

Investigation case studies

Part 1

A member of staff in the school (Alison) has raised a grievance, alleging bullying by a very senior and long standing member of the senior management team (John). The grievance has landed on your desk and it is very long and detailed.

What are your first steps?

Part 2

When Sam (the IO) meets with Alison she gives Sam a list of 16 witnesses which she insists Sam interviews as part of the investigation. What should Sam do?

Part 3

What information should John be provided with at the start of the investigation process?

Part 4

Alison has named a colleague, Joanna, who she says has witnessed two of the discussions where Alison claims that John has bullied her.

Sam invites Joanna to an investigation interview. Before the meeting Joanna tells Sam that she is very worried about the interview, because she is concerned about repercussions from John. Joanna asks if her husband can come along with her. She also asks can her evidence be given anonymously.

How should Sam respond to both questions and what issues should Sam consider?

Part 5

Sam invites John to an investigation meeting. The day after receiving the invitation John calls in sick. He has now been signed off with work related stress until a date after the scheduled investigatory meeting.

What are your options for dealing with this?

Part 6

John returns to work and a rescheduled interview is arranged. When Sam interviews John he becomes very angry and says that what Alison is saying is libellous. He demands that the meeting should be stopped because he wants his solicitor present. He also says he wants to raise a grievance about Alison. What should Sam do about both demands?

Part 7

When the investigation is complete, should all the witnesses receive a copy of the investigation report?

Should both John and Alison be sent the report? If not what information should go to each of them?