



Longford Park School

Believe • Belong • Become

**Staff Low-Level
Concerns Policy**

Our values

We **believe** in ourselves and each other.

We all **belong** in our community.

Everyone **becomes** the best they can be.

Longford Park is a school for pupils with identified social, emotional and mental health difficulties, and our policies must reflect this. A great deal of emphasis is placed upon the social and emotional development of the pupil, the ability to co-operate, share, to tolerate each other, respect themselves and each other and to contribute to a positive atmosphere within the school.

The statutory guidance [Keeping children safe in education \(KCSIE\) 2025](#) includes guidance for schools and colleges in England on dealing with low-level concerns about the behaviour of teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors (Department for Education (DfE), 2025). In KCSIE 2025, low-level concerns refer to a staff member's behaviour that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct and doesn't meet the threshold for being a serious safeguarding concern requiring referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Longford Park School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils. As a school, 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 staff regarding Low-Level concerns they might have.

Aims of this Policy

The main aims of this policy statement are to ensure that staff are fully engaged in being vigilant and aware of Low-Level concerns and that they overcome professional disbelief that such issues will not happen here and ensure that we work alongside other professional bodies and agencies to ensure that our pupils are safe from harm. The principle objectives are that:

- It is possible that a member of staff could act in a manner that although does not cause a risk, it may be inappropriate.
- It is the responsibility of the Head of School to ensure that staff are aware of the need to record any concerns raised by a staff member about another staff member.
- Staff are aware of how to record these concerns.

What is a low-level concern?

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

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- doesn't meet the threshold of harm or is not considered serious enough for the school or college to refer to the local authority.

What Constitutes a Low-Level Concern?

Inconsistent Conduct:

Behaviours that are contrary to the expected professional conduct of staff working with children.

Below the Harm Threshold:

Actions that are not serious enough to warrant a formal LADO referral.

Examples:

- Being overly friendly or having favourites amongst pupils.
- Taking photographs of children with a mobile phone against school policy.
- Engaging in one-to-one interactions with a child in a secluded area or behind a closed door.
- Using inappropriate language towards pupils.
- Not adhering to professional boundaries.

Why do schools need to respond to low-level concerns?

Having clear procedures for responding to low-level concerns is part of creating a school culture of openness and trust. It helps ensure that adults consistently model the school's values and helps keep children safe. It will also protect adults working in school from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

What Longford Park School does

Longford Park School has a low-level concerns policy and procedures. These are part of school's overall safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. They are closely linked to the code of conduct for staff and volunteers.

There are clear processes in place for sharing and responding to any concerns about an adult's behaviour, no matter how small. A concern can still be significant even if it does not meet the threshold of harm.

All staff should understand:

- what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- what a low-level concern is
- the importance of sharing low-level concerns
- how to report any concerns
- the process for recording, reviewing and responding to concerns.

Recording:

All low-level concerns should be formally documented by the employer.

Monitoring:

The concerns should be reviewed and monitored for any patterns of behaviour from the individual staff member.

Proportional Response:

The school should implement a proportionate, supportive, and consistent response to the concern.

Involvement of Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

The Designated Safeguarding Lead should be involved in the oversight of these concerns.

Recording a concern:

1. The staff member needing to record their concerns using Staff Safe. A comprehensive note should be written sharing the low-level concern. The concern will be stored with the date and time automatically recorded from when the record is made.
2. The member of staff raising the concern should also verbally inform Sara Waite, Stephanie Meadows or Rachel Lamb (SLT and DSL's)
3. The staff member reporting the concern must keep the information confidential and not share the concerns with other members of staff.
4. Sara Waite (Headteacher) or Stephanie Meadows (Deputy Headteacher) will meet with the staff member against whom the concern has been made. The member of staff will discuss the concern raised and an individual action plan will be created if deemed necessary. Further support and training will be identified as needed to ensure professional expectations have been fully understood.
5. If the concern raised is about Sara Waite (Headteacher) or Stephanie Meadows (Deputy Headteacher), this will be sent directly to Paul Eckley (CEO of The Sovereign Trust pauleckley@thesovereigntrust.uk).

Concerns will be stored in accordance with GDPR guidance on the Shared Drive and will be kept confidential, held securely and will comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. These will be kept on record for the recommended time of ten years after the incident or until the individual leaves their employment (which ever is the longer).

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.

Why are Low-Level Concerns Important?

Prevention:

Managing low-level concerns can prevent them from escalating into more serious safeguarding issues.

Early Intervention:

They allow schools to provide early support and guidance to staff to ensure professional standards are maintained.

Maintaining a Safe Environment:

By addressing these behaviours promptly, schools can maintain a safer environment for children.

Role of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee of our school will undertake appropriate training to ensure that they are clear about their role and the parameters of their responsibilities as advisory members, including their statutory safeguarding duties. The Advisory Committee of our school will support the ethos and

values of our school and will support the school in the monitoring and recording of Low-Level concerns. In line with the provisions set out in the DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025', the committee will challenge the school's Head of School (Sara Waite) on the delivery of this policy and will monitor its effectiveness.

Members will review this policy regularly (every two years) and may amend and adopt it outside of this time frame in accordance with any new legislation or guidance or in response to any quality assurance recommendations pertaining to the delivery of this policy and the overall safeguarding arrangements made.

Recruitment

The arrangements for recruiting all staff, permanent and volunteers, to our school will follow Trafford's guidance for safer recruitment best practice in education settings, including, but not limited to, ensuring that DBS checks are always made at the appropriate level, that references are always received and checked and that we complete and maintain a single central record of such vetting checks. We will apply safer recruitment best practice principles and sound employment practice in general and in doing so will deny opportunities for inappropriate recruitment or advancement. We will be alert to the possibility that persons may seek to gain positions within our school so as to unduly influence our school's character and ethos. By adhering to safer recruitment best practice techniques and by ensuring that there is an ongoing culture of vigilance within our school and staff team to ensure Low-Level concerns are appropriately addressed.

Staff Training

Through INSET opportunities in school, we will ensure that our staff are fully aware of their own responsibilities with regards to raising Low-Level concerns about their colleagues. Regular training and discussions will be held about this, so that staff members are familiar with the process should they need to raise a concern.

The purpose of this system is to ensure that all staff maintain the attitude that transparency is important in order to safeguard our pupils at all times. Staff should also be aware that it is part of their professional responsibility to raise and record issues that need to be addressed, so that support and additional training can be put in place where needed. Rather than 'reporting' on each other, this system is instead intended to ensure Low-Level concerns are addressed rather than being left to escalate further.

Useful links:

- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2025)**
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68add931969253904d155860/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_from_1_September_2025.pdf
- **NSPCC advice for 'Responding to low level concerns about adults working in education'**
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2021/october/responding-low-level-concerns-in-education>