



Managing Allegations against Adults who work with children - Local Authority Designated Officer Annual Report 2022-2023. 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 written annual report is produced by Manchester City Council Children's Service to provide assurance of the effectiveness of the role of the Local Authority LADO in its duty to provide advice, guidance and management and oversight of allegations of people who work with children. The annual report provides 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 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. This includes how effective the safeguarding partnership is in discharging its statutory responsibilities.

The report considers the learning and development over the last twelve months and sets the priorities for 2023-2024 based on the analysis of activity. It also builds on previous annual reports and Northwest 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 children¹ 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 2022. 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.

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

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 employed as foster carers for both the local authority and private agencies.

The welfare of children remains paramount when investigating allegations against a person in a position of trust and part of the LADO role is to ensure that appropriate action has been taken to safeguard and support children. All corresponding actions required to safeguard children are shared, where appropriate, with partner agencies and accurate records of actions kept.

Employers have a duty of care to their employees and the LADO ensures that the employee is for filling their duty throughout the LADO process, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.

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 as part of the enquires and investigations.
- 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.
- Provide bespoke training and development to the children's workforce on the role and responsibility of employees in managing allegations against people and the role of the LADO.
- Strategic development role in providing analysis, identifying patterns and themes to support single agency strengthening of their organisations in delivering services that are safe.
- To actively participate in the quality assurance function of the effectiveness of the LADO.

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 (FOI) requests and providing information about adults who have worked in Manchester in the past as part of historical abuse enquiries. Most recently we have also seen several enquiries related to commissioning checks for private companies working with children, for example residential homes and alternative educational provisions this is following the national safeguarding practice review into safeguarding children with disabilities and complex needs in residential settings.

The work carried out by the LADOs is all recorded electronically. Enquiries are kept securely on an electronic file and referrals through to allegation meetings recorded on the Children's Services electronic system (Liquid Logic), which both have restrict access to only those working within the LADO service.

2.2 Managing Allegations

Statutory guidance makes clear to organisations and agencies that they 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;
- 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, youth services and other childcare premises.
- Relevant personal and health care.
- Registered childminding.
- Foster Care, including connected carers.
- Coaching and leisure activities when affiliated to a regulated body.

In responding to the work coming into the service, we always consider;

- the actions required to safeguard children
- the welfare of the subject of the LADO investigations and
- provide an outcome of substantiated, unsubstituted, unfounded, malicious and false.

There are some important aspects of the LADO role in concluding investigations that ensures employers are aware of their duties set out by DfE, to make referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) when they have dismissed an employee due to them posing a risk to children, as set out in Working Together 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022. The duty to refer is clearly discussed in the meetings and recorded in the minutes. This information is also discussed as part of any multi-agency training to ensure that organisations and partners are aware of their responsibility at the conclusion of an allegation. LADOs also ensure that notification has been given to relevant professional bodies such as Social Work England and the Teaching Regulation Agency.

2.3 Profile of Service

The LADO Service is independent of operational service delivery to children and sits within the Children’s Safeguarding & Review 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.

The service is fortunate to have a very stable staff team with 1.4 permanent full time equivalent staff in the Service, consisting of 1 full time LADO and a 0.4 LADO. Last year we added an additional 0.5 LADO resource from the wider children’s review service to support the increase in demand. This member of staff is a permanent Safeguarding & Quality Assurance Officer who has previously been a LADO in another Local Authority. All 3 LADOs hold a Social Work qualification. They are appropriately qualified and experienced to fulfil their role as set out in Working Together 2018 and are skilled in managing allegations.

The service receives business support equivalent of 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 are managed by a part-time Safeguarding Manager; this is a relatively new arrangement to provide additional capacity to support the demand and 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 Complaints

There was a single complaint during 2022/2023. This complaint related to professional conduct and went from a Stage 1 to Stage 2 complaint. The outcome was Not Upheld. This low number and outcome reflects the continued quality of the service provided in a sensitive area of work.

3. **Overview of enquiries and referrals data 2022-2023**

During this year we received 827 contacts into the service. This is a significant increase (14%) from the 708 contacts in 2021/2022. All contacts are initially assessed by the LADO to either be an enquiry or a referral. Generally, all enquires to the LADO are through telephone calls and emails. Referrals are always written referrals on the MSP referral form. All enquiries and referrals are responded to by a LADO on the same day which will always involve a telephone call/email to the person making the enquiry/referral.

3.1 Enquiries

An enquiry is assessed as those contacts that only require advice and guidance and does not meet the threshold for a referral. There has been an increase in overall enquiries over the last two years this in part is linked to improved recording of enquiries and as the data suggests below in Table 2 there is an increase from education services and enquiries from GMP. Referrals from GMP relate to other professionals who potentially work with children who have become known to GMP, and they are seeking advice and guidance around whether it is a LADO referral. These enquiries after initial screening evidence that, the person is working with adults, working in another Local Authority or initially they look like LADO threshold but when further information is obtained it is not LADO. For example, police referred as incident of downloading indecent images and the IP address linked to a nursery building but became clear that the building hosted other companies and they were sharing internet access, and it was not related to any person working in the nursery. Further intelligence into this data also tells us that from all GMP referrals a third relate to adults who work in education. This shows that staff in education are the sector with the highest demand from the service for general advice and guidance that does not meet the LADO threshold in managing staff conduct in or outside of the education setting.

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

Total allegation enquiries by year	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
	326	478	573

Table 1 shows the increased number of enquiries this year. There were 573 enquiries, an increase of 95. We expected a continued increase in the number of enquiries this year as we have focused on ensuring that we evidence the key role and demands of the LADOs in providing advice and guidance to ensure that employees make safe decisions regarding managing concerns or allegations against people who work with children.

Table 2: Total number of enquiries into the LADO over the past 12 months:

Sector of Enquiries	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Health	44 (13%)	57 (12%)	45 (8%)
Children's Social Care	76 (23%)	111 (23%)	167 (29%)
Education	113 (35%)	157 (33%)	210 (37%)
Early Years	16 (5%)	49 (10%)	27 (5%)
Faith Groups	8 (2%)	14 (3%)	3 (0.4%)
GM Police	12 (4%)	6 (1%)	63 (11%)
Transport	10 (3%)	28 (6%)	7 (1%)
Sport/Leisure	12 (4%)	19 (4%)	4 (0.5%)
Voluntary	2 (1%)	7 (1%)	4 (0.5%)
Sector not recorded	7 (2%)	8 (2%)	2 (0.3%)
Youth Work	0 (0%)	8 (2%)	2 (0.3%)
Other	26 (8%)	14 (3%)	26 (4.5%)
Ofsted	0 (0%)	0	13 (2%)
Total	326	478	573

Table 2 highlights the agencies making up 66% of all enquiries are education and children's social care, and with the enquiries from the police that also relate to both agencies this increases the percentage to 72%.

The increase in the police referrals is linked to a reorganisation of officers within Children's Social Care offices and the fact there are Sergeants with an improved knowledge of LADO who will be advising officers to make enquiries. Whilst this is positive there is the impact that a significant number of enquiries do not meet the LADO criteria and as a result, we continue to consider how best to support partner agencies to manage conduct concerns around employee who work with children.

Advice and guidance are a key function of the role of the LADO and we can see from the performance data, which agencies contact the LADO most frequently for advice and guidance. It is not a surprise that Education settings and Children's Social Care feature most strongly, given the role and size of the workforce with access to children. This would be echoed across the region, although LADOs operate slightly differently in how and what they record.

Considering enquiries from Health, Early Years, Faith Groups, Transport, Sport, the voluntary sector and Youth work reduced in number. It is difficult to understand this, previously we have said that awareness needs to be raised within these organisations around allegation management and the role of the LADO to ensure agencies so they can seek advice and guidance from the LADO. We know that these agencies have attended training throughout the year, and we have linked into such organisations so this year we are more assured that the knowledge is within these service areas.

What we have identified in previous LADO annual reports is the aim to try and better manage the time allocated to responding to LADO enquires. LADO enquiries generally come in via telephone or on an email with very limited information and it is gathering the background information and general details which often takes up a significant amount of the time. What we have concluded is that having the background information and general details, including what specific advice and guidance they are looking for would assist in a more time effective way of managing advice and guidance.

3.2 Referrals

A referral to the LADO is 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	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Total no. of allegation referrals	171	230	254

The table above (Table 3) highlights the number of referrals over the last three years and shows a slight increase in referral numbers since last year. The 4th criteria is now well embedded and understood by professionals, but this adds to the complexities of referrals alongside a general increase in the complexity of situations around the use of technology. Examples of some referrals are:

“Concerns raised by a sporting regulatory body that a qualified teacher had been permanently barred from teaching by the Teaching Regulation body but continued to attempt to register sports clubs.

“Police arrest Adult for grooming girls and sexually exploiting them. Adult’s partner is professional working in Agency where they are able to access information about vulnerable Children through their work. Concerns raised by Police that Adult may be locating Children to groom by accessing the partner’s devices. Partner does not believe allegations made despite evidence presented by Police.

Table 4: Source of Referrals actioned by the LADO:

Sector making the Referral	Total Referral 2020/2021	Total Referral 2021/2022	Total Referral 2022/2023
Early Years	8 (4%)	5 (2%)	7 (2.5%)
Education	28 (16%)	51 (21%)	76 (30%)
Faith Groups	2 (1%)	6 (3%)	0
Health	6 (3%)	11 (5%)	6 (2%)
Sport/Leisure	1 (1%)	4 (2%)	8 (3%)
Police	36 (21%)	24 (9%)	42 (16.5%)
Children's Social Care	73 (43%)	116 (50%)	109 (43%)
Transport	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	2 (1%)
Voluntary Organisation	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0
Youth Work	1 (1%)	1 (0.5%)	2 (1%)
Ofsted	1 (1%)	7 (3%)	1 (0.5%)
Cafcass	0 (0%)	1 (0.5%)	0
Other	15 (9%)	2 (1%)	1 (0.5%)
Total	171	230	254

It is clear from Table 4 that the key agencies progressing to referral continue to be Children's Social Care & Education. This is consistent with the key agencies making enquiries. When you compare table 4 and 5, the occupational sector referred in is consistent with last year. While there was a dip in Police referrals in 2021/2022 the numbers have started to increase again which is reassuring.

It is predictable that Children's Social Care and Education are the highest referrers into LADO given they are one of the largest sectors working unsupervised with children. The roles within these sectors are often Foster Carers, Teachers, Teaching Assistants, early years and residential workers. This is reflected in the Northwest data, which consistently demonstrates this too.

Whilst we can see from the data that generally we are having a wide variety of referrals from agencies it is important to note that we have had an increase in referrals from Education, Sport/Leisure and Social Care and a dip in referrals from Health. As a result of this we will ensure that we continue to promote the role of the LADO in many forums and continue to provide regular training via MSP and request their scrutiny of the robustness of their arrangements.

Table 5: Occupational sectors of adults referred to LADO.

Sector of the Alleged Adult	Total Referral 2020/2021	Total Referral 2021/2022	Total Referral 2022/2023
Early Years	10 (6%)	21 (9%)	17 (7%)
Education	54 (32%)	79 (34%)	98 (38.5%)
Faith Groups	7 (4%)	5 (2%)	4 (1.5%)

Health	20 (12%)	27 (12%)	16 (6%)
Sport/Leisure	4 (2%)	5 (2%)	12 (5%)
Police	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)
Social Care	63 (37%)	80 (35%)	97 (38%)
Transport	0 (0%)	5 (2%)	5 (2%)
Voluntary Organisation	1 (0%)	3 (1%)	0 (0%)
Youth Work	3 (2%)	4 (2%)	4 (1.5%)
Ofsted	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Cafcass	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other / not record	9 (5%)	1 (0.5%)	0 (0%)
Total	171	230	254

Table 6: Nature of harm by sector

Sector of Alleged Adult	Nature of harm				
	Physical	Sexual	Neglect	Unsuitable behaviour/risk	Total
Early Years	9	3	0	9	21 (8%)
Education	33	30	1	15	79 (31%)
Faith Groups	2	3	0	0	5 (2%)
Health	14	5	1	7	27 (10.5%)
Sport/Leisure	0	3	0	2	5 (2%)
Police	0	0	0	0	0
Youth Work	0	4	0	0	4 (1.5%)
Social Care	35	8	0	37	80 (31%)
Transport	1	3	0	1	5 (2%)
Voluntary	1	2	0	0	3 (1%)
Ofsted	0	0	0	0	0
CAFCASS	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	1	0	0	1 (0.25%)
Total	95	62	2	71	230

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. The high rate of physical abuse allegations mainly relates to those within the Social Care and Education sectors. Given that professionals within both sectors spend a significant number of prolonged periods often unsupervised with children and young people often unsupervised in a care and control environment with children this would be a predictable statistic.

