

Safeguarding and Quality Service
LADO Local Authority Designated Officer
Annual Report 2017 - 2018

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The role of the LADO is set out in the “Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2018). The guidance requires local authorities to have an officer or a team of officers to manage and oversee allegations against people who work with children and that this officer or team of officers are sufficiently qualified and experienced to fulfil this role effectively. It also requires newly appointed officers to be qualified social workers. The guidance refers to the officer responsible for overseeing allegations as Designated Officer. Enfield, and the majority of the London councils have decided to maintain the term LADO, a term which is already familiar to agencies and professionals.
- 1.2 In Enfield, the role of the LADO is undertaken by the Head of r of Safeguarding and Quality Service (SQS), who has responsibility for overseeing investigations, alerting senior council officers to allegations of a serious nature, and making referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service. Child Protection Conference Chairs/Independent Reviewing Officers in the Safeguarding and Quality service will lead on investigations in the absence of the LADO. The LADO and the Child Protection Conference Chairs/Independent Reviewing Officers are all qualified social workers
- 1.3 In addition to leading on investigations, the service offer advice and guidance when there may be concerns about a person’s conduct and when the threshold for a formal investigation has not been met. This has often ensured that advice and guidance has been given to staff when there are low level concerns.
- 1.4 The “ Working Together to safeguard Children” document makes it clear that if an organisation removes an individual (paid worker or unpaid volunteer) from work such as looking after children (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the organisation must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason. To ensure there is compliance with this, referral to DBS is recommended, if appropriate after the investigation and the LADO is involved in coordinating referrals to DBS. The duty to refer to DBS applies irrespective of whether a referral has been made to the local authority designated officer and it is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.
- 1.5 The DBS procedure considers the following work with children as regulated activity. This covers:
- Unsupervised activities such as teaching and social care
 - Work for a limited range of establishments such as schools, children’s homes and other child care premises

- Relevant personal and healthcare even if done once
- Registered child minding
- Foster care

1.6 The approach we have adopted in Enfield has been effective and robust. The LADO and the CP Chairs/IROs have developed their knowledge and expertise and effective working relationships with partner agencies. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who 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.

Such behaviour should be considered within the context of physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect. It includes concerns about inappropriate relationships between members of staff (paid and volunteers) and children and young people. Examples include:

- Having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 if in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual (see ss16-19 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
- Has behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not have to directly relate to a child but could, for example, include arrest for possession of a weapon;
- As a parent or carer, has become subject to child protection procedure

1.7 The LADO process applies to paid, unpaid, volunteer, casual, agency and self-employed workers. It captures concerns, allegations or offences emanating from outside of work, as well as within a person's paid or unpaid role working with children.

1.8 The updated London Child Protection Procedures have made some changes. The meetings chaired by the LADO are no longer referred to as "strategy meetings" -they are, instead referred to as "Allegations against Staff and Volunteers" meetings, abbreviated as "ASV".

