



Bromley Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

# Local Authority Designated Officer Annual Report

## Executive Summary

**April 2021 to March 2022**

All organisations that provide services for children or provide staff or volunteers to work with or care for children, should operate a procedure for handling allegations that is consistent with Pan London Safeguarding Children Procedures Chapter 7 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

The national requirement for Local Authorities to appoint a designated officer (LADO) to manage allegations against adults who work with children is outlined in Working Together and in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education.

The LADO responsibility sits within the Children, Education and Families Directorate in Bromley Council. Gemma Taylor is employed on a full-time basis and has overall responsibility for discharging the duties of the LADO. The LADO reports to Stuart Hills, Head of Service of Quality Improvement.

The role of the LADO is to:

- Provide advice and guidance to employers and voluntary organisations
- Liaise with the police, children’s social care and other relevant agencies.
- Monitor the progress of cases to ensure that they are dealt with as quickly as possible, consistent with a thorough and fair process.

Every agency that works with children and young people should have a Designated Officer whose job it is to liaise with and refer to LADO.

The LADO should be alerted to all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (includes transfer of risk, risk by association)

### **SOURCE OF REFERRALS**

Referrals and consultations come from a range of agencies. Most referrals have been from education, early years, and social care. Training and awareness of the LADO role has been targeted to these agencies within the year as well as with faith groups and health agencies. The data highlights the need for the LADO in the coming year to continue to work with the Bromley Safeguarding Children Partnership in improving awareness and links within Police and Health and also the voluntary sector.

2021/22	Contacts	Consultations	Referrals
Number of allegations referred to LADO	437	233	204

### **CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY**

The number of referrals from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, which met threshold for harm is higher than the last reporting year, where out of 437 contacts, 204 met threshold for referral. Of the 204 2021/22 referrals, 72 were substantiated, 30 were unsubstantiated, 69 unfounded, 1 false and 32 are ongoing. There was no evidence to support any allegation deemed malicious.



Bromley Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

# Local Authority Designated Officer Activity Report

**April 2021 to March 2022**

## INTRODUCTION

This report is written to provide an overview of the activity of the Designated Officer (LADO) for the period April 2021 – March 2022 in managing allegations against people who work or volunteer with children and are therefore in a position of trust.

Nationally, all agencies and settings that provide services for children, provide staff or volunteers to work with, or care for children are required (under statutory guidance – *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018*), to have clear procedures for managing and reporting allegations against staff, whether they are paid or voluntary.

This guidance outlines the requirement for the LADO to be contacted and to oversee the effectiveness, transparency, and record retention of the process, not only in terms of protecting children, but also ensuring that staff who are the subject of an allegation are treated fairly and that the response and subsequent action by the employer or regulatory body is consistent, reasonable and proportionate.

Within education services, additional guidance '*Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020*' outlines specific requirements considered when managing allegations against staff working in educational settings.

The detail and requirements of the LADO process are set out in the London Child Protection Procedures Chapter 7. Following an update of the procedures, proposed by the London Regional LADO Group, the role of the LADO was expanded to address wider concerns relating to staff in positions of trust.

The management of allegations should be seen in the wider context of safer employment practices, which has three essential elements:

- Safer recruitment and selection practices
- Safer working practices
- Management of allegations or concerns

This report will primarily focus on the third element, but this activity should be seen in the wider context of the BSCP's work in respect of safer recruitment, employment, and guidance to support safer working practices across the children's workforce and within the private and voluntary sectors.

When an allegation is made against a professional, the safety of the children with whom the professional comes into contact is the priority. Employers, however, have an additional duty of care towards their staff and therefore the complexities involved in responding to such allegations require balance and careful judgement to ensure risk and support are measured at both levels. The LADO supports this process through advice on thresholds at the stage of notification; mediation with colleagues in other agencies, providing a proportionate response to investigations; guidance on individual risk management including careful consideration of whether suspension of the staff member might be necessary, or temporary adjustments to their duties/role; and support in the analysis of information and evidence gained as investigations progress, and to ensure risks are responded to and appropriately concluded.

LADO work is not restricted to allegations against adults whilst working in a professional capacity with children. If there are concerns that a professional has harmed their own children or other children in the community, it may be necessary and proportionate to undertake enquiries and share information with the employer, HR, police, social care, and other relevant parties to form a judgement as to whether they are suitable to continue to work with children or pose a transferable risk. There are also times when people may be out of work, but pose a risk of harm, because of their past employment with children, which has given them credibility with families.