This year we see a slight decrease in the category of sexual abuse from 28% to 27% of all referrals, with the highest rate of allegations in Education evidencing some consistency over the last two years. This figure mostly reflects online sexual abuse, which has seen an increase within this category.

As in previous years we continue to see the referral rate from Youth Services being generally low. We had raised last year that it is reasonable to conclude that the number of allegations might be higher, and this is

an area of work in seeking assurance that the knowledge on how to manage concerns and allegations at the right level is understood and applied within the services. We have engaged Youth Justice and Youth Service leads in 22/23 for conversations in understanding referral rates and seeking assurance around knowledge and expertise within the services. Conversations concluded that the services had the knowledge around safeguarding and managing concerns and allegations against staff who work within their service. We assured that knowledge on the LADO is strong and referrals appropriate so while we accept that we can always raise awareness we are assured by the knowledge within the senior leadership.

4. Managing Allegations: Allegation Meetings & Outcomes

The LADOs take a multi-agency approach to managing allegations, ensuring the management of the allegations have a strong partnership engagement and coordination. The LADOs have a good knowledge base of the workforce for Children in Manchester, including their leadership and quality assurance structures to ensure the allegations process is timely and effective.

Parmount to the managing allegations process is ensuring all safeguarding measures for the child and the arrangements for the duty of care to the adult are in place. The safeguarding of children beyond the child making the allegation forms part of this.

4.1 Allegation Meetings

Table 7: All Meeting taken place between 1st April 2022- 31st March 2023

Year	2020/21	2021/22	2022/2023
No of initial Meetings taken place	83	101	150
No of review meetings taken place			216
Total Meetings			366

We have seen a continued increase in the number of initial meetings in the last twelve months, which is in line with the increase in referrals. The percentage of meetings from referrals has increased this year. Last year the conversion rate from referral to meeting was 44% and this year **60%** evidencing that 16% more of the referrals met the LADO threshold for a meeting this year in comparison to last year.

From the 150 allegation meetings held in 2022/2023, 57% required at least one further meeting (review meeting), this is consistent with last year (58%) and is often a result of complex issues and ongoing police investigations. This year we have started recorded the number of review meetings we hold in the year, and we can see from Table 7 a more detailed recording of how many review meetings have been held and the total number of meetings.

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

Sector where alleged perpetrator is employed	Initial Meetings 2020/2021	Initial Meetings 2021/2022	Initial Meetings 2022/2023
Early Years	4	8	7
Education	24	36	55
Faith Groups	0	0	3
Health	9	12	17
Sport/Leisure	3	2	7
Other	5	5	0
Social Care	37	34	54
Transport	0	1	3
Youth Groups	1	3	4
Police	0	0	0
Total meetings	83	101	150

Table 8 demonstrates that, as with last year's statistics and consistent with enquiries and referral data, a significant amount of the LADOs workload from enquiry/referral through to meetings remains focused on the Social Care and Education sector linked with 73% of all initial meetings taking place in 2022-2023.

4.2 Outcomes of Investigations

This section discusses the outcomes of the investigations concluded in 2022-2023. LADO meetings provide an outcome at the final meeting. These outcomes options are provided in "Keeping Children Safe in Education".

Table 9: Outcomes of Investigations for alleged adult.

Outcome	Meaning (Keeping Children Safe in Education)	2021-2022 Number	2022-2023 Number
Substantiated	<i>There is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation.</i>	36 (35%)	30 (26%)
Unsubstantiated	<i>There is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation</i>	45 (44%)	63 (56%)
Unfounded	<i>To reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation/s being made.</i>	21 (20%)	19 (17%)
Malicious	<i>Where there is clear evidence to prove there has been a deliberate act to deceive and the allegation is totally false.</i>	1 (1%)	1 (1%)
Total		103	113

The outcome will be judged on the Children Act "**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 35% last year to **26%** with an increase in unsubstantiated from 44% last year to 56%.

