

Gorringe Park Primary School



Believe, Achieve, Succeed

Our vision is
To inspire our children to achieve in a safe, fun environment so that they can take
their next steps in life with confidence.

Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Staff (LB Merton Guidance)

Policy Review

Review Date: February 2025
Next Review Date: February 2026

Children, Schools and Families Department

Local Guidance on the Management of Allegations of abuse made against Staff

Purpose:

This document is intended to give detailed, local information on the process which must be followed in Merton, when there is an allegation of abuse against teaching or other school based staff, including volunteers.

It is supplementary to the guidance and procedure contained in the publications listed below.

A flowchart of the process and key decision points is attached at **appendix 1**.

Action:

To be taken following an allegation of abuse by a pupil or their parent/guardian or another person.

On receipt by Headteacher of an allegation:

1. Headteacher to contact the **Designated Child Protection Officer**, Head of Education (x4060) immediately.
2. Discussion about whether matter can be dealt with in the school as a complaint; whether the matter is unfounded and no further action necessary; whether Head of Education will refer to police as criminal matter and/or refer to Children's Social Care.
3. If referral to Children's Social Care and possible strategy meeting under London Child Protection Procedures required, Head of Education will discuss with **Children's Safeguards Manager** to arrive at a joint decision regarding need or otherwise for a Strategy Meeting.
4. If Head of Education is not available or contactable within half a working day, Headteacher will make direct contact with the **Children's Safeguards Manager** (x3633).
5. If neither of above available within half a working day, contact will be made directly with the **Duty Manager** in the **Access and Assessment Team**, Children's Social Care (x4354).
6. The **Duty Manager** will make arrangements within Children's Social Care for a Senior person to contact the referrer in order to obtain full details, and to make a decision about action to be taken.

7. When the **Head of Education** is unavailable within the half day timescale, Children's Social Care will consult with her and inform her of any action taken, at the earliest opportunity.
8. If an allegation is made directly to a member of the Governing Body of the school, the information should immediately be discussed with the Headteacher, who will follow the process, as above.
9. In the event that the allegation is against the Headteacher, the person receiving the allegation must immediately contact the Chairperson of the Governing Body, who, in place of the Headteacher, will follow the procedure set out above.

Relevant Guidance:

Guidance on the management of allegations against school staff is available in a number of DfES Publications, all of which are available on the Teachernet website. These include:

"Safeguarding Children in Education" Ref DfES/0027/2004 Provides an overview of the duties and responsibilities of LEA's, School Governing Bodies and Schools with regard to the Safeguarding of Children.

"Safeguarding Children in Education: Dealing With Allegations of Abuse Against Teachers and Other Staff" Ref DfES/2044/2005. Complementary to the above and provides detailed guidance on the management of allegations.

"Definitions and Thresholds for Managing Allegations against Education Staff": The National Network of Investigation and Referral Support Co-ordinators. Provides some useful examples of actions which may reasonably be considered to be abusive.

Additional guidance:

"Physical Intervention In the Management Of Young People: Policy and Guidelines for Merton's Local Authority Staff" This is authored by Merton CS&F and provides detailed information about the law and Merton policy regarding restraint of children and young persons.

"London Child Protection Procedures" Provides detailed information about the child protection procedures, including **strategy meetings**, to be followed in the management of allegations against teaching and other staff in schools. **Available on LBM Intranet**

Appendix 1

PROCEDURES FOR MANAGING ALLEGATIONS / CONCERNS AGAINST EDUCATION STAFF



