

Allegations against a volunteer

Barrow upon Soar Community Association (BUSCA) will assure all volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith reports his or her concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or vulnerable adult. Where there is a complaint against a volunteer there may be three types of investigation:

- A criminal investigation,
- A child protection investigation,
- A disciplinary or misconduct investigation.

The results of the police and child protection investigation may well influence the disciplinary investigation, but not necessarily.

Action if there are concerns

1. Concerns about poor practice:

If, following consideration, the allegation is clearly about poor practice; this will be dealt with as a misconduct issue.

If the allegation is about poor practice of the Designated Safeguarding Officer or if the matter has been handled inadequately and concerns remain, it should be reported to the Chair who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not the organisation should initiate disciplinary proceedings.

If the allegation is about the BUSCA Chair, it should be reported to the Vice Chair who will decide how to deal with the allegation and whether or not the organisation should initiate disciplinary proceedings.

2. Concerns about suspected abuse

- Any suspicion that a child has been abused by a volunteer should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding officer who will take such steps as considered necessary to ensure the safety of the child in question and any other child who may be at risk.
- The Designated officer will refer the allegation to the Leicester City and County safeguarding bodies who may involve the police, or go directly to the police if out-of-hours.
- The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the social services department.
- If the Designated officer is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report must be made to the Chair who will refer the allegation to Social Services.

3. Internal Enquiries and Suspension

- The *Designated Safeguarding officer* will make an immediate decision about whether any individual accused of abuse should be temporarily suspended pending further official inquiries.

Irrespective of the findings of the enquiries, BUSCA will assess all individual cases to decide whether a volunteer can be reinstated and how this can be sensitively handled.

This may be a difficult decision; particularly where there is insufficient evidence to uphold any action by the police. In such cases, BUSCA must reach a decision based upon the available information which could suggest that on a balance of probability; it is more likely than not that the allegation is true. The welfare of the child should remain of paramount importance throughout.

Reviewed March 2026

Date for new review: Sept 27

Signed: