



Report for:	Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee 23 January 2014	Item Number:	
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Title:	Local Authority Designated Officer Report April 2013 to Dec 2013
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Report Authorised by:	Lisa Redfern, Director, Children's Services (Acting)
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Lead Officer:	Rachel Oakley
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Ward(s) affected: All	Report for Non Key Decision
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1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1. Haringey Council, in conjunction with Haringey Safeguarding Children's Board (HSCB), has a duty to ensure that all allegations of abuse or maltreatment of children by a professional, staff member, foster carer, or volunteer be considered and treated in accordance with national guidance.

2. The Local Authority Designated Officer's (LADO) report annually on allegations made against adults who work with children. This report provides interim data on the allegations made in the Borough during the nine month period between April and December 2013 and an update on development work undertaken during the period.

3. Recommendations

3.1. Members to note the development work completed and data collated at the end of the third quarter of 2013-14.

4. Background information

4.1. Working Together to Safeguard Children was significantly revised and republished in 2013, effective from 15th April 2013; there were no changes to the substance of



Haringey Council

this part of the guidance or the role of the LADO. Further information on the role of the LADO as outlined by Working Together is attached [appendix B].

5. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

- 5.1. The cost of the LADO service is contained within the Children and Families base budget. There are no other particular financial consequences associated with this report.

6. Head of Legal Services and legal implications

- 6.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendation of the report.

7. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

- 7.1. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) has management oversight of all individual cases where allegations are made against people who work with children. All employers of child care staff have access to services provided by the LADO, allegations and the treatment of allegations are monitored to ensure the thresholds are applied evenly and the outcomes are proportionate.

8. Head of Procurement Comments

- 8.1 There are no implications for procurement arising from this report

9. Policy Implication

- 9.1. Whilst there have been recent revisions to Working Together to Safeguard Children [see above 5. Background information] there are no policy implications in relation to allegations made against adults working with children.

10. Use of Appendices

- 10.1 Local Authority Designated Officer's (LADO) annual report of allegations made against adults work with children [appendix A].
The LADO Role [appendix B].

Allegations against adults who work with children

Local Authority Designated Officer Annual
Interim Report
April to December 2013



CONTENTS

- 1 Introduction**
- 2 Key Development undertaken April to December 2013**
- 3 Role of the LADO and outcomes of consultations**
 - 3.1 LADO Consultations
 - 3.2 Profile of referrals reaching thresholds
 - 3.3 Referring Agencies/employment sector
 - 3.4 Categories of abuse
- 4 Profile of adults that allegations have been made against**
 - 4.1 Gender
 - 4.2 Other equalities indicators
- 5 Profile of children**
 - 5.1 Gender
 - 5.2 Other equalities indicators
- 6 Substantiation of referrals**
- 7 Case oversight**
- 8 Case Resolution time scales**



1. Introduction

A report is produced annual which provides an overview and analysis of the work of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The LADO is responsible for the management and oversight of individual cases where allegations of abuse and maltreatment of children have been made against individuals working with children in an employed or voluntary capacity. This is an interim report for the period April to December 2013. The report outlines key developments, provides an overview of allegations which have been investigated, plus a summary of consultation and advice offered by the LADO

2. Development

Key development work completed in during the period

- Full implementation of the confidential electronic recording system (on framework-i) for LADO referrals this has improved recording and reporting capability and enables report to be run directly from the system.
- Development and implementation of a system for recording and monitoring consultations – (discussions with the LADO that are deemed not to have reach the threshold for section 47 enquires)
- The LADO has attended forums for Designated Teachers of primary and secondary schools and Children Centre meetings. In 2014 she is booked to attend the early childhood providers forum. The Child Protection Advisor linked to Early Years has provided consultations on children protection and training for staff working in this area.
- LSCB training for Designated, Lead and Named Professionals for Child Protection ran in May, July and November 2013 (further course in February 2014) covered allegations against professionals and has the objective of ensuring that the Designated, Lead and Names professionals within the Haringey Partnership are clear and confident in performing their children protection duties, including dealing with allegations
- Further work has taken place to define and communicated the respective responsibilities of the referrer, HR and the LADO. This includes defining the criteria and boundaries in the process for a range of outcomes e.g. cases that meet the criteria for suspension.
- The LADO is a member of the working group overseeing allegations, complaints and serious concerns relating to Haringey looked after children whether placed inside or outside the borough.



3. Role of the LADO and outcomes of consultation

The LADO provides advice and guidance during consultation with a referrer. The possible outcomes of the consultation are broadly captured under three headings:

- the allegation meets the threshold (section 47)
- local management to address (e.g. through staff training, supervision and support)
- local management to take further action (e.g. disciplinary procedure, in consultation with HR).

In some instance referrals are not appropriate for intervention by the LADO and require signposting to other services or to the LADO in another Local Authority. The LADO in Haringey deals with all allegations which have taken place within the borough. Haringey foster carers living outside the borough will fall under the local authority they reside in, allegations pertaining to Haringey children educated outside the borough will be dealt with by the LADO for that area.

