



**Managing Allegations against Adults who work  
with children -  
Local Authority Designated Officer Annual  
Report 2021-2022.**  
Children's Safeguarding & Review Service.

**Report to:** Children's Leadership Team, Children and Education Management Team, Manchester Safeguarding Partnership (MSP)

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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of the annual report is to provide Manchester Safeguarding Partnership with an overview and analysis of the management of allegations against adults who work with children in a paid or voluntary capacity in Manchester, for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. This includes how effective the safeguarding partnership is discharging its statutory responsibilities.

The report considers the learning and development over the last twelve months and sets the priorities for 2022-2023 based on the analysis of activity. It also builds on previous annual reports and North West comparative intelligence.

## 2. Keeping Children Safe

### 2.1 The Role of Local Authority LADO

The role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in Manchester is responsible for ensuring itself and its partners comply with their statutory obligations as outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children<sup>1</sup> in relation to the management of allegations against adults working in a paid or voluntary capacity. These procedures are in line with the DfE Guidance - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021. In Manchester, the term LADO is widely known and used by partner agencies who clearly identify the role as set out in the above legislation and procedures.

The Children Act 2004, Section 11 placed a duty upon a range of organisations and individuals to ensure that their functions and any services that they contract out to others have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This also includes the voluntary and community sectors as well as private companies who employ staff who work directly with children and those engaged as foster carers for both the local authority and private agencies.

Children are central to the role of the LADO and in Manchester we ensure all allegations we receive against adults who work with children are not dealt with in isolation. The welfare of children remains paramount, and any corresponding actions required to safeguard children are shared, where appropriate, with partner agencies and accurate records of actions kept.

### 2.2 Managing Allegations

Statutory guidance makes clear that organisations and agencies must have clear policies for dealing with allegations against adults working with children in positions of trust. Furthermore, such policies should make clear the difference between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice and a complaint. An allegation relates to adults who work with children in a paid or voluntary capacity who have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;

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<sup>1</sup>Working Together to Safeguard Children A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children 2018

- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Managing allegations involves those working within regulated settings. Regulated activity is defined as:

- 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
- Registered childminding
- Foster Care

The introduction of the 4<sup>th</sup> criteria in relation to “suitability to work with Children” (Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020) is now well embedded in LADO processes. The suitability criteria cover all people working in regulated activity. This criteria considers situations whereby a person’s behaviour outside or inside the workplace may suggest a transferrable risk. The fourth additional criteria of suitability will apply to situations as follows:

- Mental health
- Criminal behaviours outside of work
- Domestic abuse
- Offences against adults
- Substance misuse.

*Example:*

*“two colleagues who work with children have an altercation outside work during a social event and 1 colleague is physically injured by the other, the referral to LADO met consideration of the 4<sup>th</sup> suitability criteria.”*

In managing allegations, we consider the allegations, actions required to safeguard children and the welfare of the subject of the LADO investigations.

In concluding LADO investigations, we ensure employees are aware of their duties set out by DfE to make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) where they have removed a person from their work due to them posing a risk to children, as set out in Working Together 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021. The duty to refer is clearly discussed in the meetings and recorded in the minutes of the meeting. This information is clearly discussed also as part of any multi-agency training to ensure that organisations and partners are aware of this responsibility at the conclusion of an allegation that they need to refer to the DBS.

### 2.3 Profile of Service

The LADO Service sits within the Children’s Safeguarding & Review Service (previously known as the Safeguarding Improvement Service) and is responsible for ensuring that there are effective and timely responses to allegations against adults who work with children. The LADOs also provide advice and guidance

to employers on policies and safer working practice that enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibilities and oversee the allegation management process.

There are 1.4 permanent full time equivalent staff in the Service, which consists of 1 full time member of staff and 0.4 member of staff. The LADOs in post are permanent members of staff for Manchester City Council and have both been in the role for 4.5 years and 13 years. This year we have added an additional 0.2 full time equivalent resource to the Service to support the increase in demand. This member of staff has previously been a LADO in another Local Authority and is a permanent member of staff in Manchester.

