



Allegation Management Policy

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0.1	Well-Being Policy	Final	HR Specialist	Principal/Vice Principal	August 2024	August 2026	August 2027
HR Coordinator (RO)				HR Manager (RO)			
Vice Principal		Principal			Regional Director (RO)		

Introduction

An **Allegation Management Policy** is designed to safeguard children by ensuring that any allegations of misconduct or abuse against staff or volunteers are handled promptly, fairly, and in line with legal requirements.

The policy must emphasize the school's commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It should reflect the school's zero-tolerance approach to abuse or misconduct by staff and volunteers and align with international best practices, including local laws and the BSO standards.

1. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and anyone working within the school, including contractors, coaches, and external service providers. The scope covers all allegations of misconduct, including those involving physical, emotional, sexual abuse, or neglect.

2. Procedures for Reporting Allegations

Clear procedures for reporting allegations must be in place and widely communicated to staff, students, and parents. The process typically includes:

- Immediate Reporting
 - Allegations should be reported immediately to the Principal. If the allegation is about the Principal, it should be reported to the school board or relevant authority.
- Anonymous Reporting
 - The policy should allow for anonymous reporting, though it must be noted that it could limit the scope of the investigation.

3. Initial Response

Upon receiving an allegation, the Principal must:

- Take the allegation seriously and assess the risk to the child or other children.
- Ensure immediate safety by removing the accused from any contact with children (suspension may be required).
- Conduct a preliminary assessment to decide whether the allegation requires further investigation.

4. Referral to Authorities

If the allegation is serious (i.e., it indicates a criminal offense or child abuse), the Principal must immediately refer the case to local child protection agencies, the police, or other relevant authorities in accordance with local legal frameworks. BSO standards emphasize the importance of external involvement in serious cases.

5. Investigation Process

For non-criminal allegations, the school may conduct its own internal investigation. Key steps include:

- **Fairness and Objectivity**
 - o The investigation must be fair, impartial, and thorough. The accused should be informed of the allegation and given a chance to respond.
- **Independent Investigators**
 - o In some cases, the school may appoint an external investigator to ensure impartiality.
- **Confidentiality**
 - o All parties involved must maintain confidentiality throughout the process, and information should be shared only with those who need to know.

6. Suspension of the Accused

The school should carefully consider whether the accused should be suspended during the investigation. Suspension is a neutral act and does not imply guilt. It is done to protect children, staff, and the investigation process. Alternatives, such as reassigning duties, may also be considered.

7. Outcomes and Disciplinary Action

Once the investigation concludes, the outcomes can include:

- **Substantiated Allegation**
 - o If the allegation is proven, disciplinary action should be taken, which may include dismissal and referral to local authorities.
- **Unsubstantiated or False Allegations**
 - o If the allegation is found to be false, malicious, or unsubstantiated, the accused should be informed, and any records related to the allegation must be handled appropriately. Support for both the accuser and the accused should be considered in such cases.

8. Record Keeping

All allegations and their outcomes should be properly documented and stored confidentially.

This includes:

- o Initial reports and evidence gathered during the investigation.
- o Correspondence with external agencies and authorities.
- o Decisions, actions taken, and final outcomes.

Record-keeping is essential to ensure transparency and accountability, as well as to provide evidence in case of future allegation.'

9. Support for All Parties

The school must ensure appropriate support for both the person making the allegation and the accused. This might include counselling services, access to legal advice, and pastoral care to manage the emotional and psychological impact.

10. Learning and Review

Each case must be reviewed at its conclusion to determine if there are any lessons for the school. The policy and related safeguarding practices should be updated to reflect any learnings and to prevent future incidents.

11. Training

Regular training must be provided to staff on:

- Recognizing signs of abuse.
- Reporting procedures for allegations.
- Responsibilities under the policy and the importance of safeguarding children.

12. Whistleblower Protection

The policy must ensure that individuals who report allegations in good faith are protected from any form of retaliation. False allegations made maliciously, however, may result in disciplinary action.

13. Confidentiality and Transparency

The school should ensure that the process is handled with the utmost discretion to protect the privacy of all involved, while ensuring transparency where necessary to maintain trust within the school community.