



ABU HANIFAH FOUNDATION

Excellence in Islamic Education

“Where every child matters and every day counts”

Allegations of Abuse Policy

UPDATED 2026

1. Purpose

This policy forms part of Abu Hanifah Foundation's safeguarding framework. It sets out how we respond to **allegations of abuse** and **concerns about the conduct of adults** who work with, or on behalf of, the Foundation.

We put the **welfare of children first** at all times. We act quickly. We act proportionately. We involve statutory agencies when required.

We also treat adults who are the subject of concerns **fairly and with respect**. We do not assume guilt. We provide support. We protect confidentiality as far as the law allows.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, agency staff, volunteers, trustees, contractors, visiting speakers, and anyone working on behalf of the Foundation.
- Concerns arising **inside or outside** the setting, where the behaviour may indicate a risk to children or may affect the person's suitability to work with children ("position of trust" concerns).

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct / Safer Working Practice
- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Behaviour, Complaints, Disciplinary, and Safer Recruitment policies

3. Legal and statutory framework

We follow relevant statutory guidance and local safeguarding partnership procedures, including:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025**
- Local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures for managing allegations (including timely notification to the LADO)
- National best practice on managing allegations about adults working with children

4. Core safeguarding principles

- **Child-centred approach.** We prioritise the child's safety, voice, and outcomes.
- **Early reporting.** We share concerns promptly with the right person.
- **No internal “fact-finding” that risks contamination.** We do not investigate allegations that require police or children's social care involvement.
- **Right support.** We support the child and the adult throughout.
- **Clear records.** We keep accurate, dated, and signed safeguarding records.
- **Confidentiality.** We share information on a need-to-know basis, in line with safeguarding duties and data protection.

5. Definitions and thresholds

5.1 Allegations that meet the LADO threshold

An allegation must be managed under LADO procedures where information suggests an adult has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; or
- 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 and are unsuitable to work with children.

5.2 Low-level concerns

A **low-level concern** is behaviour that does not meet the LADO threshold but is **inconsistent with the staff code of conduct** and may indicate a drift in standards. Low-level concerns must still be recorded, reviewed, and used to identify patterns.

5.3 Concerns outside the setting

Concerns about an adult's conduct outside work may require action if they indicate risk to children or raise suitability concerns (position of trust).

6. Named safeguarding roles at Abu Hanifah Foundation

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Case Manager (unless allegation is about the Principal):

Principal Hafidh Ismail Adam

- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL):

Maulana Mubarak Patel (Deputy Principal)

- Female Safeguarding Lead:
Mu' alimah Abeda Mallu

Case manager means the person who leads and coordinates the response to an allegation, liaises with the LADO and other agencies, and oversees the employment process. Where the allegation is about the Principal/DSL, the case manager role transfers to the **Nominated Safeguarding Trustee / Chair (or equivalent)**.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The Principal / DSL (Hafidh Ismail Adam) will

- ensure staff understand safeguarding duties through induction and ongoing training, including this policy and the code of conduct;
- ensure children know how to report worries and feel listened to;
- ensure parents and carers understand key conduct boundaries and reporting routes;
- act as case manager for allegations about staff and volunteers (unless the allegation concerns the Principal);
- consult and notify the **LADO without delay** where the threshold appears met, and **within one working day** in line with local procedures;
- ensure no action is taken that could compromise a police or social care investigation;

- decide, with HR advice where appropriate, whether interim measures are needed (see section 9);
- maintain appropriate confidentiality and secure records;
- ensure referrals are made to the **DBS, Teaching Regulation Agency (where applicable)**, or other regulators when required;
- ensure lessons learned reviews take place after cases conclude.

7.2 The Deputy DSL (Maulana Mubarak Patel) will

- deputise for the DSL when required;
- support staff to report concerns promptly;
- ensure records remain complete and consistent;
- support case management activity as directed by the DSL/LADO.

7.3 The Female Safeguarding Lead (Mu 'alimah Abeda Mallu) will

- provide an accessible safeguarding route for girls and female staff;
- support disclosures and ensure concerns reach the DSL/DDSL immediately;
- advise on culturally sensitive engagement while keeping safeguarding paramount.

