Managing Allegations Against Adults in Positions of Trust

Understanding the LADO role and process

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Self-evaluation and welcome



Today’s purpose

Today’s session builds understanding of the LADO role and the process for managing allegations.

1

POSITIONS OF TRUST

Recognise who may be in a position of trust

2

THE LADO’S ROLE

Understand LADO oversight and the limits of the role

3

ALLEGATION CRITERIA

Consider concerns against the four LADO criteria

4

THE LADO PROCESS

Understand the referral pathway and who does what

Leave knowing when to seek LADO advice and how your role fits within the process.

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What is a position of trust?

Think about access, authority, dependency and the child's perception of the adult.

Access

Regular, close or unsupervised contact

Authority

Power to make decisions or set boundaries

Dependency

The child relies on the adult for care, opportunity or support

Trust

The role carries credibility in the child's eyes

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Paid, unpaid, permanent, temporary, agency and voluntary roles may all be relevant.

WHO MAY BE IN A POSITION OF TRUST?

The definition spans many settings.



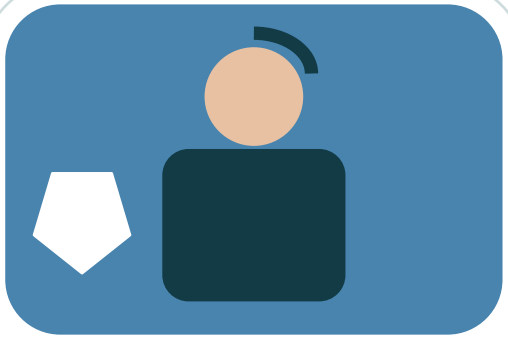
Education and early years



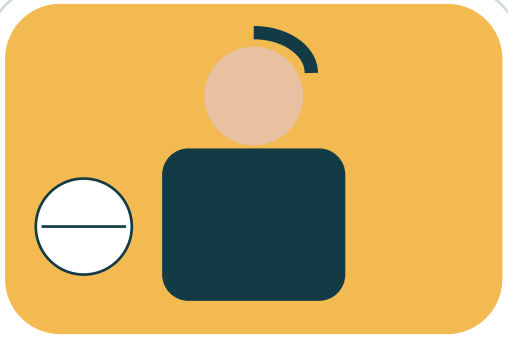
Residential care and fostering



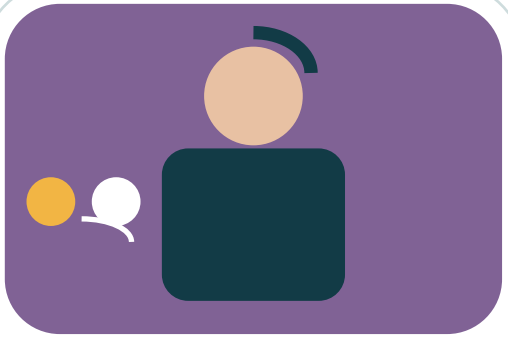
Health and social care



Police and emergency services



Sport and leisure



Faith, youth and community work



Voluntary organisations



Transport and contracted services

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Paid or unpaid • permanent or temporary • agency or supply • volunteer • foster carer or prospective adopter

Scenario: “They do not work directly with children”



A school janitor has keys to the building and is occasionally present when pupils are on site. A colleague reports they have heard that he sends private social-media messages to a 15-year-old pupil, including questions about relationships and a suggestion to meet outside school.

DISCUSS

Are they in a position of trust?

Key point: ask about access, trust and behaviour, not simply job title.

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Quick activity: position of trust or not enough information?

Trainee Doctor	YES	NO	MORE INFO
Soft Play Centre Employee	YES	NO	MORE INFO
Taxi driver	YES	NO	MORE INFO
Agency residential worker	YES	NO	MORE INFO
Security Guard at a Hospital	YES	NO	MORE INFO

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What matters more, the job title or the nature of access and trust?

Positions of trust: examples



Beverley Gail Allitt- a nurse who was convicted of murdering four children, attempting to murder three other children



Ian Huntley – Sohum murders – School caretaker
(The LADO arrangements were strengthened following the safeguarding failures exposed by the Soham murders and the subsequent Bichard Inquiry)



Dr Hugh O'Neil - Police Doctor and GP, a GP for 37 years, working at Horsford Medical Centre & working for Norfolk Constabulary, admitting sex offences against two girls



Jeremy Forrest - was found guilty of child abduction and a number of charges of sexual activity with a student at a school where he taught.