This report provides detail of allegation activity notified within Bromley during the period **April 1st, 2021, to March 31st, 2022**. The report will also seek to identify trends and issues affecting the children's workforce relating to the management of allegations. It is written to provide statistical data for the BSCP and partner agencies on the number, nature, investigation process and outcome of allegations which are considered to meet threshold.

## **ROLE OF THE LADO**

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) is responsible for the management and oversight of all investigations into allegations of abuse towards children, against people who work and volunteer with children. Working Together states that organisations and agencies working with children and families should have clear policies for dealing with allegations against people who work with children. Such policies should make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved in a way towards a child that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to Children.
- Behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (includes transfer of risk, risk by association)

In addition, the London Child Protection Procedures, revised in 2018, add the following:

- Has behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not have to directly relate to a child.
- As a parent or carer, has become subject to child protection procedures.
- Is closely associated with someone in their personal lives (e.g., partner, member of the family or other household member) who may present a risk of harm to child/ren for whom the member of staff is responsible in their employment or volunteering.

Where allegations or concerns are expressed regarding the conduct or behaviour of an adult working with children are raised, the LADO provides immediate triaging and assessing within 24 hours, with the employer to evaluate the seriousness of the concerns. Where concerns do not meet the threshold for LADO oversight, the service will offer guidance and support for next steps action by the organisation. In some circumstances, concerns do not meet the harm threshold as above, but do indicate a level of care or professional conduct which falls far

below that which is expected, the LADO will oversee the investigation of the allegations, but record these as LADO Consultations.

Where the threshold of harm has been met, the LADO will liaise with the police and other agencies, including Ofsted and professional bodies and monitor the progress of referrals to ensure that they are dealt with consistently, fairly and in a timely manner. The LADO ensures organisations operate a thorough and fair process of investigating allegations. The LADO will provide oversight of the investigative process through to its conclusion.

The LADO service will also chair, where appropriate, allegations against staff and volunteer (ASV) meetings and establish an agreed format to an investigation, whilst facilitating the resolution of any inter-agency issues. The LADO will also provide liaison with other local authority LADOs where there are cross-boundary issues.

In recent years there has been an increase in the numbers of investigations overseen by the LADO where a “single agency” investigation is initiated by the employer and police are not involved. This has been partly due to the repositioning of the LADO role from merely dealing with matters of harm, to those of standards of care and transferable risk.

In 2020 and 2021 respectively, the “fourth criteria” was added to the LADO threshold by KCSIE and “Working Together” and this reflects how guidance has evolved and responded to this preventative agenda, in that this allows for wider consideration of behaviour which raises wider concerns regarding adults working with children where a direct impact upon a child of the behaviour is identified.

The LADO Service provides advice and support to organisations, and in particular schools, working with children in relation to safe recruitment practices. This includes discussions around references, and advice on issues where recruits may have positive DBS checks. This has complimented HR guidance and advice and provided a safeguarding context to recruiting staff.

The service collects strategic data and maintains a confidential database in relation to allegations. The LADO Service disseminates learning from LADO enquiries throughout the children’s workforce and wider groups, including safeguarding forums across the Borough. The LADO will also attend children’s social care and police strategy meetings held under child protection procedures where there are concerns regarding the children of those working within the children’s workforce.

## **SERVICE STRUCTURE**

The LADO Service consists of a Full-time LADO, who manages the Education Safeguarding Officer, who is a Senior Social Worker with a Safeguarding background, and a Business Support Officer.

The LADO line manages the Education Safeguarding Officer (ESO) and continues to be instrumental in supporting the development of the ESO role during the year, providing a link between social care and education. The ESO role has identified an increase in concerns around bullying of children, peer-on-peer abuse, home schooling, tuition, and other alternative educational provision outside mainstream school. The ESO has also noted an

increase in well-being and mental health issues affecting both children and professionals, which gives rise to a need for further support and the implementation of mental health leads identified within schools has been a response to this.

Connections with the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) have improved throughout the year, with the ESO now attending the MASH daily briefing meetings twice weekly to support the triangulation of information about young people and schools being reported to MASH. Bespoke training has been provided for Education staff who visit children and families in their homes around professional curiosity and learning from practice reviews/SCR's to support professional networks with the safeguarding of vulnerable students.

