

IDTA procedural statement regarding allegations against IDTA members or IDTA staff.

It is essential that any allegation of abuse made against a person who works with children and young people in any role, including those who work in a voluntary capacity, are dealt with fairly, quickly and consistently, in a way which provides effective protection for the child and at the same time supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

This procedure is to be read in conjunction with the IDTA safeguarding children policy.

We do this to:

- Ensure that allegations are dealt with quickly and in a fair manner
- Prevent unsuitable people from working with children and young people
- Promote safe practice and challenge poor / unsafe practice
- Contribute to effective partnership working

This guidance document relates to all those who have association with the IDTA for example and not exclusively:

- IDTA staff
- IDTA member teacher and examiners
- The Board of Directors
- Volunteers, chaperones and assistants at the schools of IDTA member teachers,
- And concerns those working in positions of trust.

This procedure is applicable where it is believed that an individual may have:

- behaved in a way that has harmed, 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

for example:

there are concerns about a person's behaviour or conduct in their personal or professional life that might indicate their unsuitability to work with children

concerns arise about a person's behaviour with regard to his / her own children and if they or their child have been subject to a child protection investigation

concerns arise about the behaviour in the private or community life of an individual, their partner, member of their family or other household member

or where there are concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between those who work with children or young people as outlined in the Sexual Offences Act 2003

There are a number of sources from which a complaint or an allegation might arise, some examples include:

directly from a child

from a parent or other adult

from Police or local authority children's social care

from a member of the public

from concerns generated through a professional relationship for example another dance teacher raises a concern

disclosed anonymously or disclosed online

All concerns should be raised to IDTA head office

When a concern is raised it will be:

Shared immediately with the IDTA designated safeguarding lead and / or the CEO of the IDTA

They will then share the information with the relevant LADO (the local authority designated officer in the area from which the concern has originated)

Where there are concerns about significant harm or immediate harm and the incident has occurred outside of working hours the appropriate area emergency duty team/ front door social care team or the police should be informed immediately.

In all cases the information shared and those it has been shared with should be recorded.

Keep a clear and comprehensive record of any allegations made including:

- events leading to the allegation or concern;
- circumstances and context of the allegation;
- details of any actions taken;
- details of any decisions reached;
- final outcome

These records will be kept by the IDTA

The Designated safeguarding lead will discuss concerns with the LADO as required.

Where the designated safeguarding lead / LADO and or police feel it is appropriate, the membership of the individual who has been accused will be temporarily suspended pending further exploration / investigation.

This is for the safety and welfare of both the children in the care of that individual and also the individual. Suspension is a neutral, no accusatory act and will be made on the advice of the LADO/ Police. Suspension will be made where:

- there is cause to suspect a child/children is at risk of significant harm
- the allegation warrants investigation by the Police
- Or there are other circumstances relating to the particular case that warrant suspension.

At this point further information should be shared:

If the parents/carers of the child are not already aware of the allegation the LADO in consultation with colleagues in the Police and Social Care, will advise the IDTA about when and how to do this. Parents / Guardians and children should be supported to understand the process.

The IDTA will seek advice from the LADO / Police about how much information should be disclosed to the referred person. Subject to the restrictions on the information that can be shared, the IDTA should as soon as possible inform the referred person about:

- the nature of the allegation,
- how enquiries will be conducted
- the possible outcome.

The referred individual should:

be treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved

be provided with support throughout the investigative process and be advised to seek appropriate support

be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any IDTA process and be given a named point of contact in the organisation, usually the designated safeguarding lead.

If an allegation or concern arises about an IDTA member outside of their work with children and this may present a risk of harm to children for whom the member of staff is responsible, the general principles outlined in these procedures will still apply. If the member lives in a different authority area to that which covers their workplace, liaison should take place between the relevant agencies in both areas.

If position of trust / strategy meetings are required an IDTA representative, usually the IDTA designated safeguarding lead will attend to ensure the IDTA is fully aware of any issues that may affect the association or its membership. The purpose of such meeting is not to prove innocence of guilt but to establish an individual's suitability to work with children and to consider appropriate safeguards.

Following completed social care and police process a decision must be made by the CEO of the IDTA as to whether the individual should retain their IDTA membership status. The Board of Directors should be advised by the COE and/ or DSP on recommendations from the LADO / police and the decision made.

Where the decision is made by the LADO that no further action should be taken, or the allegation is considered by the relevant authorities to be false, malicious or unfounded the suspension ban can be lifted. The individual should receive confirmation of this from the IDTA and the LADO in writing with the LADO providing the rationale for this decision.

Where the allegation is investigated and the individual is prosecuted and convicted, the allegation is substantiated the members IDTA membership should be terminated.

In certain circumstances an individual may not be prosecuted or convicted however the IDTA still reserves the right to terminate membership, for example if an allegation is unsubstantiated but there is a significant possibility of risk of significant harm the IDTA will be advised by the police and the local authority on this matter and will act in the best interest of children, young people and families and the IDTA, its wider membership and its reputation.

Termination of membership: if an allegation is made against a member and that member voluntarily terminates their membership this does not mean the allegation should not be raised, Information must still be shared with the Local authority designated officer.

Information sharing and consent:

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity whilst an allegation is being investigated or considered. Information should be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to protect children, facilitate enquiries and manage disciplinary processes.

Consent should be sought for all information shared, in accordance with the IDTA safeguarding policy, where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

This procedure will be reviewed annually:

Date of last review 16th May 2022

Reviewing Individual: Victoria Race, Designated Safeguarding Lead.