

# 1 minute guide - Allegations against a Childminder

All Local Authorities must have in place a 'Local Authority Designated Officer' (LADO) to manage and oversee investigations into allegations made against adults who work or volunteer with children and young people either in a position of trust and or in a regulated activity.

## What is an allegation?

The Designated Officer is a local authority role responsible for managing and overseeing concerns, allegations or offences relating to staff and volunteers in any organisation across a local authority area. All allegations about people who work with children, in statutory or voluntary organisations, must be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

A referral to the LADO must be made within 24 working hours if there is information about a person indicating they have:

- 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 or,
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

## What happens if an allegation is made against the childminder?

For further advice, information and referrals please email [LADO@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@doncaster.gov.uk). For urgent enquiries telephone 01302 737332

LADO Referral form can be found at:

<https://dscp.org.uk/professionals/allegations-against-people-who-work-children>

You must also inform Ofsted within 14 days - [Childcare: significant events to notify Ofsted about - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/childcare-significant-events-to-notify-ofsted-about)

- If the childminder makes a referral the LADO will review the childminders referral / enquiry and will contact you to discuss the LADO response and decision regarding whether LADO criteria is met.
- If LADO criteria is met there will be an initial allegations meeting arranged.
- LADO will co-ordinate this meeting and decide who to invite, this may include Ofsted, Social Care, Police, a Safeguarding and Welfare Officer from the Early Years inclusion Team. If you have any other roles working with children, they will also be notified of the allegation and invited to the meeting.
- If the allegation is against the childminder you will **not** be invited to this, however if it is in relation to a member of staff you may be invited to attend.
- Dependent on the nature of the allegation Ofsted may choose to suspend your registration
- Ofsted take these step if they have reasonable cause to believe children are, or may be, exposed to a risk of harm because the allegation is of a safeguarding nature made against the childminder
- The purpose of this suspension is to allow time for the circumstances to be investigated and for steps to be taken to reduce or eliminate the risk of harm. The suspension will initially be for a 6 week period however this can be extended or reduced dependant on the outcome of the investigation



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## LADO Outcomes

After the investigation there will be a final LADO allegation meeting to decide on the LADO outcome. The outcomes are:

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
- Unfounded there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made, or there is evidence to prove that the allegation is untrue.
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there is evidence to prove a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject to the allegation
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

If the person subject to the allegation resigns from their Ofsted registration the investigation process will still continue, and LADO will provide an outcome.

If the outcome is deemed substantiated a decision will be made as to whether a DBS referral is required

## Further information and support

**DONCASTER SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP** – online procedures for Responding to Allegations Against Staff, Carers or Volunteers, can be found at:

[https://doncasterscb.proceduresonline.com/p\\_alleg\\_against\\_staff.html](https://doncasterscb.proceduresonline.com/p_alleg_against_staff.html)

[Early years practitioner wellbeing support - Help for early years providers - GOV.UK \(education.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/early-years-practitioner-wellbeing-support)

Helpline - [Education Support helpline - free and confidential emotional support for teachers and education staff](#)

There are services in Doncaster which can provide additional support if required

[YourLifeDoncaster](#)

Your place your family - [Your Place Team - YourLifeDoncaster](#)

[5 steps to mental wellbeing - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)



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