Considerable improvements continue in reporting and performance data has been possible in this reporting period with the continued support of our dedicated LADO Business Support Officer. This appointment enables us to ensure several essential strategies, including an effective LADO tracker, which is used to capture, chase, and report the number of referrals and consultations to ensure timely responses and outcomes are maintained. This appointment has also ensured that the LADO is better able to give the timeliest responses, and Allegations against Staff and Volunteers (ASV) Meeting Minutes are drafted for approval within 24 hours.

The implementation of Liquid Logic has caused some delay in the methods used for capturing effective data onto the new system and the Business Support Officer has been key in working with the support provider in managing this process and ensuring that the system is fit for purpose.

## **ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE DATA**

The number of contacts to the LADO service for consultation and allegation management support has increased significantly. Between April 2021 and March 2022, the LADO recorded 437 allegations against the children's workforce (including volunteers) in Bromley referred to as Contacts. A LADO contact is defined as any information received that required an initial evaluation and/or further research to determine if the issue falls under the managing allegations procedure.

The LADO must consider concerns against threshold criteria, namely:

1. Harm has occurred or there is a risk of harm to child(ren)
2. Serious concerns regarding conduct which could lead to harm
3. The conduct falls below standards expected
4. The standard of care falls below that which is expected.

Of the 437 contacts made to LADO, 204 reached the threshold for a Referral, meeting the criteria points 1. & 2. above, however, many of the other Contacts, referred to as Consultations (points 3. & 4. Above), of which there were 233. These Consultations mainly relate to staff conduct issues which, on consultation, are designated as below the allegation threshold or unlikely to result in a S47 investigation. Consultations can refer to the safety and welfare of children and are passed back to employers to manage as practice or professional capability issues. They may also constitute historical matters where staff are no longer

working within the children’s workforce or could relate to matters of policy guidance, safer recruitment, low level concerns etc.

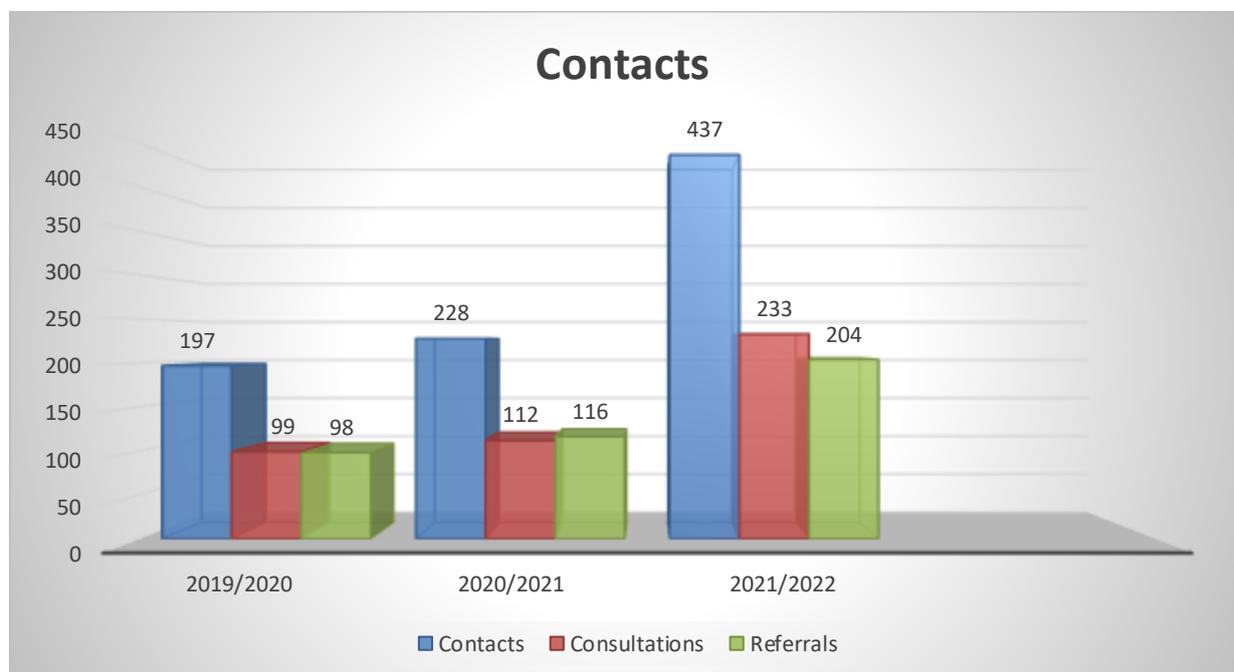
Examples of consultations could include contact from Ofsted about concerns within schools, notifications about children experiencing extreme bullying, serious health and safety incidents in regulated provisions, LADO referrals which after investigation must be referred on to the ESO, another local authority, and/or historical allegations within which we are unable to identify the professional etc. These matters can impact on the safety of children and the reputation of the school, BSCP and Council (Organisational Risk issues).

