

ConnectED Learning



Managing Allegations Policy

Overview and Purpose

Connect-ED Learning is committed to providing a safe, secure, and supportive environment for all children and young people receiving tutoring or accessing Education Other Than At School (EOTAS) provision. Part of this commitment involves ensuring that any allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour made against tutors, staff members, supply staff, or volunteers are dealt with quickly, fairly, and consistently.

This policy outlines the clear procedures to be followed in the event that an allegation is made against a member of the Connect-ED Learning team. It aims to minimise risk to students, support the individual who is the subject of the allegation, and maintain robust safeguarding standards.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals working on behalf of Connect-ED Learning, including:

- Full-time and part-time employees.
- Independent freelance tutors and contractors.
- Volunteers and students on placement.
- Any agency or supply staff delivering services under our name.

It applies to allegations that indicate a person has:

1. Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
2. Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
3. Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
4. Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (including behaviour outside of the workplace/transferable risk).

Immediate Action on Receiving an Allegation

If a student, parent, colleague, or external agency makes an allegation against a staff member or tutor, the person receiving the report must **not** attempt to investigate the matter themselves.

Step 1: Secure Immediate Safety

- Ensure the immediate safety of the child/children involved.
- If emergency medical attention is needed, call emergency services immediately.

Step 2: Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Report the allegation immediately to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**.
- If the allegation is against the DSL, it must be reported directly to the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Step 3: Record the Details

- Write down a factual, objective record of what was said, seen, or heard.
- Include dates, times, and names of anyone present. Use the child's precise words where possible. Do not cross-examine the child or ask leading questions.

Procedure for the DSL / Senior Management

Upon receiving an allegation, the DSL will immediately review the information and determine the appropriate pathway in accordance with local safeguarding partnership guidelines.

Potential Pathways and Outcomes

Following consultation with the LADO, the case will typically follow one of three pathways:

1. **A Police / Criminal Investigation:** Connect-ED Learning will pause any internal processes and fully cooperate with law enforcement.
2. **Children's Social Care Assessment:** To determine if the child is in need of protection or support.
3. **Internal Disciplinary Procedure:** If external agencies determine a criminal threshold is not met, Connect-ED Learning will conduct its own internal investigation to determine suitability of employment.

The Role of the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)

- If the allegation meets the criteria for potential harm, the DSL **must** contact the relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within **24 hours** of the allegation being made.
- No internal investigation, interviewing of witnesses, or informing of the accused staff member should take place until the LADO has been consulted. The LADO will coordinate with the police and children's social care if a criminal investigation is required.

Definitions of Case Outcomes

The LADO guidelines define case outcomes as follows:

- **Substantiated:** There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.
- **Malicious:** There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and clear intent to cause deliberate harm or deception.
- **False:** There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation, but no intent to deceive.
- **Unsubstantiated:** There is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation.
- **Unfounded:** There is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

Suspension and Support

Suspension

- Suspension is **not** an automatic response or an assumption of guilt. It is a neutral act taken to protect both the students and the staff member during an active investigation.
- The decision to suspend a tutor or staff member will be made by senior management in consultation with the LADO.
- If the individual is an independent contractor/freelance tutor, their service agreement may be temporarily paused pending the outcome of the investigation.

Support for the Accused Individual

- Connect-ED Learning recognises that an allegation can cause immense stress and anxiety.
- The accused staff member will be appointed a dedicated point of contact within the organisation who is entirely separate from the investigation team to provide regular updates on the progress of the case.
- They will be advised to contact their professional union or legal representative for independent support.

Confidentially and False Allegations

- **Confidentiality:** Every effort will be made to maintain strict confidentiality while an investigation is underway. The identities of the child, their family, and the accused staff member will not be published or shared beyond those who strictly need to know.
- **False/Malicious Allegations:** If an allegation is proven to be deliberately malicious or false, Connect-ED Learning will work closely with the student's family, school, or EOTAS coordinator to determine appropriate support or disciplinary consequences for the individual who made the false claim.

Recording and Referrals to Professional Bodies (DBS / TRA)

- **Record Keeping:** A comprehensive summary of the allegation, how it was followed up, and the final outcome will be kept on the staff member's confidential personnel file (even if the allegation is unsubstantiated). This ensures accurate history if further concerns arise in the future.
- **DBS / TRA Referrals:** If an allegation against a tutor or staff member is **substantiated**, and they are dismissed or resign before a disciplinary process concludes, Connect-EDlearning has a legal duty to make a referral to the **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)** and, where applicable, the **Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)**, if it is believed the individual poses a risk of harm to children.

Key Contacts

Role	Name	Contact Details
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Hannah Clark	hannah@connect-edlearning.co.uk
Lancashire LADO	LADO	LADO.Admin@lancashire.gov.uk 01772 536 694

Note: Because Connect-ED Learning operates across tutoring and EOTAS provisions that may span multiple geographic regions, the DSL will contact the LADO specific to the local authority where the alleged incident took place, or where the child resides.

Written November 2025

Reviewed Annually

Next Review: November 2026