Jimmy Saville – Entrainer and charity worker



Vanessa George - A nursery worker admitted sexually assaulting children in her care. At the height of the investigation detectives feared more than 300 children may have been abused



Dr Miles Bradbury - A doctor who admitting abusing 18 young cancer patients.

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What does the LADO do?

Independent safeguarding oversight connects the different processes.

ADVISE

Threshold, safeguarding actions and next steps

CO-ORDINATE

Appropriate agencies and parallel processes

OVERSEE

Fair, thorough and proportionate case management

MONITOR

Progress, timescales and agreed actions

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The LADO manages and oversees the safeguarding process.

Myth or fact?

The LADO investigates the allegation	MYTH
The LADO decides whether somebody is dismissed	MYTH
The LADO advises on safeguarding	FACT
The LADO helps coordinate relevant agencies	FACT
Have direct communication with the person who is subject of the allegation	MYTH

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The Four Allegation Criteria That the LADO Considers.

HARM

Has the adult behaved in a way that harmed, or may have harmed, a child?

CRIMINAL

May the adult have committed a criminal offence against or related to a child?

RISK

Has the adult behaved towards a child in a way indicating a risk of harm?

SUITABILITY (TRANSFERABLE RISK OF HARM)

Has the adult behaved in a way that may indicate they are unsuitable to work with children?

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If you are unsure seek advice.

TRANSFERABLE RISK: WHAT MAY BE RELEVANT?

Behaviour outside work may raise questions about risk of harm or suitability to work with children.

KEY MESSAGE

“Outside work” does not automatically mean “nothing to do with work”.

The employer does not need to reach a finding before seeking LADO advice. The relevance depends on the circumstances, the role and the possible risk to children.

- Downloading or possessing child sexual abuse or indecent images
- Offences or harm involving their own children
- Exposing children to violence, including domestic abuse
- Inappropriate behaviour involving excessive drinking, supplying alcohol or illegal substances
- Inappropriate relationships with adults who may pose a risk
- Putting children at risk through offending, including driving or drug offences
- Arrest or police investigation for relevant offences, including violence, theft or sexual offences
- Radicalisation or honour-based abuse
- Abuse of a vulnerable adult or animals

KEY MESSAGE: “Outside work” does not automatically mean “nothing to do with work”.

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Activity: LADO, maybe LADO, or organisational issue?

A teaching assistant is repeatedly five minutes late.	ORGANISATIONAL
A teacher, despite management input, continues to make inappropriate sexual remarks to students that makes them feel uncomfortable.	LADO
A foster carer makes a rejecting comment to a child.	MAYBE LADO / MORE CONTEXT
A youth worker is arrested for drink-driving with no children present.	MAYBE LADO / MORE CONTEXT

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Not every concern is a LADO allegation, but every safeguarding concern must be properly considered.

Would your view change?

1

A nursery worker raises their voice at a child.

2

Two earlier concerns mention rough handling.

3

A colleague says the same child is repeatedly singled out.

4

Another child says the worker hurts children's arms when angry.

At what point did your view change, and why?

Patterns matter. Context matters. Information-sharing matters.

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Path of the LADO Process

Safeguarding, evidence and process need to move together.



Historic allegations enter the same safeguarding pathway. The passage of time does not remove the need to consider risk, suitability and information-sharing.

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Outcomes: use the evidence accurately

SUBSTANTIATED	Sufficient evidence to prove the allegation
UNSUBSTANTIATED	Insufficient evidence to prove or disprove, does not mean it didn't happen.
UNFOUNDED	No evidence or proper basis supporting the allegation
MALICIOUS	Evidence of a deliberate act to deceive
FALSE	Sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation

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The decision in the safeguarding LADO process will in most instances be adjudicated on balance of probabilities as the threshold in safeguarding outcomes is lower than expected in a court of law

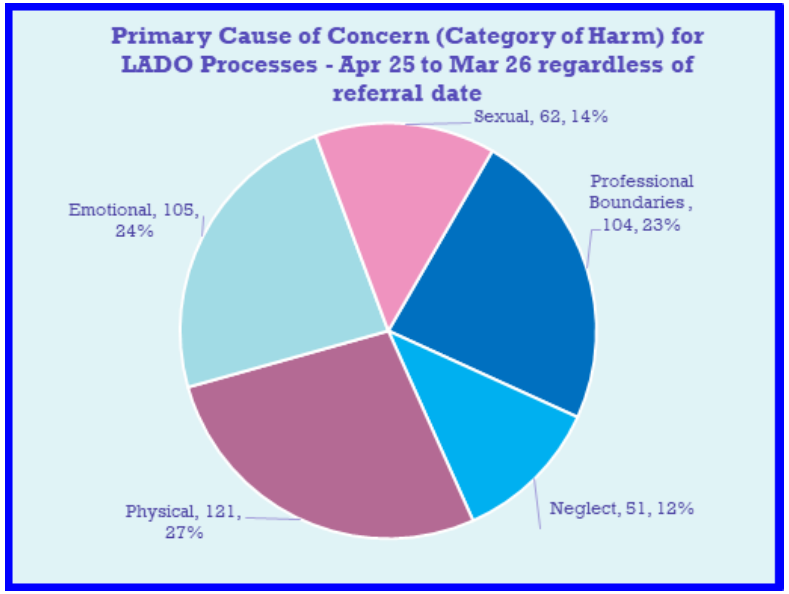
Norfolk LADO data 2026

The Governance Service

Breakdown of LADO Referrals where threshold was not met and closed with advice and guidance given and LADO Referrals where threshold was met and progressed through a formal safeguarding LADO process.				
Referrals	**2022/2023**	**2023/2024**	**2024/2025**	**2025/2026**
Referrals - Threshold not met	576	682	814	890
Referrals - Threshold met	146	280	318	328
Total LADO Referral received	722	962	1132	1218

Education remains a significant area of LADO activity, with increases in both threshold-met and threshold-not-met referrals. During 2025/26, 362 referrals involved individuals working in education, with 304 originating directly from the sector. In addition, the LADO maintained oversight of 668 ESS Duty Desk consultations, of which 100 were advised to progress to a formal LADO referral. This demonstrates the important role of early consultation in identifying concerns that require escalation, while enabling lower-level concerns to be managed proportionately within education settings.





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The LADO service also maintained oversight of **668 Education Strategy Service (ESS) Duty Desk consultations**

The legal and procedural framework

The role is anchored in national safeguarding duties and local multi-agency procedures.

Children Act 2004, section 11

Organisations must discharge their functions having regard to the need to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

Working Together to Safeguard Children

Local authorities should have designated officers involved in managing and overseeing allegations.

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Schools and colleges must have procedures for concerns or allegations about people working on their behalf.

Local safeguarding procedures

Norfolk arrangements set out the route for consultation, referral and multi-agency allegations management.

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The framework supports both child protection and a fair, proportionate process for the person of concern.

Your Norfolk LADO Team and Where to Find Information

Contacts, referral forms and guidance in one place

WHO ARE THE LADO?

1. **Lorraine Owen**
   LADO Service Manager
2. **Ancil Gerber**
   LADO
3. **Natalie Hewett**
   LADO
4. **Fiona Osborne**
   LADO
5. **Jeff Poe**
   LADO
6. **Nicola Forrest and Diane Bennett**
   Business Support and Referral Coordinators, part-time

WHERE TO FIND FORMS AND INFORMATION

1. Visit the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership website:
   Allegations Against Persons who Work/Volunteer with Children Policy | NSCP
2. LADO consultation and referral form:
   norfolk-lado-consultation-referral-form-blank-april-2025.doc
3. Leaflet for people referred to the LADO service:
   information-for-persons-referred-to-lado-sept-2026.pdf

LADO service email: lado@norfolk.gov.uk

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LADO role and process: quick reference

The LADO role

Advice
Thresholds, safeguarding actions and next steps.

Co-ordination
Appropriate agencies and parallel processes.

Oversight
Fair, thorough and proportionate case management.

Monitoring
Progress, timescales and agreed actions.

Four allegation criteria

Harm
Harmed, or may have harmed, a child.

Criminal offence
May have committed an offence against or related to a child.

Risk of harm
Behaviour towards a child indicates a risk of harm.

Suitability
Behaviour may indicate unsuitability to work with children.

The process

1. Referral / consultation
2. LADO triage
3. Threshold decision
4. Initial LADO meeting
5. Enquiries / investigation
6. Final LADO meeting
7. Process closure

The LADO oversees the process. Investigators carry out the enquiries.

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If you are unsure, seek LADO advice

Self-evaluation and welcome

