



Together we will make Cheshire East a great place to be young

Children and Families Service One Minute Guide

September 2026

Local Authority Designated Officer
(LADO)



The role of LADO

The LADO's role is set out in the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 as an officer who is responsible for the management and oversight of allegations against adults working with children in a paid or voluntary capacity. The LADO ensures allegations are managed fairly, promptly, and with children's safety at the heart.

Your duty as the employer of the adult

You have a safeguarding duty to refer through to the LADO **within 1 working day** when an allegation has been made against an adult working with children in regulated activities.

Please note, if you believe from initial basic fact finding that a crime has been committed or a child is at risk of significant harm, it is your responsibility in line with safeguarding policies and procedures that you notify the relevant Children's Services and Police department without delay.

Criteria for a LADO referral

Has the adult:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child (HARM)
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child (CRIMINAL)
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children (RISK)
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. (SUITABILITY)

You should carry out basic fact finding to confirm if the allegation has some truth to it and has potential to have happened. If you have established this is the case, submit a referral via the online portal within 1 working day for advice and guidance. You should **not** start an investigation at this stage.



What to include on the referral:

Information regarding the adult (name, DOB, address, employment history, any previous referrals to LADO / concerns, any children of their own with details, any other work / volunteering roles with children).

Information regarding the child if there is a child/ren involved.

Contact details for the child/ren's social worker if they are open to Children's Services.

Detailed information including; who has made the allegation, when the allegation was made, details of the allegation, the impact on the child/ren, actions school have taken already (if anything).

Upload any statements / incident logs and recordings that have already been gathered during initial basic fact finding.

When do I notify the adult?

This should be considered carefully on a case-by-case basis, with guidance as required from the LADO and potentially the police and children's social care.

What happens next?

Within 1 working day the duty LADO will review all information and contact you to discuss and determine whether threshold for LADO oversight is met.

If threshold is met, an initial allegation management meeting will be arranged within 5 working days. This is a multi-agency meeting and should if the adult works in a school, include the Head Teacher and a representative from HR. If the adult works within any other agency, those in attendance should be the adult's manager, a representative from HR and someone from the agency / relevant professional body should this be relevant. Remember this is not a general safeguarding enquiry for the safeguarding team and is about a staff member therefore their confidentiality is important.



What does the Initial AMM do?

The initial allegation management meeting will hear from all those present covering; the allegation details, employment details, the child/ren involved, immediate and wider safeguarding concerns and a multi-agency action plan will be agreed including what investigation, if any, is required by the police children's social care, the school. Timescales will be discussed to prevent drift and delay.

If threshold is not met, you should record it as a low-level concern and LADO may give advice on moving forward.

Review and closure

If reviews are required these will take place every 4 weeks and the process is aimed to be completed within 3 months.

When the risks have been assessed, mitigated and or managed LADO closure will be initiated and a LADO outcome agreed.

It is your responsibility as the employer to keep the adult informed throughout the process and at the point an outcome is reached.

LADO outcomes

The LADO outcome is based on the balance of probabilities. As outlined in KCSIE 2026, the possible outcomes are:

Substantiated	there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
Unsubstantiated	there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence.
Unfounded	to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.
False	there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation.
Malicious	there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive or cause harm to the person subject to the allegation.



Future references

You can only include reference to the LADO process and outcome if the allegation was substantiated.

Contact Cheshire EAST LADO:

There are 2 LADOs in Cheshire East; Sarah Baron and Claire Oakes.

Please note: All referrals to LADO must go through the online portal for consultation

- **Online:** [LADO Consultation Portal](#)
- **Email:** LADO@cheshireeast.gov.uk
- **Telephone:** 01270 685904

Further guidance: [Guidance for Safe Recruitment, Selection and Retention...](#)

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6a9081309a177a1decf97b00/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2026.pdf

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/69fb1c28d0e316a40f269a5b/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2026_a_guide_to_multi_agency_working.pdf

This document will be reviewed in September 2027 or prior to this date in line with statutory guidance updates.

