GLADE School

Low Level Concerns Policy

Document Ref:	Version No:	Summary of Changes:	Author:	Release Date:	Approved By:
SC36	1	Launch	Laura Rowe	October 2021	PSC
SC36	2	Review for 2022/23	Laura Rowe	October 2022	PSC
GSC36	3	GLADE Review	Laura Rowe	July 2023	PSC
SC36	4	GLADE Review 2024/2025	Emma Moore	October 2024	PSC
SC36	5	Full Review 2026 /2027	Emma Moore	March 2026	PSC

Review Date: October 2027 (Annually)
Contributor: Emma Moore (V3)

Contents

1 Introduction 4

2 Scope 4

3 Policy aims 4

4 Definition 5

5 Avoiding low level concerning behaviour 5

6 Reporting a low level concern 5

7 Dealing with a low-level concern 6

8 Recording a low level concern 6

9 Reviewing a low level concern 7

10 Related guidance 7

11 Associated Documentation & Legislation 7

Fair Ways Vision, Mission and Values

Our vision
To build a community that changes lives, makes a difference to society and leaves a legacy greater than ourselves and our contributions.

Our mission
To grow a compassionate, resilient, and trauma-informed community, that embraces learning, so that we improve the lives and outcomes of individuals.

Our values
Our values form the heart of the work we do, defined by Fair Ways people, for Fair Ways people. These are the values by which we operate, by which we are governed, and to which we are held accountable.

We therefore expect every individual within the organisation to *play their part*:

PROFESSIONAL	**A**CCEPTING	**R**EFLECTIVE	**T**RANSPARENT
· We do what we say we will. · We approach challenges with optimism and enthusiasm. · We don't judge, we notice. · We put the needs of the service before our own personal gains.	· We don't give up on people. · We value all individuals and are willing to challenge them. · We embrace each other's differences as much as our similarities. · We accept responsibility for our actions.	· We give feedback, we invite feedback, we listen to feedback. · We look inward before we look outward. · We learn as much from our mistakes as from our successes. · We listen to each other, learn from each other and grow together.	· We are always willing to explain why. · We have the courage to be open and honest. · We earn trust through our transparency. · We live by our values even when no-one is watching.

1 Introduction

1.1 Our school recognises its statutory and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our students and understands that staff play a vital role in meeting these responsibilities.

1.2 Our school works to ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

2 Scope

2.1 All employees employed at this school including:

- Teachers/TLPs
- Support staff
- Supply teachers
- Volunteers
- Local Authority visiting staff
- Contractors

2.2 The term 'staff' throughout this policy refers to all of the above.

3 Policy aims

3.1 To help create a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person and are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

3.2 To enable schools to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early.

3.3 To minimise the risk of abuse occurring.

3.4 To ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries and in accordance with the ethos and values of the school.

3.5 To help create an environment where staff are comfortable to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

4 Definition

4.1 The term 'low level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. It means that the behaviour towards a young person does not meet the harm threshold for an allegation.

4.2 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' defines a low level concern as:

"any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- *is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and*
- *does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO"*

5 Avoiding low level concerning behaviour

5.1 Behaviour defined as a 'low level concern' can exist on a spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate but is not in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

5.2 Staff education and reinforcement on avoiding circumstances which may put them in a difficult situation is key to avoiding the need for dealing with these types of concerns.

5.3 Our school ensures that staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is through their induction and regularly reinforcement of documents such as:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policies
- Professional Boundaries Training
- Teachers' Standards (for teaching staff)

6 Reporting a low level concern

6.1 Low level concerns about a member of staff should be reported to the DSL and/or Headteacher as per the school's Child Protection procedures. If the concern is about the Headteacher this should be reported to the Operations Director or Fair Ways Designated Safeguarding Officer

6.2 Low level concerns about supply staff, contractors and local authority visiting staff will also be reported to their employers.

7 Dealing with a low-level concern

7.1 Where a concern is raised about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff, this information must be recorded and passed to the Headteacher.

7.2 The Headteacher must then make an assessment to determine if the matter is a 'low level concern' or an 'allegation' and follow one of the following routes:

- Allegations that meet the harm threshold will be referred to the LADO for advice.
- Low level concerns that the school feel may need further guidance on will be referred to the LADO for advice.
- Low level concerns that the school feel they can deal with internally will be dealt with via the school's usual child protection investigation process.

7.3 The school will engage with its HR provider where it is necessary to undertake further investigation and/or deal with the concern under relevant processes.

8 Recording a low level concern

8.1 All low level concerns should be formally recorded by a member of staff when they are made aware of them. This record should then be passed to the Headteacher (or Operations Director if the concern is about the Headteacher).

8.2 The record should include:

- Details of the concern,
- The context in which the concern arose,
- The outcome of the investigation and any action taken, and
- The name of the individual sharing their concerns (if known) (unless the individual wishes to remain anonymous which must be respected as far as possible).

8.3 Relevant records will be retained confidentially on the personnel file. A separate record will also be kept of low level concerns to more easily identify patterns that may involve more than one member of staff. All records must be kept in line with data protection principles.

9 Reviewing a low level concern

9.1 Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

9.2 Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the Headteacher will decide on a course of action, which may include:

- Disciplinary investigation and/or proceedings
- Management Advice, including recommendations for training
- Referral to the LADO (where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harm threshold).

9.3 The school will take advice, where appropriate, from their HR Business Partner in respect of low level concerns.

9.4 The school will also review appropriate policies and training, or other wider cultural issues in the school, to see whether anything needs to be done to minimise the risk of similar behaviour happening again.

9.5 Relevant records will be retained confidentially on the personnel file. A separate record will also be kept of low level concerns to more easily identify patterns that may involve more than one member of staff. All records must be kept in line with data protection principles.

9.6 Low level concerns will not be included in a reference unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference (e.g. misconduct or poor performance). Low level concerns which relate solely to safeguarding will not be included in a reference, subject to paragraph

9.7 A low level concern (or group or pattern of concerns) which has met the harm threshold and has therefore been referred to the LADO may be included in a reference depending on the circumstances.

10 Related guidance

10.1 The policy links to the following guidance documents:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Policy
- Child Protection Policy

11 Associated Documentation & Legislation

None