The LADO continues to track and record not only referrals but also all consultations between the LADO and relevant agencies. The categorisation of a piece of work as a ‘consultation’ is deceptive and may suggest lesser input from the LADO. However, many consultations require considerable follow-up from the LADO beyond the initial contact.

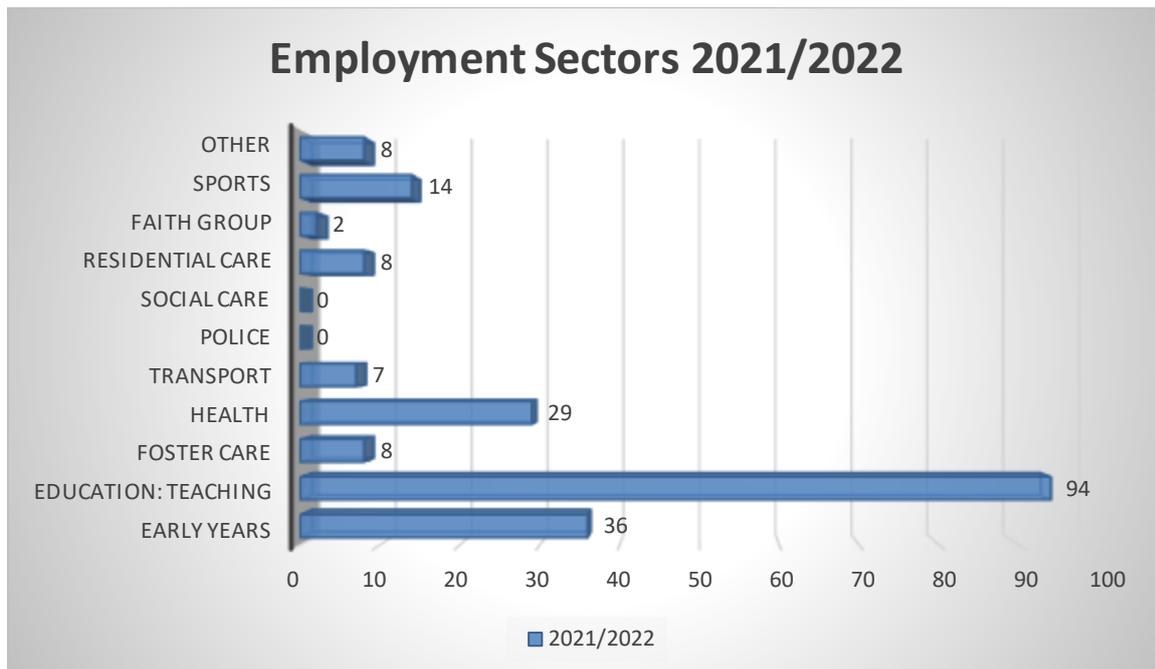
Upon determining that LADO threshold of harm has been met, a decision is made as to whether an Allegations against Staff and Volunteers Meeting (ASV) needs to be convened.

The meetings draw together and co-ordinate three strands of enquiries through:

- The police in relation to possible criminal matters.
- Social care in relation to the needs of any child or young person, namely the victim.
- The employer in relation to disciplinary and employment matters, including support to the adult about whom the allegation has been made.



