



School Policies

Policy Title Allegations of Abuse against staff

Written on	September 2010	Reviewed on	Next review due	Oct 2019
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This policy has been written in conjunction with the college's Equality policy (Equality Act 2010).

Crown Hills Community College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people and expects the college community to share this commitment.

This policy has been written in conjunction with the College's Equality and Diversity policy (Equality Act 2010).

Crown Hills Community College adopts government guidance for managing cases of allegation of abuse against people who work with children as set out in "Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children".

Introduction

It is essential that any allegation of harm or unsuitable behaviour made against a teacher or other member of staff or volunteer in an education setting is dealt with quickly and consistently, in a way that provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

Criteria:

In accordance with this guidance, where an allegation is made against anyone who works with children at Crown Hills Community College that s/he;

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

the following procedure will be implemented.

Procedure:

The procedures followed by the college will be informed by the professional judgement of the Principal based on the evidence available, and after consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the Chair of Governors.



Responding to an allegation or complaint:

The Principal is the member of staff who responds to any allegation or complaint. In the first instance on receiving information, s/he will not question the child or investigate the matter any further.

They will:

- treat the matter seriously, avoid asking leading questions, communicate with the child in a manner appropriate to the child's understanding and communication style;
- make a written record of the information, where possible in the child's own words (preferably a hand written statement by the child) stating when the alleged incident took place, who was present and what was said to have happened;
- the record must be signed and dated;
- in the Principal's absence, any allegation must be forwarded to the Vice Principal. Where the allegation involves the Principal, the information should be reported to the Vice Principal who will immediately contact the Chair of Governors without alerting the Principal.
- parents will be contacted and kept informed of every stage of the investigation.

Initial action

The Principal will NOT investigate the matter by interviewing the member of staff concerned, the child making the allegation or any of the potential witnesses.

They will:

- obtain written details of the allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving the allegation or complaint;
- countersign and date the written details;
- complete school welfare forms - sign and date;
- record any other information about times, dates and location of any incident and the names of any potential witnesses.

If the allegation meets any of the Criteria outlined above, the Principal, in consultation with the Lead Designated Officer, will report it to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day for consideration around thresholds and whether to report to Police and Social Care for investigation. Referral to the LADO will not be delayed in order to gather further information. Immediate harm or injury should be reported direct to Social Care and Police who will refer onto the LADO.



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The Principal and the college will cooperate with all relevant authorities involved and will share all relevant information about the person who is the subject of the allegation and the alleged victim to assist in any further investigation. If the matter is reported to the Police or Social Care and Health, those agencies will carry out the investigation. If the allegation is not referred on to outside agencies or they decide not to take any further action, then the Principal or Chair of Governors will need to decide if it merits disciplinary action following the college's (& LA's) Disciplinary Policy.

Informing the member of staff concerned

The Principal will inform the member of staff concerned of the allegation as soon as possible only *after prior consultation with the LADO.*

The Principal will advise the member of staff to seek support from his/her professional association or union. The Principal will ensure the member of staff's access to the Employer Helpline.

The Principal and Governors will consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant an immediate suspension of the person involved from contact with children, until the allegation is resolved. The Principal and Governors will seek guidance from the LADO when considering a suspension. Any suspension will be on full pay, until decided otherwise.

Supporting those involved

After discussion with the LADO as to the most appropriate way this should be done and by whom, parents or carers of a child or children involved will be told about the allegation as soon as possible (if they do not already know of it). In cases where a child has been injured whilst in the college's care, the parents will be informed immediately.

At all times the college will liaise with appropriate agencies, and ensure that agreed support is put in place for the child or children involved.

A nominated college representative will also keep the person who is the subject of the allegations informed of the progress of the case and consider what other support is appropriate for the individual. If the person is a member of a union or professional association she/he will be advised to contact that body at the outset.

Confidentiality

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated and/or considered. Any staff witnesses will be instructed to maintain utmost confidentiality.

Record keeping

The college will keep details of any allegations made and how the allegation was followed up and resolved. These records will be kept until the person reaches normal retirement age, or 10 years if



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that is longer, including for people who leave our employment. A confidential file will be kept in a secure cabinet in the Principal's office. A spare key will be held by the Vice Principal for use in the event of the Principal's absence or an allegation against the Principal. A copy will be given to the person. The purpose of the record will be to enable accurate information to be given in response to any future request for a reference and to provide clarification for future CRB disclosures.

Outcomes

If after initial consideration between the Principal and the LADO it is clear that police or social care investigations are necessary, the college will be guided by the LADO as to the most appropriate action.

The nature of the circumstances of the allegation and evidence will determine the next course of action. As stated previously the Principal / Chair of Governors may initiate disciplinary action. If the nature of the allegation does not require formal disciplinary action, appropriate action will be instituted. For example advice about professional boundaries and safer working practice.

If a disciplinary hearing is required and can be held without any further investigation, the hearing will be held within 15 working days. Subsequent procedures, as outlined in the Leicester City Council Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures, will be followed.

Actions in response to a false or unfounded allegation

1. Where child/children has/have made an unfounded allegation, the Principal will refer the matter to the Children's Social Care for consideration of an initial assessment.
2. Where an adult has made an unfounded allegation, the Principal will seek further guidance from HR.
3. In the event of an allegation being found to be a malicious act (child or adult), the Principal will refer the matter to the police and take disciplinary action if the child is a student at the college.
4. All of the above should be reported to the LADO