All 3 LADOs hold a Social Work qualification, and two are registered with Social Work England. They are sufficiently qualified and experienced to fulfil their role as set out in Working Together 2018 and are skilled in managing allegations. Following changes to statutory guidance, there is a requirement for new appointments to LADO to be qualified social workers, Manchester has always held the position that this ensures the right quality and expertise required to deliver the service.

The service receives business support equivalent to 1 full time member of staff. This support is vital to the effectiveness of service delivery. They support the administration of referrals, allegation meetings, maintain the data base and respond to other general enquiries such as freedom of information requests and other data information requests.

LADOs have been managed by the Service Lead for Children's Safeguarding up to January 2022 when resource was moved within the service to provide a part-time Safeguarding Manager to provide additional capacity to support the continued development of the service. The LADOs receive monthly formal supervision and informal supervision, support and development, which includes regular Team Meetings.

The full time LADO is actively involved in the Northwest Regional LADO forum. This forum provides an opportunity for peer support, sharing practice and key performance data, considering new developments and the review and development of regional policies and procedures. This group also acts to provide a link into the national group and DfE.

#### 2.4 The key roles and responsibilities of the LADO

In Manchester, the key roles and responsibilities for the LADOs are to:

- Provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations
- Liaise with the police, children's social care, other local authorities, and relevant agencies
- Manage the allegation process, including chairing the allegation meetings and monitor the progress of the allegation to ensure that it is dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.
- Participate in the Manchester Safeguarding Partnership Learning and Development programme.
- Training and development
- Strategic development role in providing analysis, identifying patterns and themes to support single agency strengthening of their organisations in delivering services that are safe.

The LADOs also play a role in responding to Subject Access Requests (SARs), responding to requests from DBS for information about allegations and outcomes, Freedom of Information Requests and providing information about adults who have worked in Manchester in the past as part of historical abuse enquiries.

The work carried out by the LADOs is all recorded electronically. Enquiries are kept on an electronic file and referrals through to allegation meetings recorded on the Children's Services electronic system (Liquid Logic).

## 2.5 Complaints

There has been 1 complaint about services for managing allegations against adults who work with children in Manchester during the reporting period and this complaint was unfounded. This reflects the continued quality of the service provided. We are keen to learn from complaints and there is always learning to take away. For this complaint the learning was regarding how we share information about managers contact details when complaints are being made. We now ensure that we give the details of MCC complaints department and the manager of the person who the complainant is making a complaint about.

## 3. **Overview of enquiries and referrals data - 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022**

There were 708 contacts this year. This is a significant increase (42%) from 497 contacts made to the LADOs between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. All contacts are assessed by the LADO to either be an enquiry or a referral. All contacts are received through telephone calls, emails or written referrals into the service and responded to by a LADO on the same day as contact is made - this will always involve a telephone call/email to the person making the enquiry/referral. The impact of this is that the LADOs have spent an increased amount of time responding to contacts that generally always involved a minimum of a telephone call and often reading information sent through and recording the outcome. In order to maintain a responsive service to safeguard children, the decision was made to move additional resource on a temporary basis. This has been effective in ensuring the quality of the service. We will be reviewing the needs over the next 6 months and if the demand is maintained, how we manage this longer term.

We know that a significant increase this year is from schools, and this is likely to have been a result of the return to all children being face to face in schools. From the agencies referring in we can also assume that the increased face to face contact with Children in all areas of Regulated Activity has had an impact on the increased contacts. Late 2019 we introduced a more effective recording system for reporting all contacts and while we recorded 590 contacts in 2019-2020 and saw a 12% drop in 2020-2021, it is difficult this year to understand whether the current demand will be sustained in 2022/3.