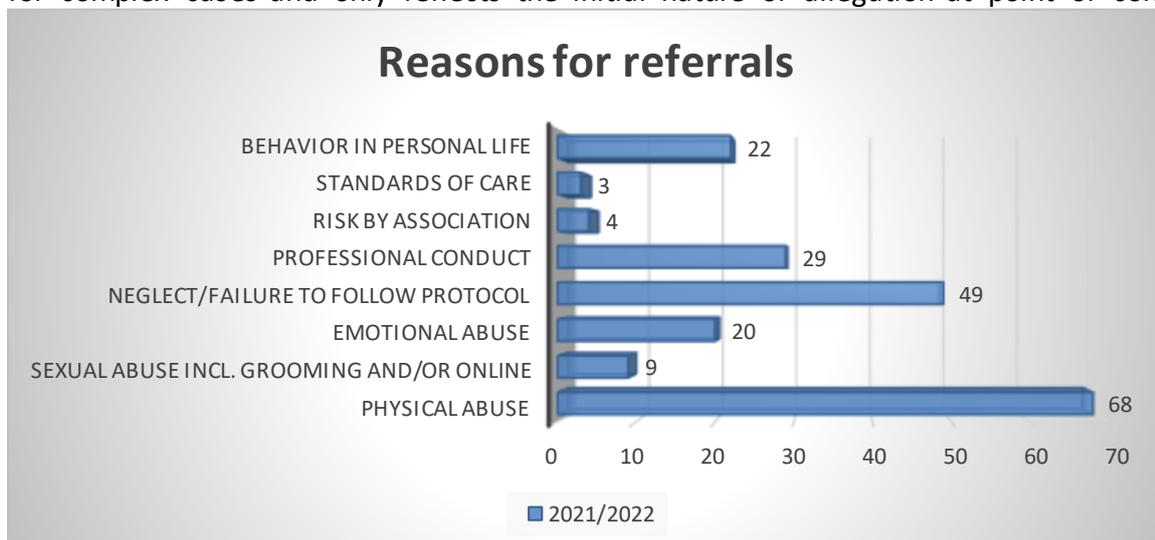
## BREAKDOWN REFERRALS FROM EMPLOYMENT SECTORS



It is unsurprising that the staff most likely to have allegations made against them will be those working with children directly for significant periods of the day and often they have experienced multiple challenges. For these staff, the need to understand and work within the basic procedures of professional safe working practice is crucial to protect both children and staff. It is also important that all staff working with children know that they will be subject to safeguarding procedures (without prejudice) should an allegation be made against them, in the interest of keeping children safe. The LADO provides regular Managing Allegations training throughout the year to support the development and upkeep of safe practice in responding to Allegations against professionals. **See section under Training and Awareness Raising for more details.**

## ALLEGATIONS BY CATEGORY

LADO referrals are categorised in line with DfE data collation descriptors. This is a basic tool for complex cases and only reflects the initial nature of allegation at point of contact.



Physical abuse remains the largest proportion of alleged abuse due to the nature of interaction required between teaching staff, early years, and health practitioners towards children. There may be a need for the use of restraint on a child who is deemed to be placing themselves or others at risk due to their exhibiting behaviour. During the restraint, the child may make an allegation which could be due to being unintentionally hurt in the course of being restrained. It is for this reason that schools, nurseries, and hospitals ensure that staff are fully equipped and understand the guidance in place if it is deemed that the use of restraint is required, and appropriate training is provided.

There has also been an increase in staff failing to follow protocol, this may be attributable to having to adopt new ways of working practices considering the impact of the pandemic in relation to online teaching. However, I also think that failure to report Safeguarding concerns has increased due to increased knowledge and wider scope of the definition of harm, or more specifically potential harm.

Once it has been established that the allegation is not of a criminal nature, or the criminal investigation has been completed, the LADO will advise and guide employers in conducting their own Internal Management Investigation (IMI). During this process issues considered would include:

- What and when to disclose details of the allegation and to whom
- Guidance throughout the Investigation Process
- Ensuring Employers evidence their Duty of Care towards staff
- Ensuring as much as possible a fair and transparent process
- Ensuring a timely and proportionate response

### **INITIAL EVALUATION MEETINGS (IEM) AND ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF AND VOLUNTEER MEETINGS (ASV)**

Initial Evaluation Meetings (IEM) and Allegations against Staff and Volunteer Meetings (ASV) have significantly decreased during this reporting period due to the consistent increase in LADO referrals impacting upon capacity.

### **OUTCOME OF ALLEGATIONS**

The Department for Education has defined outcomes within five definitions – Substantiated, Unsubstantiated, Unfounded, False, and Malicious. The LADO is required by guidance to collate information on allegation outcomes within these definitions.

**Substantiated** means there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation, or it has been admitted; **Unsubstantiated** means there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence; **Unfounded** means there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation; **False** means there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation; and **Malicious** means there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation and there has been a deliberate act to deceive.