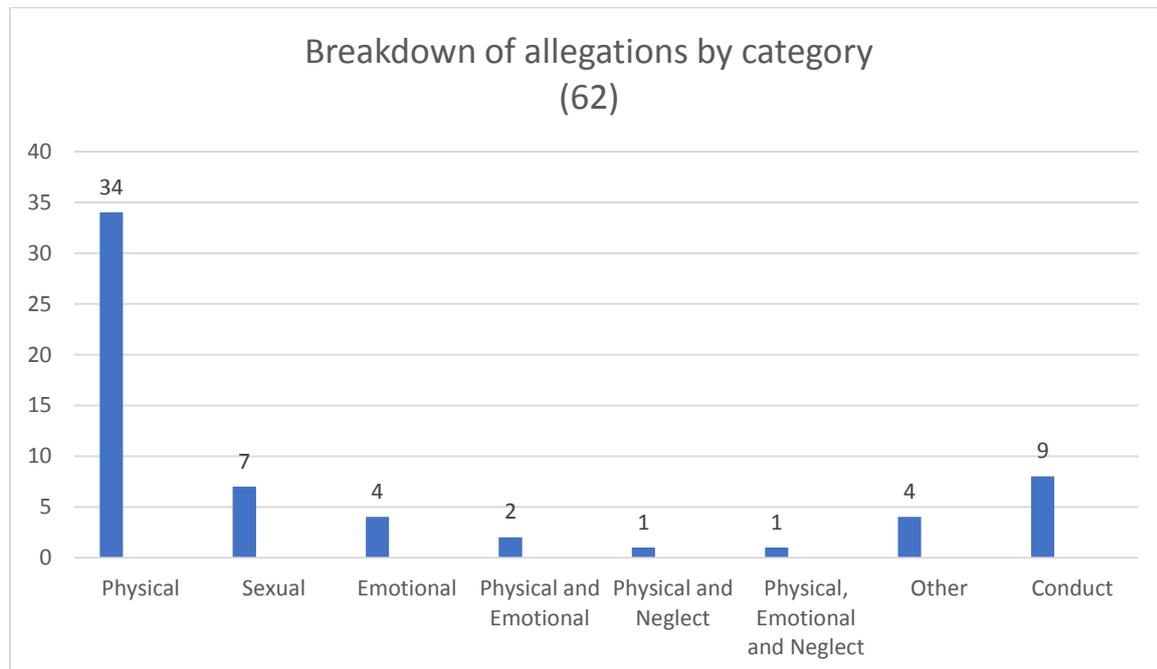
1.9 The procedures also apply when allegations are made against a 16 or 17 yr old who has been put in a position of trust by an organisation in relation to anyone under the age of 18. For example, where they might be involved in coaching a sport of in other school or out of school activities.

1.10 Another significant change which impacts on these investigations is the change in police guidance on arrest. It is now the case that the defendant will not be arrested unless there is a need for bail conditions.

1.11 The bespoke LADO referral form is now embedded and agencies are now using the form more consistently. The revised form has enabled referring agencies to provide more detailed information about the alleged incident and the staff involved, in advance of the strategy meeting. This has had an impact on the quality of referrals and has reduced the time previously spent by the LADO gathering information from different sources.

2. BREAKDOWN OF ALLEGATIONS

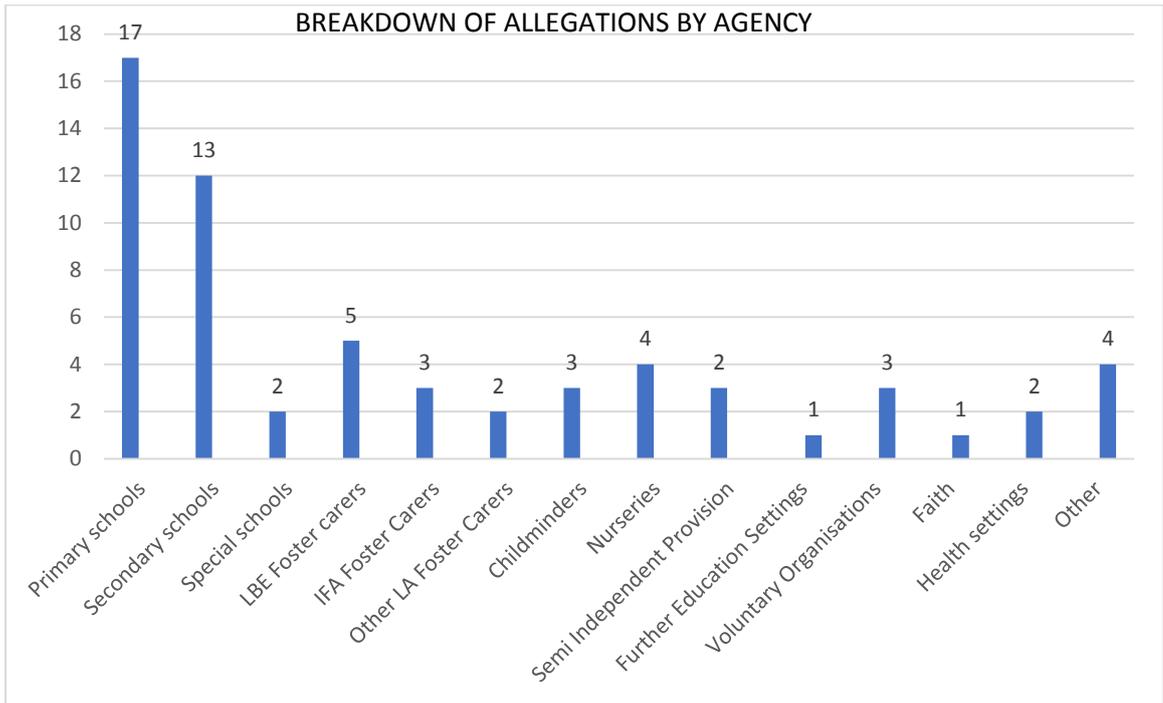
The total number of allegations between 1.04.2017 and 31.03.2018 which met the threshold for formal LADO involvement was 62.

