enhanced** CRB check and a record of who carried out the check should be recorded.
* **Checks on the Right to Work in the UK ~** Employers must confirm the right of those they employ to work in the UK. The evidence and date of these and a record of who carried out the check should be recorded.
* **Overseas Checks ~** Where individuals have lived abroad, ECRB disclosures will not show any offences that may have been committed. Additional checks will need to be made such as obtaining good conduct certificates from embassies or police forces as needed. The evidence and date of these and a record of who carried out the check should be recorded.

**12. Equality**

Thorpedene Primary school is an equal opportunities employer. This means that all applicants for jobs in the service of the school will receive equal treatment irrespective of their gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, age, religious belief, disability or other areas where prejudice may occur

**13. Induction**

**All staff follow an induction procedure on appointment to a role in the school:**

* Training and information on school policies and procedures including H&S
* Support appropriate for the role for which they have been engaged
* Confirm conduct expected of staff within the school
* Opportunities to discuss an issues or concerns about their role and responsibilities
* Enable the line manager or mentor to recognise any concerns or issues about the person’s ability or suitability at the outset and address them immediately

**And in relation to Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children will discuss the following with the appropriate person**:

* Policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting welfare, eg child protection, anti-bullying, anti-racism, physical intervention/restraint, intimate care, E-Safety and any local child protection/safeguarding procedures
* Safe practice and the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of staff and pupils in the establishment
* How and with whom any concerns about those issues should be raised
* Other relevant personnel procedures, eg disciplinary, capability and ‘whistle-blowing’
* Child protection training (if appropriate to the role)

**Implementing ‘working together to safeguard children’**

**Managing allegations in the children’s workforce**

**A practical guide for organisations and practitioners**

**June 2007**

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[Permission requested to include this document within our policy Jan 2010 from Essex Safeguarding Service}

**1. Important contacts**

**Essex**

Children’s Safeguarding Service ~ Schools, Children and Families Service

PO Box 11

Chelmsford

Essex CM1 1LX

Telephone: 01245 436744

Fax: 01245 434154

E-Mail: childrens.safeguarding@essexcc.gov.uk

**Southend**

Laurence Doe, Safeguarding and Child Protection Co-ordinator (Local Authority Designated Officer)

Telephone: 01702 534539 or 07867 553088

**Thurrock**

Brenda Stannard, Education Lead Officer for Safeguarding (Local Authority Designated Officer)

Telephone: 01375 652535

**Referrals to Social Care Services out of office hours**

Where you have urgent and immediate concerns for the safety and welfare of a child or young person out of office hours telephone:

Essex and Southend: 0845 606 1212

Thurrock: 01375 672468

**2. A shared objective**

All organisations that provide services for children share an objective to keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

* providing a safe environment for children and young people;
* identifying those children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and within other settings.

Achieving this objective requires systems designed to:

* prevent unsuitable adults working with children and young people;
* promote safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe practice;
* identify instances in which there are grounds for concern about a child’s welfare and initiate appropriate action to keep them safe; and
* contribute to effective partnership working between all those involved with providing services for children and young people.

**3. Why have new procedures for handling allegations against adults in the children’s workforce been put in place?**

In 2006, the Government produced a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children called Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfES 2006). Chapter 6 of Working Together gives guidance on what to do where an allegation, complaint or concern of abuse is made against a person who works or volunteers with children. It states that “All organisations that provide services for children, or provide staff or volunteers to work with or care for children, should operate a procedure for handling such allegations that is consistent with the guidance in Appendix 5” Working Together to Safeguard Children ( DfES 2006)

Module 12 of The Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) Child Protection Procedures sets out the actions to take in these circumstances.

Both these documents can be accessed on line via the following websites:

* Working Together is available via the Every Child Matters website at [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)
* The SET procedures are available via www.escb.co.uk. [www.southend.gov.uk/lscb](http://www.southend.gov.uk/lscb) or

[www.shapingthurrock.org.uk/safeguard](http://www.shapingthurrock.org.uk/safeguard)

These documents require each Local Authority to have procedures in place for managing allegations against adults working and volunteering with children, similar to those that have been in place for education staff since 2004. In order to ensure consistency across Southend, Essex and Thurrock a single process has been agreed and put in place that is compliant with Working Together to Safeguard Children and SET procedures. This will ensure that allegations are dealt with quickly, fairly and consistently to provide effective protection for the child(ren) and appropriate support for the person who is the subject of the allegation.

There is a statutory duty on all organisations providing services to children and young people to follow the guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children.