7.4 All staff, volunteers, and trustees will

- put child welfare first;
- follow the staff code of conduct and safer working practice;
- avoid one-to-one situations that are not authorised, recorded, or necessary;
- report **immediately** any concern that an adult may have behaved in a way that could harm a child, may be criminal, or may indicate unsuitability;
- report any incident that could be misconstrued, as soon as possible, to protect children and staff;
- cooperate with safeguarding processes and maintain confidentiality.

7.5 The Trustees (Dr. Khalid Master) will

- ensure the Foundation's culture promotes safeguarding and professional boundaries;
- appoint a **Nominated Safeguarding person** to provide oversight and act as case manager when the allegation concerns the Principal/DSL;
- ensure safer recruitment and disciplinary panels receive appropriate training;
- receive at least annual assurance on safeguarding, including trends in low-level concerns and allegation management;
- review learning from cases and ensure improvements get implemented.

8. How to report an allegation or concern

8.1 Immediate danger

If a child is at immediate risk, staff must take urgent protective action and contact emergency services where required.

8.2 Reporting route (standard)

- Report to the **DSL (Principal Hafidh Ismail Adam)** immediately using the secure 'Safeguarding Disclosure Form' available on Full Staff Announcement group.
- If unavailable, report to the **DDSL (Maulana Mubarak Patel)**.
- If the concern relates to a girl and the child prefers, staff may also involve the **Female Safeguarding Lead (Mu 'alimah Abeda Mallu)**, but the concern must still reach the DSL/DDSL without delay.

8.3 Allegation about the Principal / DSL

Report directly to the **Nominated Safeguarding Trustee / Chair**. That person must contact the **LADO** without delay.

8.4 Whistleblowing

Where a concern involves senior leaders or you fear improper handling, use the Whistleblowing Policy route. You may also seek external advice through appropriate channels.

9. Immediate actions and interim safeguards

The case manager will consider proportionate interim safeguards, including:

- increased supervision or adjustments to duties;
- restricted contact with certain pupils;
- temporary redeployment;
- supervised duties only;
- suspension, **only where necessary** to protect children, to prevent interference with an investigation, or where the allegation is so serious it may amount to gross misconduct.

Suspension is a neutral act. It is not a disciplinary outcome. It must remain under review and last no longer than necessary.

10. Managing the process with the LADO and other agencies

- The case manager will **consult the LADO** where the allegation may meet the threshold, before any internal action that could compromise external enquiries.
- Where police or children's social care become involved, the Foundation will cooperate fully and align actions with agreed multi-agency plans.
- The Foundation will not ask a child for a detailed written statement as part of internal fact-finding where this may prejudice statutory enquiries.
- The Foundation will follow agreed communications plans, including what can be shared with parents, staff, and others.

11. Support for children and for the adult who is subject of the allegation

We will:

- ensure the child receives appropriate pastoral and safeguarding support;
- provide the adult with a named contact, clear information about the process, and signposting to professional support;
- consider reasonable adjustments where needed;
- remind all parties about confidentiality and respectful conduct.

12. Confidentiality, information sharing, and communication

- We maintain confidentiality and share information only with those who need it to keep children safe and to run a fair process.
- We keep records securely. We restrict access.
- We manage rumours and inappropriate discussion as a conduct issue.
- We do not comment publicly beyond what the law and safeguarding guidance allows.

13. Record keeping and outcomes

The DSL/case manager will keep a clear, chronological record of:

- the initial concern, dates, times, and who raised it;
- actions taken and decisions made, including rationale;
- LADO advice and multi-agency actions;
- the final outcome and any learning.

Outcomes should use recognised categories such as substantiated, unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious, where applicable, and drive learning and improvement (including training, supervision, or policy changes).

14. Post-case actions

Where concerns are substantiated and the person is removed from working with children (or would have been had they not resigned), the Foundation will consider:

- referral to the **DBS** and any relevant professional regulator;
- updates to safer recruitment practice;
- a lessons learned review to reduce recurrence.

We do not use settlement agreements to prevent lawful safeguarding referrals or disclosures.

15. Monitoring, evaluation, and review

Trustees will:

- receive an annual safeguarding report that includes allegation and low-level concern themes, response times, and learning actions;
- review any use of suspension after the process concludes, including necessity and duration;
- check staff induction and ongoing training coverage, including through exit processes where appropriate;
- review this policy at least annually, and after any significant safeguarding incident or changes in statutory guidance.