



# LOW LEVEL CONCERNS POLICY 2023

Approved by: Karen Pickles  
Designated Safeguarding Lead  
Date: 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023

## POLICY REVISION RECORD (annual reviews)

Date	Section	Revision	Updated/Writtten by
10/07/2020		Reviewed	Karen Pickles
09/07/2021		Reviewed	Karen Pickles
19/07/2022		Reviewed	Karen Pickles
10/01/2023		Re-styled & Reviewed	Karen Pickles

## **Why do we have this policy?**

Berkeley Guardians believes in an honest and robust culture of safeguarding within the company including the pupils with whom we care and the staff with whom we work. We encourage all pupils and staff to bring any issues to light and be prepared to talk about them before they become too large.

This policy is focused on low level concerns and how we would expect our staff and homestays to report on these issues enabling all to report concerns to underline the trust and honesty that pinpoints Berkeley Guardians culture.

All Berkeley Guardian staff have to undergo a Safer Recruitment process on joining the guardianship for whatever role they take on and a high professional level of conduct at all times is expected between staff and pupils alike. All concerns should be reported to a senior member of staff and if the concerns are related to a senior member of staff then the staff member should go directly to the Local Authority for support and advice.

**A low-level concern is:** a worry no matter how small that worry is whether it manifests in any of the following ways:

- Behaviour is not consistent with expectations or there is some concern that for a particular reason it is felt that there is a worry about an adult working alongside a pupil and this has caused unease.

## **The difference between a low-level concern and an allegation:**

- An allegation is evidence or belief that an adult may have harmed or mistreated through inappropriate behaviour a pupil in his/her care
- It will be the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will make this decision as to whether it is a low-level concern or an allegation

## **Who should report and when?:**

- Please report immediately to the DSL or the Deputy DSL (Karen Pickles or Jo Clark) either in writing or verbally
- Should the concern be linked or to do with either of the DSL/DDSL then go directly to the Local Authority
- The person reporting may choose to remain anonymous but this may not be possible

## **What happens then?:**

- The DSL will ensure a report is written as soon as possible, if not immediately
- The written report will be kept with password protected folder on GDoc in the safeguarding folder and will only be accessible to the DSL
- If possible the DSL will speak to the individual making the concern and review whether this is a breach of the code of conduct or whether it should be considered an allegation in which case it will be sent to the LADO. If for any reason the DSL is not sure then the LADO will be approached for advice.

- The person who has been the centre of the concern will then have a meeting in which a record (by a third party) will be taken of the conversations therein and any decisions made or action taken will be shared.
- Should the report not meet the low-level concerns then the DSL will speak to the individual and allow their response before explaining their response etc.
- The result may mean further training, conversation on a regular basis, a closer watch and support or it could result in all of the above
- The atmosphere during the meeting should be kept calm and there should be no sign of commanding behaviour from the DSL to intimidate
- It may be that HR will need to be involved and the DSL may turn to the HR dept for further assistance as to how to move the issue forward
- At all times, if the low-level concern is believed to be stronger than this and is believed to constitute an allegation then a referral will be made to the LADO

The notes from these meetings will be kept in the secure GDoc folder until such time as the member of staff resigns or leaves the company.

Senior members of staff should be sure that if any concerns etc were made and unsubstantiated or proved false then these should not be included in any future references.