**4. Scope of procedures**

The guidance set out in Working Together applies to a wider range of allegations than just those in which there is reasonable cause to believe a child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. It also includes cases of allegations, complaints or concerns that might indicate that the adult may be unsuitable to continue to work with children in his or her present position, or in any capacity. It should be used in respect of all cases in which it is alleged or there are concerns about a person who works with children who may have:

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

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006)

**5. Nominating a named senior officer**

Each organisation providing services for children should nominate a senior officer who has overall responsibility for ensuring these procedures are operated. This person will be known as the Named Senior Officer. A deputy should also be identified in case the Named Senior Officer is absent, or if the allegation is against the Named Senior Officer.

The Named Senior Officer will be responsible for:

* contacting the Children’s Safeguarding Service in Essex or Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in Southend or Thurrock when a concern, complaint or allegation of a child protection nature is made against a member of staff or volunteer;
* referring cases of suspected abuse or allegations to Social Care Services;
* acting as a source of support, advice and expertise both within your establishment and to the Essex Children’s Safeguarding Service or LADO;
* liaising with senior management or management committees to inform him or her of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role.

All staff working or volunteering within your organisation should be made aware of the procedures for managing allegations so that they know what action to take if they receive an allegation, and who in the organisation should be informed.

**6. What should I do if I receive an allegation, complaint or a concern about a member of staff or volunteer?**

**DO:**

* treat the matter seriously and keep an open mind;
* make a written record of the information (where possible in the child’s own words), including the time, date and place of incident(s), persons present and what was said;
* report the matter to the Named Senior Officer, or deputy in his/her absence or where the Named Senior Officer is the subject of the allegation;
* make some basic preliminary enquiries or checks to establish if the allegation is possible.

**DO NOT:**

* investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification;
* make assumptions or offer alternative explanations;
* promise confidentiality, but give assurance that the information will only be shared on a ‘need to know’ basis;
* ask children to make written statements;
* speak to the adult concerned at this stage.

**7. Whom do I contact?**

**Essex**

In all cases in the Named Senior Officer should immediately telephone the Children’s Safeguarding Service on 01245 436744. This action should be taken even if you think the allegation may be unfounded. The Safeguarding and Allegations Officer will advise you on action to take next.

If you are in **Southend or Thurrock**, please contact the LADO on:

Southend – 01702 534539

Thurrock – 01375 652535

**8. What if the concern is received during the evening or weekend?**

When a concern is raised outside office hours, and you think a referral to Social Care Services is urgently required, if you are in Essex or Southend you should contact Social Care Services immediately on **0845 6061212**. If you are in Thurrock you should contact 01375 672468. You must remember to inform the Children’s Safeguarding Service or LADO at the first available opportunity during normal office hours.

If the service you provide is part of a national organisation or has an umbrella organisation you may wish to also inform the appropriate person for further guidance and support.

**9. Essex Children’s Safeguarding Service**

In Essex the role of the Local Authority Designated officer (LADO) is fulfilled by the Children’s Safeguarding Service. There are three Safeguarding and Allegations Officers who will confirm whether the allegation falls into the scope of these procedures and give advice on action to take next. This may be to make a referral to social services for consideration of an investigation including a joint investigation with the police; that the matter should be dealt with under the organisation’s own disciplinary procedures; or you may agree that the concern/allegation has no foundation.

The Safeguarding and Allegations Officer will discuss the next steps such as attendance at strategy discussion/meetings; informing the person who is the subject of the concern and any others who need to know; offering or signposting to appropriate support for the organisation; implementing your organisation’s disciplinary procedures; and other relevant action.

The Children’s Safeguarding Service will be available to offer advice and guidance throughout the process as appropriate.

Office hours are 9.00 – 5.00 pm Monday to Thursday and 9.00 – 4.00 pm Friday.

**10. The role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

The role of the Local Authority Designated Officer is to:

* act as the initial point of contact for organisations when an allegation, complaint of concern arises about an adult working with children;
* be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases;
* provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations;
* liaise with the Police and other agencies;
* monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible consistent with a thorough and fair process;
* report to the Local Safeguarding Children Board and DfES at regular intervals on the management of allegations.

**11. What records do I need to keep?**

Writing and keeping records is an important aspect of dealing with allegations, concerns or complaints about adults working or volunteering for your organisation. This may provide evidence about the individual’s pattern of behaviour.

It is really important that accurate and timely written notes are made about the incident itself. These should be signed and dated clearly indicating the name of the person making the records. You will need this information if there is a social care or police investigation and also for any further disciplinary or suitability meetings.

It is vital records or minutes of meetings are retained in the files belonging to the organisation. These may be needed should there be any further child protection investigations.

In addition and importantly these records would form the basis if or when you are requested to provide a reference as this must reflect any child protection allegations and provide information about the outcome. Information on retaining records is in section 13.

**12. Data protection and information sharing**

A leaflet is available from the Essex Children’s Safeguarding Service to give to the child, their family and your member of staff/volunteer at an agreed and appropriate time which will explain what happens to the information that has been given to the Children’s Safeguarding Service.

**Why has information been given to the Children’s Safeguarding Service/LADO?**

In order to make reasonable, proportionate and informed decisions it is important to collect enough information to allow a careful assessment to be made whilst safeguarding both the child(ren) and the adult involved.

**What Information is held?**

The information collected is about the nature of the allegation or concern. There will be a number of personal details such as date of birth, ethnicity and the role the person fulfils for the organisation. The information held is limited to what is necessary, reasonable and factual.

Local Authorities are required to track cases through to completion and to record the outcome of any Police, Social Care or disciplinary investigation. Where it is determined that an allegation is unfounded this information is also recorded.

**What is the purpose of holding information?**

Unfortunately there are occasions when adults do abuse children in professional and voluntary settings. It is important to collect information to ensure that children are protected and those adults that have abused children or who are unsuitable are prevented from working with children.

The information is also used to identify trends with a view to planning future guidance and training in order to reduce the number of allegations in the future by focused prevention through good practice.

There is also a requirement from the DfES and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to collate statistical information about allegations. All information is given anonymity before it is submitted. These organisations are interested in looking at the national and regional picture and trends in relation to allegations against the Children’s Workforce staff not at individual cases.

**Who has access to the information?**

The information given is only for the purpose of protecting and promoting the welfare of children. The information held by the Local Authority would not be accessible to future employers. Information would only be shared with the police or Social Care Services as part of an ongoing or future child protection or vulnerable adult investigation.

**Is information held securely?**

The information is held in paper and electronic format. There are security measures in place to ensure that only authorised officers can access the information.

**How long is information held?**

Local Authorities follow the DfES guidance regarding the length of time that records of allegations are retained. “In all cases (including those individuals that leave the organisation) the record should be retained at least until the individual concerned has reached normal retirement age or for a period of 10 years from the date of the allegation (if longer)”. (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2006)

**Can individuals access personal information about them?**

Anyone can make a request for access to information held about them by making a subject access request to the Local Authority where the information is held. You will need to contact one of the following:

**Essex** : 01245 436596 / 436110

**Southend** : 01702 534539 or E-mail JohnMurphy@southend.gov.uk

**Thurrock** : 01375 652500 or [www.information.matters.thurrock.gov.uk](http://www.information.matters.thurrock.gov.uk)

**13. Frequently asked questions**

**Do I have to suspend the subject of an allegation immediately?**

The decision to suspend or temporarily re-deploy staff rests with the employing agency. Suspension is a neutral act and it should not be automatic. It should be considered in any case where:

* there is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm, or
* the allegation warrants investigation by the police, or
* the allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal

Where suspension is not appropriate, consideration should be given to putting safeguards in place to protect the child/ren and the adult involved e.g. undertaking alternative work or the provision of additional adult support.

You should seek advice from your organisation’s HR/Personnel services or umbrella organisation.

**Our organisation already has procedures in place to deal with allegations – do we have to follow the new process, or should we change our existing procedures?**

Yes, Working Together to Safeguard Children is the national guidance. SET Procedures is based on Working Together and provides local procedures. It is important that all organisations ensure their procedures are compliant with national and local guidance and procedures.

**Does it matter which office I telephone – Southend, Essex or Thurrock?**

It is best to contact the area in which the child lives if you have that information, otherwise telephone the area in which your organisation is situated within Essex, Southend or Thurrock.

**What if I believe the allegation to be false?**

The allegations process must still be undertaken even if you believe the allegation to be false. 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.

**If the person agrees or offers to resign immediately, do we still need to go through the allegations process?**

All investigations should be completed and the outcome recorded, regardless of whether the person involved resigns even if the person refuses to co-operate with the process.

‘Compromise agreements’, where a person agrees to resign without any disciplinary action and agreed future reference, must not be used.

**14. Useful publications**

Working Together to Safeguard Children is available via the Every Child Matters website at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

SET Procedures are available through:

Essex Safeguarding Children Board website at www.escb.co.uk

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council’s Local Safeguarding Children Board’s web page at [www.southend.gov.uk/lscb](http://www.southend.gov.uk/lscb) .

Thurrock Safeguarding Children Board website [www.shapingthurrock.org.uk/safeguard/](http://www.shapingthurrock.org.uk/safeguard/)

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

Safeguarding Children and Safer recruitment in Education [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk) or [www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications)

**This policy will be reviewed in line with our policy cycle and statutory requirements.**