**Safeguarding Update: Arrangements/ referrals under the allegations against staff process**

**Allegations against staff**

* all organisations providing services to children must ensure that those who work with or on behalf of children and young people are competent, confident and safe to do so. Likewise anyone who comes into contact with children and young people in their work has a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare.
* it is recognised that in this area of work tensions and misunderstandings can occur. It is here that the behaviour of adults can give rise to allegations of abuse being made against them. Allegations may be misplaced or malicious. They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned. Equally, it must be recognised that some allegations will be genuine and there are adults who will deliberately seek out, create or exploit opportunities to abuse children.
* **It is therefore essential that a clear process exists for the investigation and resolution of allegations made for the benefit of all concerned whether those staff are paid or volunteers or in a commissioned service.**

**Working Together and the London Child Protection Procedures 2013 require that allegations against staff are reported to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) within 24 hours.**

The referral criteria are as follows:

Where there is an *allegation or concern that* a person working with children has

*1. behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child*

*2. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child*

*3. behaved towards a child/ren in a way that indicated s/he would pose a risk of harm if they worked with children regularly or closely*

**Referrals to Barnet’s LADO should be made via Barnet MASH:** <http://www.barnet.gov.uk/wwcib/mash>

Of particular use is a regular free training event that takes place twice per term. This workshop lasting half a day covers building a safer working culture to avoid allegations being made as well as looking at perpetrator behaviour, the investigative process and record keeping. It is a vital course for safeguarding leads within schools and other agencies/settings/providers (either statutory or voluntary) and will help bring the process to life, provide tools and build confidence in this tricky area. For more information, see our workforce development pages:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/wwc-home/workforce-development.html>