While we know that some of the increase can be attributed to return of face to face we also know that there has been evidence (NSPCC, NCA and UK's Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) that there was an increase in all online activity during lockdown, however the NSPCC's lead for Child Safety online described lockdown as the "perfect storm" for online abuse of children. Both the NCA and the UK's Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre stated that the full extent of this abuse would not be known until children returned to school and were able to speak to a trusted adult. Whilst the experience of the LADOs in Manchester would support this hypothesis, how we record our data would not provide the detailed analysis to confirm this. The other factor that needs considering is that the interrogation and investigation into people, and their devices, who are accessing this abuse. Therefore, these crimes are coming to the LADO currently.

### 3.1 Enquiries

An Enquiry is assessed as only requiring advice, guidance or information and does not meet the threshold for a referral. Enquiries come into the service in a variety of ways; email requests for advice directly to the LADO, emails sent via the generic Children’s Safeguarding & Review Service email that is directly forwarded to the duty LADO and through telephone calls via the Children Safeguarding & Review Services. The data shows that 67.5% of contacts are dealt with as enquiries. The implication of this is that significant LADO resource is used redirecting employees to activity not requiring LADO over-sight. The intention is that training will give people the confidence to see when issues are a matter to be investigated by the employer and when a referral is required to the LADO. Manchester is not significantly different to the regional comparison, but there are examples where clear internal processes are not used or followed prior to contacting the LADO. Whilst this is a positive reflection on the service, it creates an increasing pressure that needs to be addressed.

*Table 1: Total number of enquiries against adults who work with children over the past 3 years:*

Total allegation enquiries by year	2019/20	2020/21	2021/2022
		351	326

As discussed above there are several reasons for the increase in enquires this year and a further point to acknowledge is that we have been much more consistent over the last 2 years in delivering LADO training to organisations and this rise in awareness could be reflected in the increase of enquiries. We also know that regulatory bodies (Ofsted/CQC) insist that the information is shared with the LADO for advice and guidance.

*Table 2: Total number of enquiries & % against adults who work with children over the past 12 months:*

Sector of Enquiries	2020/2021		2021/2022
Health	44	(13%)	57 (12%)
Children’s Social Care	76	(23%)	111 (23%)
Education	113	(35%)	157 (33%)
Early Years	16	(5%)	49 (10%)
Faith Groups	8	(2%)	14 (3%)
Police	12	(4%)	6 (1%)
Transport	10	(3%)	28 (6%)
Sport/Leisure	12	(4%)	19 (4%)
Voluntary	2	(1%)	7 (1%)
Sector not recorded	7	(2%)	8 (2%)
Youth Work	0	(0%)	8 (2%)
Other	26	(8%)	14 (3%)
Ofsted	0	(0%)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>326</b>		<b>478</b>

Table 2 highlights the key agencies whose contact with the LADO results in advice or guidance only and shows the consistency in the key agencies, health, Children’s Social Care & Education over the last two years making enquiries.

We have seen the biggest increase in the Youth Service, Transport and Early Years. Again, we know that we have targeted Youth Services to seek advice and guidance from LADO, so it is promising this year to see the increase and regarding Early Years we know that Ofsted expect a LADO discussion from Nurseries / Child Minders with the LADO. These discussions are often advice and guidance rather than resulting in a referral. We know that in 2020-2021 the numbers of children accessing childminders reduced in line with government guidance and this year with the restriction removed children have returned to childcare provisions.

As with previous years we continue to see employers seeking advice and guidance around the 4<sup>th</sup> criteria and the interpretation of behaviours. This often refers to behaviour in respect of conduct issues rather than behaviour that have or may have harmed a child. The complexity of adult behaviours both in their personal life and when working with children is often the reason for the enquiry and organisations / partners require support to navigate through these. Examples of this but not limited to are; being over friendly with children, having favourites with children in groups, taking photographs of children on mobile, how they interact with others outside work.

It is positive to see agencies continue to use the expertise of the LADO to consider whether it meets the threshold for investigation. These partnership conversations strengthen professional knowledge and skills in managing concerns when adults work with children. However, we plan to deliver targeted training with education and social care in 2022-2023 to ensure that employees have the knowledge and skills to consider what makes an allegation.