3.1 LADO consultations

During the nine month period from April 2013 the LADO has been consulted on a total of 79 occasions. This is made up of 53 instances where advice and guidance was given on safeguarding and welfare issues which did not reach the threshold to trigger a section 47 investigation but frequently required local management to take remedy action at some level. Twenty six referrals resulted in convening a strategy meeting or discussion.

This makes for an average of two contacts a week which is in line with the overall referral rate in the last 6 months of 2012-13. However, the proportion of contacts that have led to an investigations being initiated is lower than in previous years.

This report makes reference to the contacts which do not reach the section 47 threshold as these discussions support referrers in gaining an understanding of thresholds and appropriate responses.

3.2 Profile of referrals that met the threshold

There were 26 referrals that met the threshold for section 47 investigations. The end of year report will provide comparisons with statistical and geographical neighbouring boroughs.

3.3 Referring Agencies



The majority of referrals were received directly from the senior managers or designed officers in the educational setting where the alleged abuse took place (38.5%) or from social care staff referring allegations against foster carers/residential staff or education staff (38.5%). The remaining referrals came via the police (11.5%) and a small number of other agencies.

Just under half of all allegations (46%) which met the threshold related to incidents in schools, the vast majority in primary schools, 23% involved foster carers or their family members. There were also a smaller number of allegations investigated in relation to professionals in their personal life, early year's settings, police officers conduct in child care settings and residential units.

In comparison with 2012-13 this shows an increased percentage of referrals from education and social care and a reduction from other agencies – particularly from Faith Groups and Transport.

3.4 Categories of abuse

Referrals are categorised by type of abuse. The largest category was physical abuse which accounted for 61% of all allegations received; this is an increase from 52% during 2012-13. Sexual abuse was alleged in 31% of referrals (this included a number of historical allegations) and neglect in 8%.

Although there was a predominance of allegations in relation to physical and sexual abuse, as in previous years it is notable that the individual circumstances of the allegations varied significantly. This demonstrates the need for designated professionals and senior staff responsible for safeguarding to have an on-going awareness of the range of situations in which children could be harmed and how this meets the threshold for intervention by the LADO.

4. Profile of adults that allegations have been made against

4.1 Gender

Of the 26 allegations, 62% were made against males and 38% against females. In the previous year there were an equal number of allegations against men and women.

4.2 Other equalities indicators – ethnicity and age of alleged perpetrators

Alleged perpetrators ranged in age from 18 to over 80 years of age at the time of the referral (the oldest alleged perpetrators being those where there has been an historical allegations) Ethnicity was captured using the ONS codes. 46% were Black



Haringey Council

or Black British, 19% Asian, 35% were White British/Irish, and 7.5% white other. The Haringey employee profile June 2012 indicates that 44.1% of employees are from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, 34.5% White British and 18.1% White minorities.

4.3 Employment Sector

The majority of referrals are in relation to adults who work in educational settings (46%). Referrals regarding employees in primary schools represented 38%, with a much smaller number from secondary schools (8%). Given that the educational sector is the biggest employer of people working with children, the high percentage of referrals is to be expected, however, the lower number of referrals from the secondary sector is in contrast to previous reporting periods where primary and secondary schools has similar proportions of referrals.

Referrals from the education sector came from all types of educational provision and included both professionally qualified staff and support staff such as teaching assistants and school cleaners. The majority of referrals came from state schools, with two from Academies.

There continue to be a low number of referrals from other sections, such as Early Years. Work with early years providers and children's centres suggests that the implementation of lone working policies mean that children are rarely alone with one adult.

5. Profile of Children where allegations have been made

Allegations concerning current abuse involved children of one to seventeen years old with the majority in the primary school years. 46% of children were Black or Black British, 23.5% White British and 11.5% White other. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – population profile updated November 2013 identifies that predominate group is White other 29.2%, White British 18.7% and Black African/Black Caribbean 26.8%. In 50% of the cases where the data could be matched the perpetrator was/was not of the same ethnic group.

In four instances the child/young person had made a previous allegation. Six young people were in care living with Foster Carers in Haringey

6. Substantiation of allegations

6.1 In nine months between April and December 2013, 46% (12) of the allegations taken to strategy meeting were substantiated, five lead to disciplinary action, five to investigation by the police - two of which are waiting on a decision regarding prosecution. One foster carer was referred to the Fostering Panel to determine whether they should continue fostering. The number of substantiated referrals is



Haringey Council

slightly lower than in the previous reporting period where 56% of allegations were substantiated. 38% (10) were not substantiated, 2 were deemed not to have met the threshold at the strategy meeting and three remain open. The numbers involved are small and slight changes are not seen as particularly significant, what is important is quality of investigation and decision making on each individual case.

6.2 It should be noted that when an allegation is deemed to be unsubstantiated this does not necessarily equate to it being unfounded, but rather there is insufficient evidence to substantiate the allegation. Further in some instances the Crown Prosecution Services deems that prosecution is not in the public interest and the case is not progressed.

