

Belinda Crowsaw

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)



The role of the LADO

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) role was introduced within 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' statutory guidance in 2006 (Working Together). Working Together sets out that Local authorities should have designated a particular officer, or team of officers (either as part of local multi agency arrangements or otherwise), to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against people who work with children in their area.

The LADO **does not** undertake investigations into allegations against adults who work with children but rather is responsible for:

- Providing advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations and deciding whether a concern or complaint should be treated as an allegation.
- Receiving referrals about allegations and overseeing the management of individual cases to conclusion and closure.
- The consideration of referral to and liaise with, the police, where a possible criminal threshold has been reached.
- Provide advice on consideration of referrals to children's social care where a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm. In exceptional cases where there is no one to make such a referral and it is in the best interest of the child for such a referral to be made the LADO will make the referral.
- Supporting and overseeing such investigations carried out by the police, children's social care, the employer or another appropriate body.
- Chairing Position of Trust (POT) meetings and discussions regarding allegations as appropriate.
- Monitoring the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with in a timely, proportionate, and fair manner.
- To coordinate and facilitate multi agency decision making with regards to the allegation and any identified ongoing risk.
- Provide advice and guidance to employers in relation to making referrals to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and regulatory bodies or associations regarding allegations against staff working with children such as Ofsted, The Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA), the General Medical Council (GMC), Football Association (FA) etc.



Walsall Council



Definition of an allegation

'Working Together' states that 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;
- 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.

This is referred to as the 'Threshold'.

These behaviours should be considered within the context of the four categories of abuse (physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect). These include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children or young people and also relate to any act or behaviour whether committed in their capacity of working or volunteering with children, or within their private lives. Should you have a concern, or a concern has been raised which potentially indicates any of the behaviours above, please contact the LADO on the details provided below for a discussion in the first instance.

About your new LADO:

Belinda first started working for Walsall Council in 2005 as a Children's Services Support Officer within the Safeguarding and Family Support service. She remained in this team as a student social worker whilst completing her social work degree and qualified in 2012 then completed her Post Graduate Certificate in Professional Practice. Belinda has worked in several areas as a social worker including Safeguarding, Transition and Leaving Care, Corporate Parenting and Children with Disabilities.

In 2017 Belinda left Walsall to take up a management position within an independent fostering agency which included lead role for safeguarding, panel advisor, team manager and agency decision maker responsibilities. During this time Belinda completed her Level 5 qualification in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services (England).

Belinda has returned to Walsall and is excited to take up the position of LADO and looks forward to working with her Walsall colleagues.

Belinda was born, raised and still lives in Walsall and enjoys running, swimming, walking the family dog and spending time with family and friends.

Contact details:

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