### 3.2 Referrals

A referral to the LADO where the referrer considers that an adult who works with children in a paid or voluntary capacity in Manchester has:

- *Behaved in a way that has harmed, 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*
- *Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.*

Table 3: Number of Referrals:

Year	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
<b>Total no. of allegation referrals</b>	218	171	230



The table above (Table 3) highlights the number of referrals over the last two years that shows the highest number of referrals this year in the three-year period. We continue to see an increase in the complexities of referrals. We have set out some examples of referrals into the service over the last twelve months.

*Example:*

*“Allegation of physical abuse, kidnapping and forced marriage. This was a health professional and allegation made by adult sister. Sister did not pursue complaint but there was evidence that supported allegations and concerns. Suitability criteria as no harm or crime against a child.”*

*“Education professional– Internet Protocol address used to view and distributed incident images of children (IIOC) came from an address that the education worker resided at. 2 people living at the address, 1 in regulated activity and both denied any involvement with IIOC and a shared devices in property. Suitability criteria met.”*

*Table 4: Source of Referrals:*

<b>Sector making the Referral</b>	<b>Total Referrals 2019/2020</b>	<b>Total Referral 2020/2021</b>	<b>Total Referral 2021/2022</b>
Early Years	5 (2%)	8 (4%)	5 (2%)
Education	53 (24%)	28 (16%)	51 (21%)
Faith Groups	2 (1%)	2 (1%)	6 (3%)
Health	4 (2%)	6 (3%)	11 (5%)
Sport/Leisure	5 (5%)	1 (1%)	4 (2%)
Police	26 (11%)	36 (21%)	24 (9%)
Children’s Social Care	92 (42%)	73 (43%)	116 (50%)
Transport	4 (2%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)
Voluntary Organisation	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Youth Work	1 (0%)	1 (1%)	1 (0.5%)
Ofsted	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	7 (3%)
Cafcass	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.5%)
Other	26 (11%)	15 (9%)	2 (1%)
	218	171	230

It is clear from Table 4 that the key agency whereby contacts progress to referral is from Children’s Social Care & Education. This is consistent with the key agencies making enquiries. When you are comparing table 4 and 5 you can see that the occupational sector is consistent with last year in occupations being referred in. This reassures us that while the police referring into LADO has dropped, this is likely to be because the responsible agency for the subject has already referred to LADO.

It is unsurprising that the highest referrals are from Children's Social Care and Education. The roles within these sectors are often foster carers, teachers, teaching assistants and the children’s Social Care workforce,

thereby having most contact, often unsupervised, with children. This is also consistent with Northwest data.

It is important to acknowledge that whilst we know that advice and guidance to determine whether criteria are met is well utilised by some agencies there is always further training required with smaller agencies who we do not see referring in to ensure that those organisations and services know when the LADO criteria is met for a referral.

*Table 5: Occupational sectors of adults referred to LADO.*

Sector of the Alleged Adult	Total Referral 2019/2020	Total Referral 2020/2021	Total Referral 2021/2022
Early Years	15 (7%)	10 (6%)	21 (9%)
Education	72 (33%)	54 (32%)	79 (34%)
Faith Groups	7 (3%)	7 (4%)	5 (2%)
Health	15 (7%)	20 (12%)	27 (12%)
Sport/Leisure	10 (5%)	4 (2%)	5 (2%)
Police	2 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Social Care	59 (27%)	63 (37%)	80 (35%)
Transport	10 (4%)	0 (0%)	5 (2%)
Voluntary Organisation	1 (1%)	1 (0%)	3 (1%)
Youth Work	3 (2%)	3 (2%)	4 (2%)
Ofsted	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Cafcass	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other / not record	24 (11%)	9 (5%)	1 (0.5%)
	218	171	230

