

Low level concerns policy

Concerns may come from a parent, colleague or the public. Any allegation must be made to the Designated Safeguarding Officer unless the concern is about them. If this is the case the manager should be informed.

What is a low level concern.

A low level concern is any way that an adult has acted in a way that;

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including out of work.
- Is not considered serious enough to refer to the local authority.

Low level concerns are part of a spectrum of behaviour that includes;

- Inadvertent or thoughtless behaviour.
- Behaviour that may be considered inappropriate.
- Behaviour that is intended to enable abuse.

Examples of such behaviour could include;

- Being over friendly with children.
- Having favourites.
- Adults taking photos of children on personal mobile phones.
- Engaging with a child on a 1-1 basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door.
- Using inappropriate sexualized, intimidating or offensive language.

Responding to low level concerns

All concerns about staff, volunteers or students must be shared with the DSL and recorded. They will decide how to proceed with the agreement of their line manager.

Any reporting of incidents contributes towards a safeguarding culture of openness and trust.

If it is not clear whether the matter is a low level concern the DSL should contact the LADO for clarification.

In most cases low level concerns will be dealt with through training, supervisions and appraisals and if necessary a disciplinary investigation.

Identification

A concern is not low level if adult has;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child.
- Possibly committed a crime against a child.
- Behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to a child.
- Behaved in a way that shows they are not suitable to work with children.

Informing

- All staff must report allegations to the DSL.
- The DSL records the allegation and informs the line manager, the accuser should have a response, detailing further action within 3-4 hours.
- It is essential that, if the LADO becomes involved they has the full factual report of the incident.
- The DSL must ensure that all children, parents and staff are kept safe.
- The LADO team, if necessary, must be contacted within 1 working day.
- The LADO can advise on how the parents of the child involved are notified.
- The LADO will advise whether the police should be notified.
- All allegations are investigated even if the person involved resigns or ceases to volunteer.

Allegations about agency staff.

- If a member of staff has concerns about an agency worker they must notify the DSL.
- The allegation will be recorded and investigated and the agency informed.

Recording

- A record is made of all allegations and concerns. Along with any available evidence.
- This is saved in the child and involved staff member's file.

Escalating concerns

If a member of staff feels their allegations have not been dealt with correctly they should contact the chairperson and the LADO.

The LADO will decide whether they are happy for the allegation to be dealt with in house or if their team will become involved.

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