



**Cumbria Family Support Ltd**

**MANAGING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF & VOLUNTEERS  
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

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## 1. Introduction and Criteria

- 1.1 All allegations of abuse of children by those who work with children must be taken seriously. Allegations against any person who works with children, whether in a paid or unpaid capacity, cover a wide range of circumstances.
- 1.2 This procedure should be applied when there is such an allegation or concern that a person who works with children, 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.
- 1.3 These behaviours should be considered within the context of the four categories of abuse (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect). These include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children or young people, for example:
- Having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 if in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual (see s16-19 **Sexual Offences Act 2003**);
  - 'Grooming', i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence (see s15 **Sexual Offences Act 2003**);
  - Other 'grooming' behaviour giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature (e.g. inappropriate text / e-mail messages or images, gifts, socialising etc);
  - Possession of indecent photographs / pseudo-photographs of children.
- 1.4 If concerns arise about the person's behaviour in respect of her/his own children, the Police and/or Children's Social Care must consider informing the employer / organisation in order to assess whether there may be implications for children with whom the person has contact at work / in the organisation, in which case this procedure will apply.
- 1.5 Allegations of historical abuse should be responded to in the same way as contemporary concerns. In such cases, it is important to find out whether the person against whom the allegation is made is still working with children and if so, to inform the person's current employer or voluntary organisation or refer their family for assessment.
- 1.6 All references in this document to "staff or members of staff" should be interpreted as meaning all paid or unpaid staff/ professionals and volunteers, including for example Trustees, volunteers working with children and young people in family homes, contact centres or other settings.
- 1.7 This document does not replace or take priority over any aspect of employment law and should be used in conjunction with relevant Cumbria Family Support staff Policy & Procedures.

## 2. Initial Actions

- 2.1 Any allegation should be reported to the Chief Officer immediately who will then notify the Chair of Trustees, unless the Chief Officer is the subject of the allegation in which case it should be reported directly to the Chair of Trustees who will take charge of the investigation process.

- 2.2 If the allegation meets any of the criteria set out above the Chief Officer should report it to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 1 working day

### **3. Ongoing Management of Allegations**

- 3.1 CFS works within the Policy and Procedure framework of Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership. The detailed procedure in place in response of allegations against staff and volunteers can be found [HERE](#) and will be adhered to by Cumbria Family Support.