



## LOW LEVEL CONCERNS (LLC) ABOUT ADULTS' POLICY

**This policy applies from EYFS through to Year 13**

### Principles

- The College is committed to the welfare, protection and safekeeping of all its pupils. If College Staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, both physical and mental, they must act on them immediately. Safeguarding Policy
- All children have a fundamental right to be protected from harm and from all forms of neglect, abuse and exploitation and should feel safe and secure at College
- Parents should be reassured that it is the aim of the College to always act in the best interests of their child and to encourage the fullest possible involvement and consultation with parents
- Pupils should know that they have a means of raising issues of personal concern. They should feel that their concerns are taken seriously, that they are encouraged to talk and that they are listened to

### Purpose of Policy

The Policy focuses on low level concerns regarding adults' behaviour towards children:

- To treat and embed a culture of openness
- Ensure staff are clear about and are confident to distinguish between expected and problematic behaviour
- Empower staff to share any low level concern with the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Address unprofessional behaviour at an early stage
- Identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour
- Provide for responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns
- Help identify weaknesses in the organisations safeguarding systems

## **Concerns that are NOT covered by this Policy**

### **Allegations**

An 'allegation' means that it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to Children
- Have behaved in a way in their personal life that raises safeguarding concerns. These concerns do not have to directly relate to a child but could, for example, include an arrest for possession of a weapon
- Have, as a parent or carer, become subject to child protection procedures

### **Safeguarding concerns**

- Concerns about a child's safety or welfare
- Concerns regarding peer-on-peer abuse

## **Concerns that ARE covered within this Policy**

### **Low level concern**

A low level concern about an adult's behaviour towards a child that does not meet the allegation threshold set out above, or is not otherwise serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. A low level concern is any concern - no matter how small, and even if no more than a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- Is not consistent with an organisations Code of Conduct, and/or
- Relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult's suitability to work with children

### **What to do if you have a low level concern**

All low level concerns should ultimately be received by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Share concerns with the Headmaster within 24 hours of becoming aware of it
- In the absence of the Headmaster inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- If behaviour is from the Headmaster, then share concern with the Chair of Governors

## **Procedure for managing a low level concern**

### **Step 1 - Initial Concern Raised**

In the first instance, staff can report verbally to the Headmaster providing a written summary of concern.

- Verbal account – ‘contemporaneous recording by the Headmaster’. Ensure a written record is taken as information is shared
- Sound professional judgment should be used in determining what information is necessary to record for Safeguarding purposes
- Record should include brief context, concise details, and relevant incidents
- Record to be signed, dated and timed

### **Step 2 - Response by the Headmaster**

- The Headmaster should speak to the person who is raising the concern
- Review the information and decide whether the behaviour is:
  - ◆ (i) Entirely consistent with the College Staff Code of Conduct
  - ◆ (ii) Constitutes a low level concern
  - ◆ (iii) Is serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Safeguarding Policy
  - ◆ (iv) When considered with any other previous low level concerns about this individual, should be reclassified as an allegation and referred to the LADO/any other statutory agencies
- Where the Headmaster is in any doubt, then they should seek advice from the LADO
- Speak to the individual about whom the concern is raised (unless LADO/Police have advised otherwise if within (iii) or (iv) above)

### **The Headmaster must make records of:**

- All internal conversations
- All external conversations
- Their determination
- The rationale for their decision; and
- Any action taken

### **Step 3 –Decision Making and Next steps**

Information shared meets organisations expectations and is compliant with Code of Conduct

- The Headmaster to inform the individual concerned what was shared about their Behavior and give them an opportunity to respond
- Speak to person who shared the low level concern, providing feedback about how and why the behaviour is consistent with the Code of Conduct and the law
- Consider if a review of the Code of Conduct is necessary - is the Code not clear? Has the training been unsatisfactory? Is the LLC policy not clear enough?
- Consider training /support of LLC policy if the same individual reports similar low level concerns and it is found to be consistent with Code again

Information shared does not meet the organisations expectations and is in breach of the Code of

#### **Conduct - a low level concern**

- A sensitive and proportionate response is essential
- Maintain confidence that concerns will be handled promptly and effectively, whilst protecting staff from potential false or malicious allegations
- Any investigation is on a 'need to know' basis
- Some concerns may not give rise to further action, others may be dealt with by management guidance and/or training
- In many cases, a positive/supportive conversation with the individual will enable them to meet expectations moving forward

#### **Information above is a low level concern or further evidence gained raised the level of concern**

- If further evidence is gained that raises the level of concern
- Access guidance from LADO
- Refer to LADO always

#### **Previous low level concern**

If an individual has had a previous low level concern raised against them then the Headmaster must take this into account. Information available will be reviewed and a decision may be made, if necessary, to reclassify the concern as an allegation, and the concern will be dealt with in accordance with the College's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures.

## **Recording and Retention of Information**

All records of LLC, (including behaviour deemed by the Headmaster to be entirely consistent with the Code of Conduct) should be retained in a central low level concerns file;

These records are confidential, with a limited number of individuals having access, for example Headmaster, SDL and HR Officer. The Headmaster may store the LLC records with the other safeguarding and child protection records.

In the event of a decision that behaviour is a low level concern, the information should not be held on personnel files.

If disciplinary, grievance or whistleblowing procedures are triggered, then a copy should be held on both safeguarding and personnel files.

If the concern is deemed serious enough to consider referral to the LADO, then records should be retained on the personnel file.

If the LLC is reclassified as an allegation, then files should be moved from Safeguarding to personnel files.

The College will retain all information regarding any level of Safeguarding concern centrally within a secure system.

Please refer to the Colleges Data Retention Policy for full details.

## **Review**

The Headmaster should review the central LLC file periodically to ensure such concerns are being dealt with appropriately, and any potential problematic behaviour patterns are identified.

## **Timeframe**

Low level concern files should be kept unless and until further Government guidance provides otherwise.

When a staff member leaves and/or takes up new employment, that would then create a natural point at which the content of the file may be reviewed.

## **Policy Prepared by:**

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**Senior Deputy Head**

<b>Person Responsible for Updates</b>	<b>Date Last Reviewed</b>	<b>Next Review Due</b>
<b>Guy Emmett</b>	<b>September 2022</b>	<b>September 2023</b>