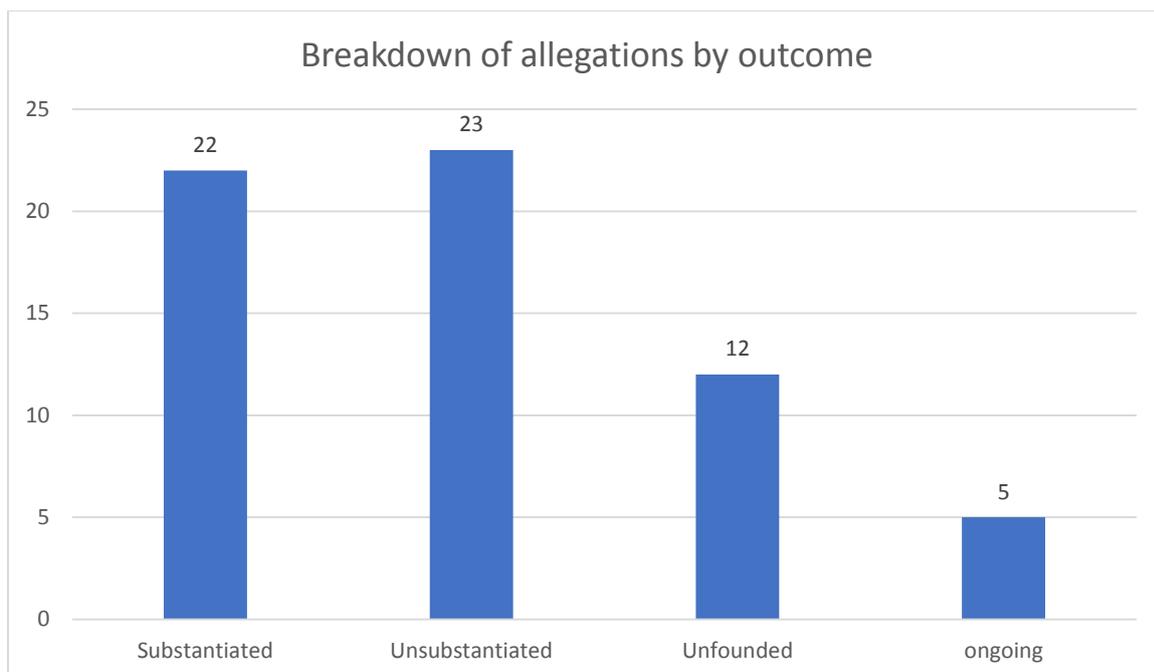


~Other –referrals were made to the LADO when there were concerns about a professional or volunteer outside work but raised concerns about their suitability to work with children.

One allegation was for both sexual and conduct -it has been recorded under “conduct” which was substantiated.

The percentage of allegations of physical harm has decreased from last year, from 66% to 55.7%. Sexual abuse allegations have remained the same (around 12%) but the number of allegations in relation to conduct/professional boundaries has had a significant increase from 8% to 14.75%. These are trends the LADO will be monitoring and reporting. One contributing factor may be an increased awareness around professional conduct and boundaries between staff/volunteers and children/young people and the increased use of social media.





NB One allegation was partly substantiated.

There has been a significant increase in the number of allegations which were substantiated during this period compared to last year. The percentage of substantiated allegations this year was 35% compared to 20% for the same period last year.

Four of the five ongoing investigations are led by the police. Three of these are pending decision from CPS on whether charges will be made. There have been charges on one and court date has now been confirmed. One allegation is being managed under disciplinary procedures.