We must be mindful when considering these statistics that any adults deliberately intent on harming children are unlikely to do so in front of witnesses, that a child's word against an adult's is unlikely to be accepted as evidence at a criminal level and that many children do not

have a voice either due to their young age or communication difficulties, and these are our most vulnerable children. The LADO's starting point is that children's allegations are believed, and investigations are conducted from this starting point.



There has been an increase in Unfounded LADO outcomes. Analysis indicates that this is partly attributable to increased awareness of the LADO role and due diligence in the timeliness of referrals being made prior to undertaking any investigation. Also, I am reassured that the number of Unsubstantiated outcomes has decreased which I believe is due to a higher level of scrutiny in the quality of investigations, increased use of CCTV footage, and a concerted effort to reduce the number of Unsubstantiated LADO outcomes due to the unsatisfactory nature of not being able to prove one way or another the outcome of an allegation of harm against a child.

In addition, the LADO continues to update and circulate guidance for employers to assist with completing good quality Internal Management Investigations and a LADO threshold document to aid professionals in their critical thinking of outcome criteria.

The 32 current ongoing cases continue to be under police investigation, mainly due to the time it takes to complete forensics and downloading evidence from electronic devices seized from alleged suspects and/or the length of time cases await decisions from the CPS and court dates.

Below is a graph showing a breakdown of the 22 referrals to regulatory bodies.

<b>Breakdown of Agency</b>	<b>Total 2021/2022</b>
Health Governing Bodies e.g. NHS England	3
Sporting Governing Bodies e.g. Football Association, English Cricket Board, British Gymnastics	4
Ofsted	9
Independent Schools Inspectorate	1
DBS	4
Teaching Regulatory Agency	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>22</b>

LADO liaison with Ofsted has continued to strengthen in this reporting year. This relationship has been positive for both Ofsted and LADO and often the LADO's views are sought during Ofsted consideration for emergency inspections or in the timing of scheduled Inspections. Please note that the above figures do not relate to the number of LADO referrals where Ofsted are involved, which is a considerable number, this is only where LADO has had to refer when the organisation hasn't already done so or when high levels of risk are determined, and Ofsted involvement is crucial. Most Ofsted referrals do not meet the harm threshold for LADO and are managed by the ESO.

It is also suspected that better understanding of the LADO role has meant that employers are referring to their governing bodies themselves rather than waiting for LADO to do this or advice for this to be done. As a result, the governing body has often already had notification of an allegation at the point of referral to LADO. This is a significant achievement in promoting the LADO and ESO profile amongst employers.

### **TIMESCALES TO CONCLUDE REFERRALS**

Working Together to Safeguard Children sets out the expectations that 80% of LADO cases should be resolved within one month of referral, 90% within three months, and all but the most exceptional cases, completed within one year. The graph below illustrates the timescales in which referrals have been concluded by the LADO in the 20/21 reporting year.

Whilst investigations are undertaken by employers, the police and any responsible agency or body, the LADO manages and monitors the investigations to ensure fairness and thoroughness and to challenge where and when required.

<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Totals 2019/20</b>	<b>Totals 2020/21</b>	<b>Totals 2021/22</b>
1 Month	45	50	83
1 -3 Month	33	42	64
3 - 6 Month	5	15	24
6 - 9month	3	5	0
9 -12 month	0	0	
12 month +	8	0	1
Ongoing	4	4	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>204</b>

The response time in respect of being able to resolve referrals of allegations has significantly reduced. Overall, we have completed 72% referrals completed within 1-3 months, in comparison to the last reporting year of 80%. It is the responsibility of the LADO to provide timescales and guidance, and although several sectors can work within these timescales, some sectors still struggle to meet deadlines for various reasons, e.g the Police.

The increased referral rate to the LADO has also impacted upon the timeliness of reaching LADO findings. However, other contributing factors are the Covid 19 Pandemic (due to increased members of staff not being available for investigations due to illness), increased mental health issues and the complexity of referrals.

There has also been an increase in Strategy Meetings conducted by Bromley MASH considering the need for sec 47 investigations on behalf of children which, although a welcome improvement, can add an additional layer of delay.