*Table 6: Nature of harm by sector*

Sector of Alleged Adult	Nature of harm				Total
	Physical	Sexual	Neglect	Unsuitable behaviour/risk	
Early Years	9	3	0	9	21
Education	33	30	1	15	79
Faith Groups	2	3	0	0	5
Health	14	5	1	7	27
Sport/Leisure	0	3	0	2	5
Police	0	0	0	0	0
Youth Work	0	4	0	0	4
Social Care	35	8	0	37	80
Transport	1	3	0	1	5
Voluntary	1	2	0	0	3
Ofsted	0	0	0	0	0
CAFCASS	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	1	0	0	1

<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>230</b>
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The highest category of harm continues to be that of physical abuse. This year 41% of all referrals made related to physical abuse, which is consistent with the previous year of 39%. The high rate of physical abuse allegations relates to those within the Social Care and Education sectors.

This year we see a decrease in the category of harm being sexual abuse from 35% to 28% of all referrals, again with the highest rate of allegations within education. However, while the percentage is lower overall, we know that educationally the percentage is higher than last year. This is consistent with research discussed above around online sexual abuse.

The most significant increase this year relates to allegations against adults who may pose a risk to children; linked to unsuitable behaviours, which has increase from 19% last year to 31% this year. We would expect to see this increase given that we now have an additional criterion that was introduced at the beginning of 2021 for all sectors of the children’s workforce. We know the introduction of the 4<sup>th</sup> criteria has now provided an additional criterion that has often better reflected the allegations than previously.

*Example:*

*“PE teacher that pupils said he was looking at me in the PE and made me feel uncomfortable – this may have been previously sexual rather than suitability”*

As in previous years we continue to see the referral rate from Youth Services being generally low. We had said last year that it is reasonable to conclude that the number of allegations should be higher, and this is an area of work around multi agency training for key partners where referrals are lower than would be expected. We have this year invested time in meeting with strategic leads for Youth Services to explore this and ensure that managing allegations made against professionals is part of the ongoing training available to managers in Youth Services. The impact of this has been a slight increase in this area, which is positive and demonstrates the importance of training and development across all sectors of the children’s workforce.

#### **4. Managing Allegations: Allegation Meetings & Outcomes**

The LADOs take a multi-agency approach at the first point of contact ensuring the management of the allegations have strong partnership engagement and coordinate the three strands of investigation without compromise to the safeguarding of children, or the duty of care to the alleged perpetrator. The lines of communication with key partners are good and results in decisions being made as to the response to a referral being timely and effective.

It is important to note that the LADO will ensure that all safeguarding measures are in place prior to the allegation management meeting and throughout the allegation meetings thereafter. The safeguarding of the children forms part of the agenda in considering that professionals have all taken appropriate steps to safeguard children.

##### **4.1 Allegation Meetings**

*Table 7: Initial Meeting taken place between 1st April 2020- 31st March 2021*

<b>Year</b>	<b>2019/2020</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>
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<b>No of initial Meetings taken place</b>	69	83	101
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We have seen a continued increase in meetings in the last twelve months, which is in line with the increase in referrals. The percentage of meetings from referrals is only a slight decrease this year. Last year the conversation rate from referral to meeting was 48% and this year 44%. In 2019-2020 32% of referrals resulted in a meeting. The reason for the increase in meetings over the last two years is a result of improving the management of referrals given the complexities and ensuring that we bring key partners together to make multi-agency decisions through the allegations meeting.

From the 101 meetings held 58% of allegation meetings required at least one further meeting, this is consistent with last year (51%) and previous years, and is often a result of ongoing police investigation.

*Table 8: Sector where alleged perpetrator is employed that had an Allegation Meeting.*

<b>Sector where alleged perpetrator is employed</b>	<b>Total Meetings 2019/2020</b>	<b>Total Meetings 2020/2021</b>	<b>Total Meetings 2021/2022</b>
Early Years	8	4	8
Education	25	24	36
Faith Groups	4	0	0
Health	7	9	12
Sport/Leisure	5	3	2
Other	0	5	5
Social Care	17	37	34
Transport	2	0	1
Youth Groups	0	1	3
Police	1	0	0
<b>Total meetings</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>101</b>

Table 8 demonstrates that, as with last year's statistics, a significant amount of the LADOs workload from enquiry/referral through to meetings remains focused on the social care and education sector with 69% of all meetings taking place in 2021-2022.