2.1 Definitions of outcomes

Substantiated- there is sufficient identifiable evidence to prove the allegation

Unfounded- there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made. It might also indicate that the person making the allegation misinterpreted the incident or was mistaken about what they saw. Alternatively, they might not have been aware of all the circumstances.

Unsubstantiated – there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation

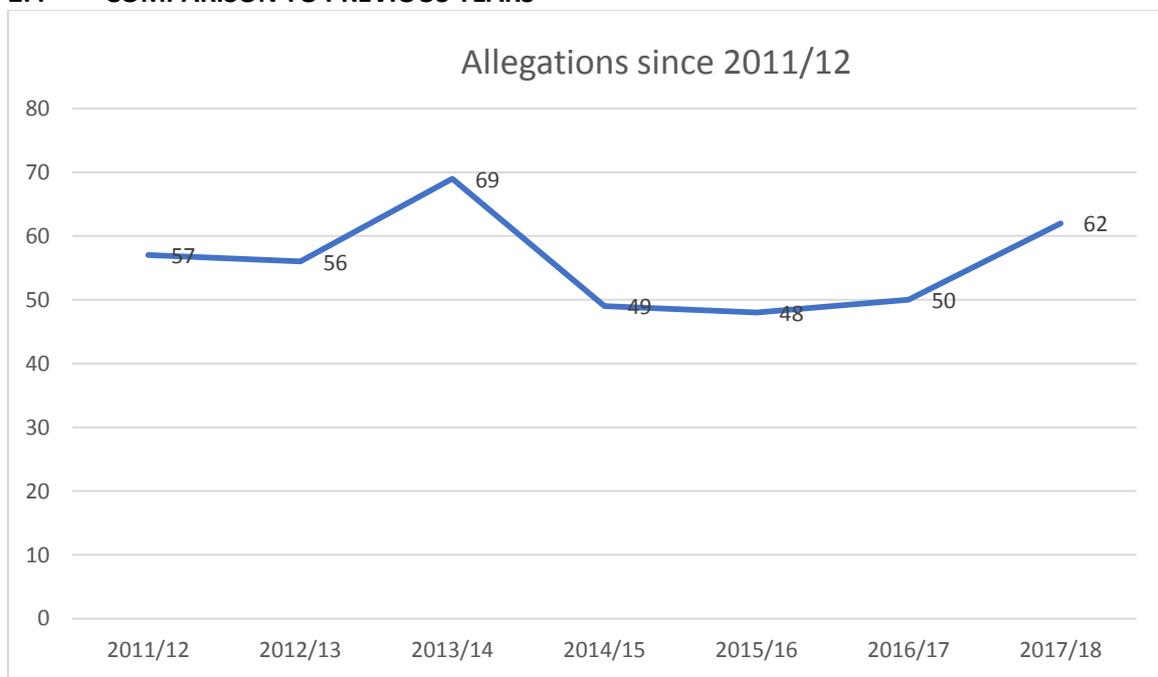
Malicious –there is sufficient evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation is entirely false.

2.2 In addition to the above 62 allegations, there have been approximately 80 consultations with the LADO, where the threshold for LADO intervention had not been met. Advice was offered on managing low level concerns and a system has been put in place to record this activity and report. A significant number of the consultations relate to incidents when school staff need to use positive handling (under section 93 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006), conduct and

professional boundaries. In these circumstances, the LADO will evaluate the information in consultation with the Head teacher and the police and investigate in circumstances when restraint has not been appropriate.

2.3 In addition, the LADO has provided advice to colleagues when there have been allegations by Enfield children/young people against professionals and volunteers working in other authorities. These allegations are investigated by the LADO of the authority where the alleged incidents took place.

2.4 COMPARISON TO PREVIOUS YEARS



2.5 Sources of referrals include direct contact from young people and parents, police, children's social care schools, the SPOE, partner agencies, OFSTED and other local authorities.

- 2.6 There have been several allegations this year of a complex nature which have required several review strategy meetings. There are ongoing police investigations in three cases (have been referred to Crown Prosecution Service to make a decision on whether charges should be made) and a disciplinary investigation in one.
- 2.7 There has been one dismissal and two people resigned from their positions. DBS referrals have been made or are being processed in these cases.
- 2.8 Significant concerns were raised by the LADO in relation to an organisation's safer recruitment processes, which came to light during the investigation of an allegation. This was escalated to senior level within that organisation and we have had assurances that processes and procedures have been reviewed.

