



Outstanding practice framework

Helping our social workers and practitioners provide the best quality support to children and families in Wandsworth

LADO Practice Standards

1. Local Authority Designated Officer Practice Standards

Whilst working within a procedurally driven structure the work of the LADO reflects the Wandsworth Outstanding Practice Framework and our commitment to relational, systemic practice. This means that we will collaborate closely; our language will be kind and respectful. We will prioritise the safeguarding of children but support persons who are the subject of allegations.

The role of the Local Authority Designated Officer [LADO] as determined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 is to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases where allegations of abuse have been made against a person who works or volunteers with children. The LADO may provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations liaise with the police and other agencies and monitor progress of investigations to ensure they are dealt with as quickly as possible.

The LADO will consider referrals against the following criteria

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child 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 she or he may pose a risk of harm to children; or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicated they may not be suitable to work with children.

The LADO will also provide advice, support, and guidance to partner agencies where there is *cause for concern* that requires the employer to internal investigate but the criteria for an investigation overseen by the LADO is not indicated. This also applies when there is a *Standards of Care investigation* by the Fostering Service. The LADO will provide advice and support and review the Standards of Care report on conclusion and provide further advice.

These practice standards provide a guide to the expected standards for the LADO work in Wandsworth. Priority will always be given to investigations where there is currently contact with children professionally or within the persons private life.

2. Guidance

Guidance on allegations against staff, carers and volunteers is contained in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 , Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 and London Safeguarding Procedures Chapter 7. These are all available via Wandsworth Childrens Services Procedures and Resources Hub_ https://wandsworthchildcare.proceduresonline.com/local_resources.html

The Wandsworth website also provides a clear outline of the roles and responsibilities of WSCP member agencies in identifying a named senior officer, and for the local authority to appoint a LADO <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/children-and-families/allegations-against-staff-and-volunteers-who-work-with-children/>

3. Identifying and responding to concerns

Actions / Activity	Who is Responsible	Time Frames [where applicable]
The LADO must be told of all allegations that come to the employer's attention and may meet the criteria in paragraph 1 above so that s/he can consult or refer to police and Children's Social Care as appropriate.	Referrer	within 1 working day
<p>A Strategy Discussion with the police and LADO should be held within 2 working days. The purpose of this is to share information with Police, identify any additional information Police can provide. The Police will be able to confirm if the threshold for a Police investigation is indicated.</p> <p>The SD taking place prior to the ASV enables the Police to make enquires and ensure an officer is available for the ASV .</p> <p>Information that is high risk must be referred to Police immediately in receipt .</p>	LADO	2 working days
<p>If an investigation overseen by the LADO is indicated an ASV meeting must be held within 5 working days of receipt of the allegation.</p> <p>The ASV must include all relevant professionals including the child's allocated SW .</p>	LADO to co-ordinate	ASV within 5 working days
<p>Where indicated the LADO should advise CSC colleagues that strategy meeting to consider a s47 investigation is required in parallel. This advice will be recorded on child's file by the LADO.</p> <p>Wherever possible the LADO should attend the child's strategy meeting to hear the information .</p>	LADO to record advice	24 hours
<p>Actions from ASV meeting should be distributed within 24hrs.</p> <p>Where the person accused does not have an employer or employment agency the LADO will update them after each ASV meeting</p>	BSO / LADO LADO	24 hours 48 hours.
The meeting should be recorded and distributed following the meeting with 15 days.	BSO/LADO	15 Days
Provide advice / support when required or requested by internal teams and external partners	LADO	<p>Response to requests for advice and support within 24 hours.</p> <p>Advice will be confirmed in writing</p>

Back up arrangements will be in place if the LADO is not available - this will be clear on LADO's Out of Office Message.		within 2 working days.
LADO to monitor progress of investigation by liaising with police, Children's Social Care, or the employer as appropriate. Where actions are outstanding the LADO should raise this and escalate if necessary . Where investigations take more than 3 months there will be a summary on file every 3 months updating issues and progress.	LADO LADO	Either fortnightly or monthly depending on complexity – may be more frequently in cases necessary. 3 monthly.
Dates for subsequent reviews, should be set at the meeting if the investigation continues.	LADO	Within a six weeks of the first review and then as required
Once the outcome is known, the LADO should advise whether referrals should be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service and any other Regulatory body. This will be done in consultation with the relevant Human Resources department in professional internal employee.	LADO	This will be recorded on the individuals electronic file (MOSIAC) and relevant individuals/agencies will be notified.
LADO Spreadsheet and any additional recording should be always updated.	LADO/BSO	Monthly
Role of LADO to be promoted via DSL, IRO/CPC session, Local Authority Website	LADO	Quarterly
THE LADO should provide an annual report to <u>the Council and WSCP</u> providing information about the sources and nature of referrals, the outcomes and annual figures. It should include an analysis of learning from Practice Reviews, partners feedback and themes/patterns from referrals and investigations .	LADO	Based on year ending 31 st March.
The LADO will provide advice and support into Standards of Care investigations carried out by the Fostering Service prior to and on conclusion of the SoC investigation. This should be recorded on the FC file by the LADO . Where the LADO advice on conclusion is that a LADO investigation is indicated this will be progressed. LADO advice will be recorded on Foster Carers files and reference to this on the child's file (without confidential detail)	LADO and TM Fostering	48 hours

LADO to provide monthly summary reports on cases which involved Wandsworth schools/colleges to Senior Managers.	LADO	Monthly
Notify AD for Schools of all referrals concerning education staff.	LADO	Weekly
LADO will track all allegations made by Children in the care of. This includes investigations overseen by the LADO of other LA. This is to ensure safeguarding to all children looked after by Wandsworth. The LADO should ensure regular contact with external LADO for progress of investigation and notify senior managers of challenges or delay to the safeguarding of children in our care.	LADO LADO	Monthly Recorded on child's file within 24 hours

4. [Guidance on timescales from procedures](#)

80% of cases should be resolved within **1 month** where no police investigation is warranted.

90% within **3 months** where no police investigation is warranted.

All but the exceptional should be completed within **12 months** (it is unlikely cases requiring a criminal prosecution or complex multi-agency and police investigation can be completed in less than 1 year).

5. [Practice assurance, improvement, and learning](#)

The quality of practice by the LADO service will be subject to regular Practice Learning Reviews by Service Manager and Head of Service for Safeguarding to ensure good quality outcomes are consistently achieved and steps are promptly taken to address issues of concern. A minimum of 5 practice reviews per quarter will undertaken.

Performance data is reviewed weekly within the Power BI Dashboard and exceptions reported by Service Manager to HoS . The LADO will use the Dashboard to support the management of their work. In addition the Service. In addition, the Service Manager will review the weekly tracker of all ASV actions and minutes in collaboration with the Principal Business Support Officer.

LADO and Service Managers will use monthly tracking of all open investigations in supervision. Where there is any drift or delay this will be escalated to the HoS to raise with key partner agencies.

Should a professional have a concern surrounding the LADO function this should first be raised with the Service Manager who supervises the LADO. Where this is unresolved, the Head of Service for

Safeguarding will be consulted with to seek a fair resolution. The WSCP escalation policy can also be used

https://wscp.org.uk/media/02jdu33k/inter_agency_escalation_policy.pdf