The LADO service offered bespoke LADO training again to the Fostering Service this year and the plan is to continue this regularly for interface with the service as we know several the referrals marked Social Care would include Foster Carers. It is planned that next year we will separate out allegations against Foster Carers to capture these referrals and ensure we continue to receive them appropriately and provide a guide for future training needs.

#### 4.2 Outcomes of Investigations

This section discusses the outcomes of the investigations concluded in 2021-2022. LADO meetings provide an Outcome at the final meeting. These outcomes are provided in "Keeping Children Safe in Education".

Table 9: Outcomes of Investigations for alleged adult.

Outcome	Meaning (Keeping Children Safe in Education)	Number
Substantiated	<i>There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.</i>	36
Unsubstantiated	<i>There is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation</i>	45
Unfounded	<i>To reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation/s being made.</i>	21
False	<i>There is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.</i>	1
Total		<b>103</b>

The outcome will be judged on the “balance of probabilities” threshold rather than the higher “beyond reasonable doubt” threshold. The Unsubstantiated outcome does not mean that the allegation is untrue and the incident did not happen, it means there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation, hence this is the significantly higher outcome as many allegations will be one person’s word against another.

This year we have seen a decrease in the number of substantiated outcomes from 47% last year to 35% this year. In writing this report we have compared the last three years and this year are more in line with 2019-2020 when 29% of Allegation meetings / investigations concluded as substantiated. Generally, the Northwest data in this measure varies between 30%-40%, which indicates that we are consistent with other Northwest authorities.

There are 12 investigations that remain ongoing at the time of writing this report within this reporting year.

## 5. Service Reflection

The past twelve months have enabled the LADOs to work differently to deliver this service and the below are the reflections and learning.

### 5.1 What went well

**Agile Working** - The service continued to adopt an agile working approach, which has allowed all LADO meetings to take place virtually using video conferencing facilities (Microsoft Teams). This has allowed both the LADOs and partners to work remotely. This has allowed for improved attendance across LADO Meetings and better flexibility for participants in arranging and participating in meetings.

**Feedback from partners** – This year we asked all partners for feedback following LADO Meetings, 81 partners responded throughout the year and general feedback was extremely positive about when asked how satisfied they were of the meeting, the general score overall was 4.8 out of 5. Generally, everyone felt that virtual meetings were as effective and that when asked for any areas for improvement it was generally a reflection of how well they had been organised and carried out and a recommendation to continue ‘as is’. The breakdown of agencies completing the feedback:

Social Care	29
Education	24
Police	6
Other	13
Health	4
Sport	3
Early Years	2

**Partnerships engagement** – Throughout the year we have been able to engage with Education and Youth Service to focus on how we ensure that their roles and responsibilities and the role of the LADO is fully understood in keeping children safe. We have been able to deliver 3 virtual sessions over the 12 months to a range of multiagency partners, football safeguarding, nurses, head teachers through MSP, on average with 10 per session. The training provides partners with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of managing allegations for staff within the children’s workforce.

**Managing Allegation Meetings** – Last year we said we were worried about the quality of the minutes, and they had become very descriptive of what people said and when. We have made an improvement on this over the last twelve months. This includes organising and recording the meetings. Dedicated LADO support has provided an improved coordination to the meetings and improved recordings. We have dipped sampled the quality of the minutes in March 2022 and can evidence that minutes are thorough, concise in recording discussions and outcomes.