3. OTHER LADO RELATED ACTIVITIES

- 3.1 The LADO is responsible for coordinating referrals to DBS and responding to DBS and relevant Freedom of Information Requests.
- 3.2 In addition to the above activity, (investigations and consultations) the LADO has liaised with the Standards and Curriculum Service when there have been referrals from OFSTED to co-ordinate responses in a timely fashion. A robust system has been developed between the two services and the Director's office to ensure all referrals from OFSTED are considered and a response is provided. Records are kept by the Director's office.
- 3.3 The LADO has collaborated with IT services to develop a bespoke LADO workspace within ICS. This is now in place.

As part of the internal audit programme the LADO work was reviewed by PwC to assess the management of the LADO referrals. Three medium and one low risk finding were identified in this review. One of the medium risk finding was that the current procedure did not have a clear escalation process so that complaints about the outcome of investigations could be challenged or appealed. This will be incorporated when the procedures are revised.

Another finding was the lack of peer to peer review of cases. Arrangements are being currently considered so that reciprocal peer to peer review of LADO processes is put in place with another London authority.

4. TRAINING

- 4.1 Training is an integral part of staff development and an awareness raising and feedback from these training sessions has been consistently positive. The LADO has delivered three half training sessions to Enfield foster carers around safe caring and managing allegations. The LADO has also contributed to the "Skills to Foster" training for prospective foster carers. This is a new development and has proven to be a helpful preparation to those who have shown interested in becoming foster carers.

- 4.2 The LADO has also delivered a half day training on managing allegations to LSCB partner agencies.
- 4.3 The LADO has contributed to the designated teachers' training with specific reference to LADO issues and processes

5. REVIEW OF WORK PLAN 2017-2018 AND WORK PLAN FOR 2018-19



Action complete



Action taken but as yet not complete



Action requiring urgent attention/implementation

ENFIELD LADO WORKPLAN 2017 – 2018			
Action	Responsibility	Timescale	RAG Status
Implement LADO process on ICS to improve management information process and systems and to improve LADO recording, monitoring and tracking of cases	Corporate IT and Maria Anastasi	September 17 *	
Design leaflets for parents and professionals**	Maria Anastasi	September 2017	

			
Continue with developing and delivering awareness raising sessions within the statutory and voluntary sector and identify and give specific attention to agencies where there are few or no referrals	Maria Anastasi and SQS	Ongoing	
Revise and update the procedure on "Managing Allegations" **	Maria Anastasi	December 17	

*The development of the LADO workspace was delayed. This was completed in the beginning of 2018.

**The revision of the procedures has been delayed. This was due to the delay in the publication of the "Working Together to safeguard children" guidance. This has also delayed the completion of leaflets for parents and professionals.

ENFIELD LADO WORKPLAN 2018 – 2019			
Action	Responsibility	Timescale	RAG Status
Recruitment of a part -time LADO	Maria Anastasi	November 2018	
Revise and update the procedure on "Managing Allegations"	Maria Anastasi	October 2018	
Continue with developing and delivering awareness raising sessions within the statutory and voluntary sector and identify and give specific attention to agencies where there are few or no referrals	Maria Anastasi and SQS	Ongoing	
Design leaflets for parents and professionals	Maria Anastasi/LADO	November 2018	

Peer on Peer Review of LADO processes	Anne Stoker/Maria Anastasi	March 2019	
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6. APPENDIX A

Key contacts for Enfield

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)	0208 379 2746/2850
Police Child Abuse Investigation Team (CAIT)	0208 733 5139
Single Point of Entry (SPOE)	0208 379 5555
Emergency Duty Out of Hours Social Worker	0208 379 1000
Local Safeguarding Children Board	0208 379 2767

Key publications

“Working Together to Safeguard Children” (2018)

“Keeping Children Safe in Education” (July 2016)

“London Child Protection Procedures”

“Protocol for the Management of Allegations of Abuse Against an Adult working with Children”
(ESCB 2015)