6.3 Outcomes of cases taken to strategy by category of abuse.

Physical Abuse: Sixteen allegations – 44% of those investigated were substantiated 38% were unsubstantiated, with 6% still open and 12% being closed or dealt with through an alternative other than investigation as an outcome of the strategy meeting. Of the allegations which were deemed substantiated two became the subject of police prosecution and four in disciplinary action.

Sexual Abuse: Eight allegations - three unrelated allegations are historical. Just under half were substantiated with one remaining open and under investigation. Around two thirds of perpetrators and victims were classed as White this is much higher than in all other categories of abuse (although there is no obvious collation between the ethnicity of the perpetrator and victim).

Neglect: Two allegations - both of which were substantiated

7. Case oversight

The details for each case is reported to the Assistant Director Children and Families on a monthly basis and the LADO and responsible Head of Service retain an overview of the progress of open cases and those closed which require police, HR action or other action – such as presentation to a Fostering Panel or referral to a professional body.

8. Case resolution timescales

8.1 Cases are logged from the date of referral to the point at which they are handed to either the Police or employing organisation to progress.

8.2 There are three cases that are ongoing, both situations are being regularly monitored by the LADO, the employing organisation and police. All other cases have been addressed by the LADO during the reporting period.



8.2 Preliminary calculations indicated that the average length of time taken to resolve cases was 14 working days, substantiated allegations took longer concluding on average within 19.5 days, whilst unsubstantiated allegations took on average 10.2 days to resolve. The longest case took in excess of four months and the shortest one day. Cases in primary schools generally concluded the quickest within an average of 8.6 days, with cases relating to foster carers taking an average of 14 day.

9. Consultations where thresholds are not met

The LADO conducted 53 consultations on cases where the referrer needed advice on thresholds and the appropriate action to take. Education and Ofsted accounted for 63% of these referrals – in contrast to the allegations which met the threshold nearly half of these consultations were from secondary schools.

Twenty of the incidents discussed were found not to meet the threshold for further discussion – this category included queries about lone working policies, staff stress and malicious referrals. In 14 cases it was suggested that HR should be consulted – these primarily related to the behaviour of staff and partners outside work. In another 14 learning and development options were discussed, issues included inappropriate communication between staff and parents/children and supervision of children and young people. Five required internal investigation on a range of issues. A number of referrals within each of these categories were found to the responsibility of other local authorities and referred on.

10 Outstanding Actions for 2013-14

- 10.1 Progress discussions with Police and Health on the involvement of the LADO in the investigation of allegations against professionals, ensuring compliance with Working Together 2013
- 10.2 Ongoing communication regarding LADO role to all Designated Leads, Named professionals and managers with responsibility for services to children - including sections where referral levels are low.
- 10.3 Carry out a quality audit of LADO activity as part of the department's quality assurance programme

The role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Overview of role in Haringey

In compliance with *Working Together to Safeguard Children - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*, March 2013. Haringey has a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) who is involved in the management and has oversight of individual cases where allegations are made against people who work with children.

Working Together described the LADO role as providing “advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations, liaising with the police and other agencies and monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible and are consistent with a thorough and fair process.”

In Haringey, the operational role of the LADO is undertaken by a designated Child Protection Advisor, with oversight by the Head of Service, Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and Practice Development, which is part Children and Families Service within the Children and Young People’s Service.

Responsibilities of the LADO

The LADO provides advice and guidance during consultation with the referrer. The possible outcomes of the consultation are broadly captured under three headings: the allegation meets the threshold (section 47), local management to address (e.g. through staff training), local management to take further action (e.g. disciplinary procedure, in consultation with HR).

Working Together states that agencies employing staff working with children must have in place clear policies in line with those from the LSCB for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- 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; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.



Haringey Council

Where the above criteria are met, the LADO is responsible for chairing:

- a strategy meeting to consider whether there should be:
- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- enquiries and assessment by children's social care about whether a child is in need of protection or in need of services; and
- consideration by an employer of disciplinary action in respect of the member of staff.



LADO ACTION PLAN IN HARINGEY 2013 / 2014

No	Action	Responsibility	By
1.	Confirm data set for LADO activity – including equalities indicators, source of referrals and outcomes	Head of Service Safeguarding QA & PD	July 2013
2.	Produce data on LADO activity, undertake analysis of trends and make recommendations/determine action for single agency or partnership action.	LADO	June/July, September/October, December/January and end of 2013/14
3	Carry out a quality audit of LADO as part of the department's quality assurance programme.	Principal Social Worker	30 October 2013
4	LSCB Training for Designated Lead and Named professionals	LSCB	May, July, November 13 and February 14
5	Quality Assurance - audit of thresholds for referrals to LADO – analysis of referrals not leading to Section 47 investigations	Child Protection Advisors and Head of Service – Safeguarding, QA & PD	June/July, September/October, December/January and end of 2013/14
6	Discussion with Police and Health on the involvement of the LADO in the investigation of allegations against professionals, ensuring compliance with Working Together 2013	LADO	September 2013
7	Ongoing communication regarding LADO role to all Designated Leads, Named professionals and managers with responsibility for services to children - including sections where referral levels are low.	LADO and CPA's	On going.