## 5.2 What we are worried about.

**Managing Enquiries** – We continue to find the demand of enquiries on LADO resource challenging. Over the last twelve months we have continued to analyse the data in respect of how many enquiries do not result in a referral and whilst we want to continue to promote the conversational approach to professionals ringing / contacting for enquiries as we know this is an important and invaluable part of the role, the demand is significant on the LADO resource. We need to work with partners to ensure that when they ring for advice and guidance some of their own mechanisms for advice and guidance is considered prior to ringing the LADO. For example, when a Head Teacher rings for Advice and Guidance that they have first considered why they require advice and guidance and have they sought advice and guidance within education prior to ringing the LADO. Addressing this worry we have identified that throughout 2022-2023 we need to work with MSP to identify a way in supporting the LADO service in improving our joint performance around managing contacts.

## 6. Service Achievements 2021-2022

The service has several achievements this year set against the priorities. We said we wanted to:

- Broaden the training offer

### What we did & the impact:

We have delivered training virtually across MSP over the last 12 months alongside continued training to Social Workers and Fostering. We have invested in making links with locality Social Work teams to raise awareness of the role of the LADO and expectations of people who work with children.

- **Develop our Quality Assurance Framework**

#### What we did & the impact:

This is an area that we have significantly improved in over the last twelve months – we have improved our performance data and now better understand what it is telling us to help shape the service. There are monthly performance reports and performance meetings.

We have dip sampled quality of recording and minutes to ensure that the outcomes and impact of the service is good. This was recognised by OFSTED in April 2022 who considered the work of the LADO over the period of this reporting and recognised that we delivered a good and effective service. We have continued to seek partnership feedback too, which again assures us that the service we are delivering is improving outcomes for children.

- **to develop SMARTER ways of managing enquiries and referrals.**

#### What we did & the impact:

We better understand the data that shapes enquiries and the resource implications. We have considered different approaches to managing the enquiries, which has involved ensuring that we check some basic details at the first point of contact (do they work in Manchester, do they work with children). We know this is an area for further development and will continue to be a key priority area for 2022-2023.

## 7. KEY PRIORITIES 2022 - 2023

### Priority 1. To provide a timely and effective service to employers.

- We will work with agencies to ensure that they use their internal resource effectively before sending enquiries or referrals to the LADO service. This will ensure that LADOs are able to continue to focus on the enquiries and referrals which have been through this process in a timely way.
- We will work with employees to improve how we feedback to children and alleged perpetrators and make this a focus at each final LADO Meeting.
- We will ensure that we have a focus in each meeting on the duty of care to children and their families and the alleged perpetrators.

### Priority 2. Improve participation from partners to focus on improving outcomes for children.

- We will continue to offer training to our partner agencies to ensure they understand LADO thresholds and the confidence to deal with internal allegations where appropriate. We will consider the groups that continue to be low refers into the service. This includes understanding better with agencies why referrals are high but why referrals are not progressed to allegation meetings, for example faith groups and transport.
- We will work with PRI to improve the data available to us to understand, improve practice and support the training offer to partner agencies.
- We will work in partnership with MSP to understand what the outcomes of the Section 11 report to identify organisations that require additional support from the LADO around their overall rating of safe recruitment and safeguarding with specific reference to employees.

### Priority 3. To improve quality assurance to be more focused on learning and development.

- We will continue to develop the monthly Performance Report to understand the performance of the LADO service, including strengths and areas for development
- We will use the North West Audit tool to develop an effective audit process and ask for moderation by another NW authority.
- We will develop a more learning environment through the QA process linked to regular thematic audit and observation of practice.



## 8. References

**Greater Manchester - Managing Allegations of Abuse Made Against Adults Who Work with Children and Young People – Policy, Procedure and Guidance**

[http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p\\_man\\_allegations.html](http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_man_allegations.html)

**Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018**

**Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020**

**Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021**

**Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People.**

<http://www.manchesterscb.org.uk/docs/Guidance%20for%20Safer%20Working09%281%29.pdf>

**Regulated activity in relation to children: scope**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/522656/Regulated Activity in relation to Children.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/522656/Regulated_Activity_in_relation_to_Children.pdf)