

Investigation Procedures and Protocols

Stage 1 – Incident Reported

When an incident is reported it will be referred to either the Head of Year (HOY) or a member of the Pastoral Team. The immediate response will be to ensure one, or some, of the following:

- everyone is safe
- whether medical aid is needed
- whether emotional support is required
- whether an item needs confiscating
- whether or not the incident needs reporting to the police or other agencies

The Pastoral Team will then liaise with the HOY or a Senior Deputy to establish the investigation priorities and to make an investigation plan.

This can include:

- what needs to be investigated
- isolation of students
- who is carrying out the investigation
- anyone who needs to be spoken with ('witnesses')
- any sources of evidence, for example CCTV footage,
- if any searches of students are required
- setting out the importance of confidentiality

Stage 2 – Interviews of students and staff

Students will be interviewed and asked to complete an Incident Summary pro forma. It is an expectation that students will co-operate with this process. At this stage the parents may not be contacted as the interview is only to try and help establish the facts and to ascertain, on the balance of probabilities, what happened.

In the event that it is discovered that the account on a student's Incident Summary form is false, or lacking key known information, the person investigating may request that a further Incident Summary form is completed. Where an account is found to be false, or where key information has been deliberately withheld, this could also result in disciplinary action for attempting to bias an investigation.

If, in the process of an investigation, a safeguarding concern is raised, then this will be referred to the DSL who will deal with it through our normal safeguarding procedures.

Please note that it may be necessary to isolate a student/students whilst an investigation is taking place. This may be for their own safety, the safety of others or to ensure that there is no collusion with other witnesses.

Staff will be asked to submit their statements at their earliest opportunity and this can be via email or handwritten. Staff may also be interviewed at a later date.

Stage3 – Presentation of Evidence

Once an investigation has been completed the evidence will be presented to the relevant person dependent on the nature of the incident. The person investigating is expected to give recommendations at the end of the investigation.

Guidance for potential levels of Incidents

- Minor incidents, investigated and dealt with by Pastoral Team, sanction agreed where applicable. PT's informed and incident recorded on Bromcom.
- Intermediate incidents, investigated by Pastoral Team, with HOY overseeing the incident
- Major Incidents, investigated by Pastoral Team or HOY, with Senior Deputy or Head Teacher overseeing the incident.
- Safeguarding incidents will be dealt with by the DSL or DDSL

When making a decision about the outcome of an investigation all evidence gathered and any mitigating circumstances will be taken into account. Full details may not necessarily be conveyed to other parties involved due to confidentiality.

The range of outcomes available will be dependent on the level of the incident. Once a decision is made, parents of all involved parties will be contacted as necessary. This will always include both the victim, and perpetrator, but in some instances it will extend to witnesses. Any immediate sanctions, mediations or restorative justice will be communicated at this point. If the decision is that a student is to be fixed term suspended, then the outcomes, targets and support package will be discussed at the reintegration meeting.

The Academy's Behaviour Policy will govern all actions taken during this process.

Additional Information – Third Party Involvement

A third party is neither –

- the victim
- the perpetrator
- a witness

However, this does not mean that a third party isn't affected by an incident. A third party can report an incident. If a third party is affected by an incident they can ask for support by flagging this with their Personal Tutor. The Academy has staff identified to provide such support.

If a third party reports an incident the Head of Year or Pastoral Manager, they can confirm that they are aware of the incident. However, they will not share any details with the third party and the third party will not be updated about the course of the investigation or the outcome.

A third party should **not**:

- propagate rumours or theories about what happened – they were not there
- attempt to involve themselves in the situation or the investigation
- use social media to discuss the incident or voice opinions about it
- expect updates on the investigation

Should the third party involve themselves in any of the ways above they could find themselves subject to disciplinary action in line with the Academy's Behaviour Policy.