Most long-term/ongoing cases have police involvement. The Police report that, on average, it can take up to a year or longer to prepare their case and obtain a decision from the Crown Prosecution Service. Because of this delay, both the child making the allegation and the adult/s requiring justice, experience delay. The person against whom the allegation has been made will often not be able to work during this time and some have reported to have suffered family problems and mental health difficulties during this time. The Employer can also experience frustration and resource issues whilst the employee remains suspended on full pay. Where the LADO process is stalled, with employers having to wait for the Police to complete their investigations (i.e. disciplinary procedures, Standards of Care Assessments, referrals to governing bodies etc.) before other investigations can progress, inevitably delays closure of the LADO role.

It is important to note that the above data is not indicative of the overall resolution rate of the LADO. Considering the high level of consultation work, the timeliness of resolution improves significantly to 280 contacts being successfully concluded within one month and a further 79 concluded up to 3 months, meaning 359 of 437 contacts (82%) made with the LADO have been fully resolved within 3 months.

It is unfortunate that there is neither regional or national benchmarking data available to benchmark our LADO performance, demand and outcomes with other Local Authorities. The lead of the regional network sought data from all regional LADOs which we contributed to,

but the low return across the region meant that meaningful benchmarking could not be undertaken.

## **TRAINING AND AWARENESS RAISING**

The LADO has continued to seek to provide information and learning to all partners. This has included the delivery of sessions to the NHS England and the South East London CCG meetings to raise the profile of the LADO within health services, along with advice around what constitutes a referral to the LADO and LADO processes.

### **LADO briefings undertaken during 2021/2022:**

9 <sup>th</sup> July 2021	All Bromley Staff
9 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	Health Colleagues NHS CCG
15 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	Student Social Workers
4 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	All Bromley Staff
25 <sup>th</sup> November 2021	Health Colleagues NHS CCG
5 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	All Bromley Staff – high attendance rate of Bromley Foster Carers
10 <sup>th</sup> February 2022	Step Up Students Induction
23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2022	Evening Training for Early Years Providers
31 <sup>st</sup> March 2022	LADO/CCG/SLAM

## **WIDER LADO NETWORK & MAPPA MEETINGS**

The Bromley LADO is a member of the Regional London Network. The Regional LADO's have a bi-monthly meetings where best practice is shared and case work experiences as well as reviewing interfaces and cooperation across boroughs, including identifying themes and emerging patterns as identified above. This offers opportunities to compare and benchmark thresholds and levels of intervention, draw on the experience of others, and consider alternative approaches.

The regional group continues to develop with its prime focus of ensuring that practice and processes between London LADOs are consistent in complying with statutory guidance and the Pan London Child Protection Procedures, and feeds into the National LADO Network.

The Group also meets regularly with members from a variety of stakeholders and actively participates in debates and challenge of emerging policy, procedures, and guidance as it relates to the LADO role.

The LADO also attends monthly MAPPA meetings and liaises with Children's Social Care to ensure the safeguarding service contributes to the safety planning around violent and sexual offenders who have access to children.

## **EMERGING THEMES AND CHALLENGES FOR LADO**

### **LOCALLY**

- Significant Increase in LADO Referrals & Consultations.
- Timeliness of reaching LADO conclusion/outcome.

- Delays on LADO outcomes due to ongoing police investigations and/or CPS decisions being made – Also a national issue.
- Transition from Care First to Liquid Logic file recording systems.
- Increase in cases relating to Behaviour in Private Life and therefore, Transferrable Risk Assessments, and Low-Level Concerns.
- The impact of the Pandemic in terms of illness and increased mental health issues.

## **REGIONAL- LONDON WIDE**

- Impact of Covid, in terms of increased stress levels resulting in an increase in Mental Health issues for both staff and children, increasing the need for employers to evidence their duty of care, issues arising out of online platforms and online learning.
- Referrals and Notifications from the police relating to Police Officers as LADOs do not get referrals from Met Police DPS as standard when there are conduct matters that may meet LADO thresholds, due to the role not being considered a regulated activity (excluding the Child Abuse Investigation Team - CAIT).
- Transport for London does not have a safeguarding policy, and this represents a breach of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). TfL is the Licensing Authority for London Local Authorities. This means that they license all London minicabs. As a Licensing Authority, they have a requirement to provide CSE and Safeguarding training. This is not in effect.
- Referrals in respect of individuals and/or charities that are not registered with regulated bodies, i.e. independent tutors, independent coaches in sport, churches, unregulated children's residential units. The exact numbers of unregistered organisations are unknown and such individuals will only come to light when an allegation is made. Such individuals use church halls and school halls/grounds and/or their homes to deliver such services.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance for schools in terms of Low-Level Concerns, and increased understanding of Transferable Risk issues when behaviour in personal life brings into question a staff member's suitability to work with children. The key drivers in the Farrer & Co policy were included in KCSIE 2021 without consultation, and without consulting National and Regional LADO networks. The London and National LADO networks have responded to DFE and to the London Partnership to urge that decision-making around harm and risk of harm where conduct may have a safeguarding component always needs to be made in conjunction with the LADO. The National LADO network is in ongoing conversation with the DFE.
- DBS – the London and National LADO networks would like KCSIE to provide better guidance in terms of how to manage blemished DBS outcomes and whether to keep records of DBS disclosures on file. Ofsted seem to still discourage this, but DBS seem to suggest that this is a good idea.
- Ofsted Inspections have heavily criticised Local Authorities that don't have a Designated LADO and use Child Protection Chairs and/or Independent Reviewing Officers to fulfil this role or provide LADO cover when on annual leave.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The LADO is focussed on the steps needed to work with the Local Authority on the road to excellence and is positive about the year ahead. It has been a very productive year for the LADO service, and it continues to establish itself within the safeguarding network in Bromley and is seen as a positive and supportive provision. Professionals continue to feedback the benefits of learning and knowledge acquired because of working with the LADO.

With the progress and achievement made this year, the LADO acknowledges that there is still ongoing work to be done and more sectors to reach within Bromley such as newly employed staff in organisations as well as Designated Safeguarding leads in schools and charities. More collaborative work needs to be done with the police and voluntary organisations.

The LADO recommends that the information and details provided within this report is noted and that partners ensure that their respective services are aware of the LADO function and if not, arrange for the LADO to attend key forums within their various departments and organisations or for their staff to attend the regular LADO training.

### **ACTIONS FOR 2021/22 WITH UPDATES:**

The following are priorities during the 2021/22 year that the LADO will be progressing:

- Contributing Bromley data for the regional benchmarking exercise and using this to analyse any differentials between our approach to LADO and that of other London based LADOs.  
**Update: In Progress – feedback forms have been received; these will be analysed, and themes shared at the next Regional LADO Meeting**
- Seeking out various ways of engaging Charities/Voluntary Agencies and self-employed staff.  
**Update: Not Achieved and requires further work. This will be prioritised in 2022-23 and has been affected by an identified need to focus on engaging Early Years settings which has instead been the focus of additional twilight training sessions.**
- Should Covid restrictions ease sufficiently, the development of twilight briefing sessions for local voluntary organisations and sporting bodies will be launched.  
**Update: Commencing with bespoke sessions with Early Years providers.**
- The LADO will attend DSL forums to deliver a LADO briefing and explore significant amendments to the statutory guidance contained in Keeping Children Safe in Education that relates to LADO consultations.  
**Update: Achieved and ongoing**
- The LADO aims to improve to 90% the conclusion of LADO referrals within 1 to 3 months and increase the conclusion of LADO referrals in up to 1 month to 60%.
- **Update: Not Achieved. Although we have consistently reached 80% of referrals concluded within timescales, there are pressures associated with referrals that require criminal investigation that impact on achieving the target figure. 32**

**ongoing referrals at the end of the year were ongoing because of the complexities and evidential demands related to criminal investigation by the Police.**

- Continued attendance at the NHSE/CCG Meetings.  
**Update: Achieved and ongoing**
- The LADO will continue to attend monthly MAPPA meeting and act as liaison between panel and Children's Services as applicable.  
**Update: Achieved and ongoing**
- The LADO will continue contributing to the Regional and National LADO network.  
**Update: Achieved and ongoing**
- The LADO will continue to support and develop the Education Safeguarding Officer's role in liaison with the Education Department's and Children's Social Care Division's objectives.  
**Update: Achieved and ongoing**
- The LADO will continue to disseminate LADO procedures, processes and thresholds through regular training sessions, contribution to staff inductions and attendance at various service meetings both within Children's Social Care and with external partners.  
**Update: Achieved and ongoing**
- To continue to participate in the developing of effective data recording systems linking up the LADO spreadsheet/Care First/Liquid Logic and management of the shared LADO drive.
- **Update: Achieved and ongoing**