



MALDON COURT

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Low Level Concerns Policy

Policy Reviewed– September 2022

School Aims

- Children develop a love of learning and come to appreciate the value of their talents and life experiences.
- Children flourish and become enthusiastic and independent learners reaching their full potential through a stimulating, broad curriculum and rich variety of experiences beyond the curriculum.
- Children embrace the traditional values of Kindness, Respect and Courtesy, becoming responsible, independent caring individuals.
- Children are confident happy individuals who are well prepared for their next step in education. This includes 11+, scholarships and entrance to schools with Specialist Status.
- Children develop the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs: both in the local and wider community.

Introduction

At Maldon Court Preparatory School, we take safeguarding very seriously. This includes ensuring that adults who work with children do so in a way that is in accordance with the ethos and policies set out by the school, including the Staff Code of Conduct. This policy sets out the detail and processes for staff regarding low-level concerns they may have.

Summary

It may be possible that a member of staff acts in a way that does not cause risk to children but is however inappropriate. A member of staff who has a concern about another member of staff should inform the Headteacher about their concern using a Low-Level Record of Concern Form. If the Headteacher cannot be contacted, the Deputy Head Mrs H Bonner or DDSL Mrs K Abrehart should be contacted instead. If the concern relates to the Headteacher, the Board of Visitor - Bridget Harris should be contacted.

Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022

The following is taken from Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022

423. As part of their whole school or college approach to safeguarding, schools and colleges should ensure that they promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

424. Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. If implemented correctly, this should:

- *encourage an open and transparent culture*
- *enable schools and colleges to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early*
- *minimise the risk of abuse, and*

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

What is a Low Level Concern?

425. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is 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 harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating pupils

426. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

428. It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

Clarity around Allegation vs Low-Level Concern vs Appropriate Conduct

Allegation - Behaviour which indicates that an adult who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Low Level Concern - . A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with a School's Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- does not meet the allegation threshold, or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO – but may merit consulting with and seeking advice from the LADO, and on a no-names basis if necessary

Appropriate Conduct

Behaviour which is entirely consistent with the School's Code of Conduct and the Law.

Storing and use of Low-Level Concerns and follow-up information

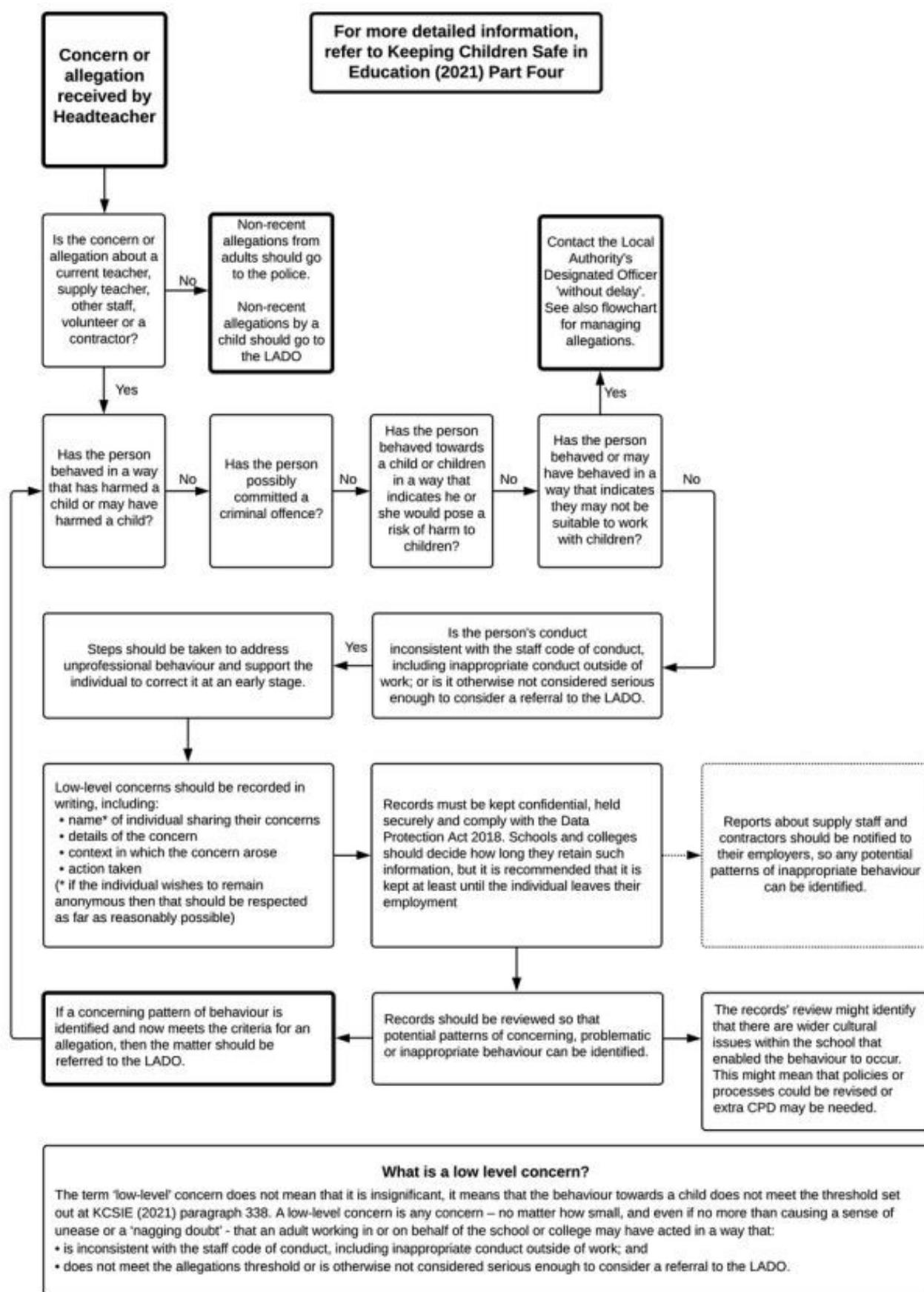
LLC forms and follow-up information will be stored securely within the schools safeguarding systems, with access only by the leadership team. This will be stored in accordance with the school's GDPR and data protection policies.

The staff member(s) reporting the concern must keep the information confidential and not share the concern with others apart from the Headteacher or those aware in the senior leadership team.

Low-Level Concerns will not be referred to in references unless they have been formalised into more significant concerns resulting in disciplinary or misconduct procedures. Whenever staff leave Maldon Court, any record of low-level concerns which are stored about them will be reviewed as to whether or not that information needs to be kept. Consideration will be given to:

- (a) whether some or all of the information contained within any record may have any reasonably likely value in terms of any potential historic employment or abuse claim so as to justify keeping it, in line with normal safeguarding records practice; or
- (b) if, on balance, any record is not considered to have any reasonably likely value, still less actionable concern, and ought to be deleted accordingly.

Process to follow when a Low-Level Concern is raised



Reference Document

Read this document for further information about Low-Level Concerns, which is referenced in KCSIE 2022.

<https://www.farrer.co.uk/globalassets/clients-and-sectors/safeguarding/low-level-concerns-guidance-2020.pdf>

Low Level Concern Form

This form will be available to staff via:

- The School website
- The School Office

To be reviewed September 2023 – K Abrehart