We have 13 LADO managing allegations investigations that remain open over 12 months, compared with 12 last year. All these investigations remain open because of ongoing criminal investigations that have yet to have a criminal trial. However, it is positive that the average managing allegations investigation in 2022-2023 took 5 months to conclude. We have not reported on this statistic previously and therefore unable to make a comparison. However, in next year's annual report we will include the timeliness of the conclusion of LADO management of allegation investigations to provide further insight to the timeliness and effectiveness of the LADO process.

4.3 Quality Assurance of managing allegations process

This year we have introduced an audit tool to quality assure the management of allegations process. We completed 8 audits, with 63% being graded as good and 37% being graded as requires improvement to be good. The key findings from the audits were that:

- Decisions making was robust and based on evidence
- LADOs always considered the safeguarding and support for children and demonstrated duty of care to the employee ensuring that support was in place.
- The quality of the minutes of the meetings was seen to be good
- Evidence of strong multiagency agreement to plans and next steps.

We did plan for a peer audit with another Local Authority within this year but unfortunately, we have been able to set this up, but we are confident that we have now built relationships with Greater Manchester peers and will be able to achieve this in 2023-2024. Demonstrating the quality and effectiveness of the service in overseeing the management of allegations is something that we are keen to develop and will be a priority for next year.

5. Service Reflection & achievements

In writing this report we continue to be able to evidence the effectiveness of the LADOs in Manchester. For 3 individuals that work with a wide variety of agencies and professionals to deliver a service that keeps children safe it is a credit to them all that they continue to provide their expertise to deliver a consistent and safe service. We set ourselves some key priorities in the last twelve months and we have made progress in a number of the areas.

5.1 What went well

Feedback from partners – This year we asked all partners for feedback following LADO Meetings, 134 partners responded throughout the year a big increase from 81 last year. General feedback was extremely positive about the quality and effectiveness of LADO meetings and when asked how satisfied professionals were with the meeting, the overall score was 4.7 out of 5 which is consistent with last year's figure. Unsurprisingly as the main users of the service, Social Care and Education provided 67% of the responses.

The breakdown of agencies completing the feedback:

Table 10: Feedback from partners by agency.

Social Care	37
Education	53
Police	16
Other	6
Health	13
Sport	6
Early Years	3
Total	134

Partnerships engagement – We have met with the Education Safeguarding Leads to ensure that their service area is effectively using their internal resource before sending contacts to the LADO service. In 2022/2023, 4 training sessions were offered via MSP to ensure that partner’s roles and responsibilities and the role of the LADO was fully understood in keeping children safe.

Performance data – This year we have focussed on continuing to develop the performance data we require to be effective in monitoring and improving performance. We have been able to breakdown data to understand better how we manage the flow of work. This has allowed us to now report monthly the length of time between referral to closure; the number of meetings which were initial or review and the outcome of meetings. There is always more to do in improving performance and quality assurance, and this will be a focus for next year. The Performance report has been established and embedded and there is discussion at monthly performance meetings. We have broken down the social care data into categories, to assist with understanding the detail of where enquires come from. The categories are Social Care, Fostering and Residential. We will do this for education and health too to gain a better understanding of key roles within the Children’s workforce that meet the LADO criteria.

5.2 Areas for further development.

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 the advice and guidance given and have generally concluded that this advice and guidance function of the LADO is generally used appropriately. The percentage of agencies using the advice and guidance could generally be said to be consistent with the size of those agencies' workforce. This then leads us to consider how better we can ensure that LADOs are available to provide this advice and guidance and provide a written account.

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 introduced the term ‘low level’ concerns this year and while the enquires rates from education have been generally stable throughout the year, we do know from speaking to education colleagues this this is something that will need to be considered throughout the year as while numbers have only increased by 2% this year from education, we know that education colleagues are considering further what constitutes a low level concern.

Training is key for all agencies to ensure there is good understanding of managing allegations and the role of the LADO. Whilst we will continue to work with partners to ensure that before they ring for advice and guidance some of their own mechanisms for advice and guidance are considered (for example; a

Headteacher contacts their link Safeguarding Quality Assurance Officer in Education), we also accept that advice and guidance is a function of the LADO role. However, with ongoing awareness training on managing allegations and low-level concerns we will be in a stronger position to provide a more effective initial response. To support this, we will work with MSP to identify ways to support the LADO service in sharing our performance and quality assurance exercises for learning.

5.3. Service Achievements 2022-2023

The service has several achievements this year set against the priorities, which are evaluated below. We said we wanted to:

- Provide a timely and effective service to employers - What we did and the impact.

We added and have maintained an additional 0.5 LADO on a temporary basis to effectively manage the incoming work and support employers with concerns about employees. Given the increase in demand this has ensured that responses to employers and meetings took place in a timely way.

Most employers and agencies involved in the LADO process in Manchester are confident and satisfied with the service provided as evidenced in professional feedback.

- To improve participation from partners to focus on outcomes for children - What we did & the impact:

We have delivered training across MSP over the last 12 months with a continued focus on ensuring staff are aware of what action they need to take to protect children and understand the LADO role and processes. We have engaged Early Years and Youth Justice to in understanding the demand into the LADO service.

We have regularly audited the quality of recording and minutes to ensure that the outcomes and impact of the service is good and to ensure there is support and a mechanism for feedback after meetings available for children and adults. The impact is that all LADO meetings consider the needs of the child and adult to ensure they receive the support they require.

- To improve Quality Assurance and to be more focussed on learning and development - What we did & the impact:

As discussed above we better understand the data, practice, the demand on the service and the resource implications. We have ensured that there has been continued audit and observation of the work undertaken by LADOs as a learning and development experience. LADOs have undertaken peer audits and key headlines have been shared for reflection.

We do need to take this key priority into next year in ensure the performance and quality assurance approach matures with greater focus on peer audits within our service and wider within the Northwest LADO network. This year we will focus more on quality and what this tells us about how we deliver our service.

6. KEY PRIORITIES 2023 – 2024

As we move into 2023, we have several priorities identified within this report about how we do even better in delivering the LADO service and evidencing the training offer and impact of this in raising awareness of managing allegations against professionals who work with children.

Priority 1. To safely and effectively support employers whilst managing the LADO demand.

- We will look at developing a way forward, in consultation with partners, to manage enquiries which works well for employers and effectively manages the increasing demand for the service.
- We will develop a dedicated LADO email box to make it easier to communicate with the LADO as currently the main way to communicate is via telephone or a general Children's Safeguarding & review Service email.
- We will agree and implement a timescale for the completion and distribution of minutes to ensure employers receive the minutes in a timely way to assist them in their planning.

Priority 2. To raise awareness and develop the training offer to the children's workforce.

- We will work closer with MSP to ensure that there is a cross section of attendees from all of Children's Workforce.
- We will next year demonstrate, which key agencies have attended training and evaluate the impact of this by asking them to evidence the change to practices.
- We will provide bespoke training to early years and education to ensure they understand LADO thresholds and have the confidence to deal with low level concerns or conduct internally where appropriate.
- We will identify low referrers such as Faith Groups, Voluntary agencies and Transport and target bespoke training. We will commit to do this when we identify agencies or key partners require a targeted approach to managing allegations.
- We will work with commissioners in Manchester to help us understand the increased demand in information requests.

Priority 3. To build on the performance framework, to quality assure activity to focus on learning and improvement.

- The monthly Performance and quality assurance Report will introduce new measures as discussed within this report, timeliness of minutes sent out, breakdown of key agencies making contact for example health, we will breakdown into acute, primary etc. We will also report against training provided and measure the impact throughout the year.
- We will use the Northwest 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 peer audit, thematic audit and observation of practice.
- In learning from SAR requests and the complaint this year, we will consider how best we inform adults of the role of the LADO and who will feedback to them for transparency throughout the process,

7. 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

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022

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.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/522656/Regulated_Activity_in_relation_to_Children.pdf.pdf)