
From: Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services
Sarah Hammond, Corporate Director Children, Young People & Education

To: Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee –
21st November 2024

Subject: Kent County Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
Service Annual Report 2023-2024

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of report: Kent LADO Service Annual Report 2022-23

Future Pathway of report: None

Electoral Division: All

Is the decision eligible for call-in? *N/A*

Summary: The Kent LADO Service Annual Report provides the detailed data & analysis for LADO activity during the period 01.04.23-31.03.24. The report provides progress on the same period's actions, the re-valuation of the LADO Service (February 2024) and comments upon the challenges and recommendations for the future development of the Service.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **NOTE** the content of the Annual Report.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Kent LADO Annual Report 2023-24 was produced in-line with the statutory requirements set out in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'¹ (hereafter referred to as Working Together 2023). The report focuses on key areas of activity and learning obtained during the period set out.
- 1.2 The updated guidance sets out all Local Authorities should have a designated Officer (LADO) to be involved in the management and oversight of allegations against staff working with the children's workforce. Working Together 2023

¹ [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/115271/Working_together_to_safeguard_children_2023.pdf)

provides the Harm Threshold to be applied when an allegation has been made against a member of the children's workforce.

1.3 The legislative framework is also reflected in the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

2. Annual Report April 2023 – March 2024

2.1 The Annual Report follows the agreed format and was developed to better understand the impact of the LADO Service activities and comments upon the number, nature, investigation process and the outcomes of allegations made concerning staff members and adults in positions of trust, whether paid or voluntary.

2.2 The Kent LADO Annual Report 2023/24 was written by Gavin Swann and Graeme Southern and was signed off by Kevin Kasaven, Director of Children's Countywide Services on 30.10.24.

2.3 The report particularly highlights several key activities progressed during the period, including;

- Referral Data
- Referrals relating to different settings in the Children's workforce
- Consultations
- LADO and the Harm Threshold
- Analysis of the demographics of Children and Young People linked to LADO referrals
- Investigation Outcomes
- Allegations and Outcomes by Sector (Education, Early Years and the Wider Workforce)
- Review of the recommendations from the 2022/24 LADO Annual Report
- A detailed analysis of the LADO Service referencing the Service re-valuation of February 2024
- Conclusions
- Recommendations

3. Conclusions

3.1 The data, the internal Quality Assurance framework, the re-evaluation and the analysis evidence the Kent LADO Service remained busy, well respected and continued to provide quality management and oversight of allegations.

3.2 The report concludes there is a demand for a more sophisticated and systemic response to managing allegations against staff within the Kent Children's workforce, especially a more holistic collection and analysis of data to inform strategic responses, recruitment, organisational cultures, sector guidance and awareness raising. To achieve this the LADO service needs modernisation.

Recommendation(s):

The Children’s, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to **CONSIDER** and **NOTE the content of the Annual Report.**

4. Background Documents

4.1 [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023: A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children](#)

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 – The 2023/24 LADO Annual Report (this report also contains as a separate appendix the February 2024 re-evaluation)

6. Contact details

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