



MANAGING ALLEGATIONS POLICY

June 2026

Joanna Gardner
Head of Education

Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy

Projection Education

Scope: This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and consultants working at Projection Education. It outlines the mandatory procedures for handling allegations that a member of staff or volunteer has behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

As a Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) alternative provision, we recognise that our pupils face complex challenges and may exhibit high-consequence behaviours. This environment requires an absolute commitment to safeguarding, alongside robust, transparent procedures to protect both our young people and the staff who support them.

1. Key Personnel & Roles

- **Head of Education:** Receives allegations against staff and liaises with the LADO.
- **Proprietor:** Receives allegations against the Head of Education.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** Provides safeguarding support and coordinates records.
- **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):** Provides advice and oversees allegations that meet the harm threshold.
- **Head of SEND:** Oversees support arrangements for affected pupils

2. Threshold for Managing Allegations

This policy is triggered when it is alleged that a person working at Projection Education 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 they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including behaviour outside of the school environment).

3. Immediate Action Procedure

If an allegation is made, staff must follow these steps in order. **Do not attempt to investigate the matter internally before consulting leadership.**

Step 1: Report Immediately

Any staff member receiving an allegation must report it immediately to the Head and DSL.

Step 2: If the Allegation Concerns the Head of Education

The allegation must be reported directly to the Proprietor without informing the Head of Education first.

Step 3: Preserve Information

- Make a factual written record.
- Do not interview witnesses.
- Do not ask leading questions.
- Maintain confidentiality.

Step 4: Contact the LADO

The Headteacher or Chair of Governors must contact the LADO within one working day where the allegation appears to meet the threshold.

Step 5: Risk Assessment

An initial risk assessment should consider:

- Immediate risks to children.
- The staff member's current duties.
- Whether alternative arrangements are needed.
- Impact on other pupils and staff.

4. Suspensions & Alternative Arrangements

Suspension from duty must never be an automatic knee-jerk reaction. At Projection Education, we recognise that suspension can be highly detrimental to a staff member's well-being and disruptive to our SEMH pupils who rely on relational consistency.

A voluntary suspension or temporary redeployment will only be considered if:

- There is cause to suspect a child or children at Projection Education are at risk of significant harm.
- The case is so serious that it might grounds for summary dismissal.
- An investigation by the police or social care could be compromised by the staff member's presence.

Julie Lawrence (Head of SEND) will review any proposed staff adjustments to ensure that vulnerable pupils with specific Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) have appropriate, stable cover to mitigate emotional distress.

5. Supporting Involved Parties

- **For the Pupil:** The pupil making the allegation, and any other pupils affected, will receive immediate therapeutic and emotional support managed by the SEND team.
- **For the Staff Member:** Projection Education will appoint a designated support colleague (unrelated to the investigation) to provide regular updates and welfare checks to the accused staff member. They will also be directed to occupational health or counselling services.

6. Outcomes and Record Keeping

Once the investigation is concluded, the allegation will be categorised into one of five statutory definitions:

1. **Substantiated:** There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.
2. **Malicious:** There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive.
3. **False:** There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
4. **Unsubstantiated:** There is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation.
5. **Unfounded:** There is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Retention Note: A comprehensive summary of the allegation, how it was followed up, and the final outcome must be kept on the staff member's confidential personnel file. It must be retained at least until the person reaches normal retirement age, or for 10 years from the date of the allegation if that is longer. Copies must be provided to the individual.