



**Budapest British  
International School**

**LOW LEVEL CONCERNS POLICY**

## Document Control Table

<b>Status</b>	Live		
<b>Policy owner</b>	David Wheatley		
<b>Statutory/Recommended</b>	Statutory		
<b>Date approved</b>			
<b>Review period</b>	Yearly		
<b>Latest review date</b>	November 2022		
<b>Revision</b>	1		
<b>Next review date</b>	September 2023		
<b>Linked documents and policies</b>	Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Allegations against Adults Policy Low Level Concerns Policy Staff Code of Conduct Inspecting Safeguarding in Early Years Keeping Children Safe in Education Working Together to Safeguard Children		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Comments</b>

## Key Contacts

<b>Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	David Wheatley	<b>Contact details</b>	+353852818495 David.wheatley@bbis.hu
<b>Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead</b>	Jonathan Spinks	<b>Contact details</b>	06203901020 Jonathan.spinks@bbis.hu
<b>Designated Safeguarding Governor</b>	David Rowsell	<b>Contact details</b>	david.rowsell@bbis.hu
<b>Principal</b>	David Porritt	<b>Contact details</b>	+36703158982 David.porritt@bbis.hu

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## 1. Introduction

At **Budapest British International School (BBIS)**, 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.

## 2. 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 Principal about their concern using a Low-Level Record of Concern Form. If the Principal cannot be contacted, the Chair of the Trustees and the Owner should be contacted instead.

## 3. Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022

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

- As part of their whole school 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.
- Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold (see Part Four - Section one)) 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 concerning, problematic or inappropriate 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?

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out at paragraph 338. 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 allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the Police.

### 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;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language.

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.

It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold (see Part Four - Section one), are shared responsibly and 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 potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

#### 4. 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;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they may pose a risk of harm to children.

##### **Low level concern:**

Any concern – no matter just how small, even if no more than a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- Is not consistent with an organisation's Code of Conduct, and/or;
- Relates to their conduct outside of work, which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult's suitability to work with children.

##### **Appropriate conduct:**

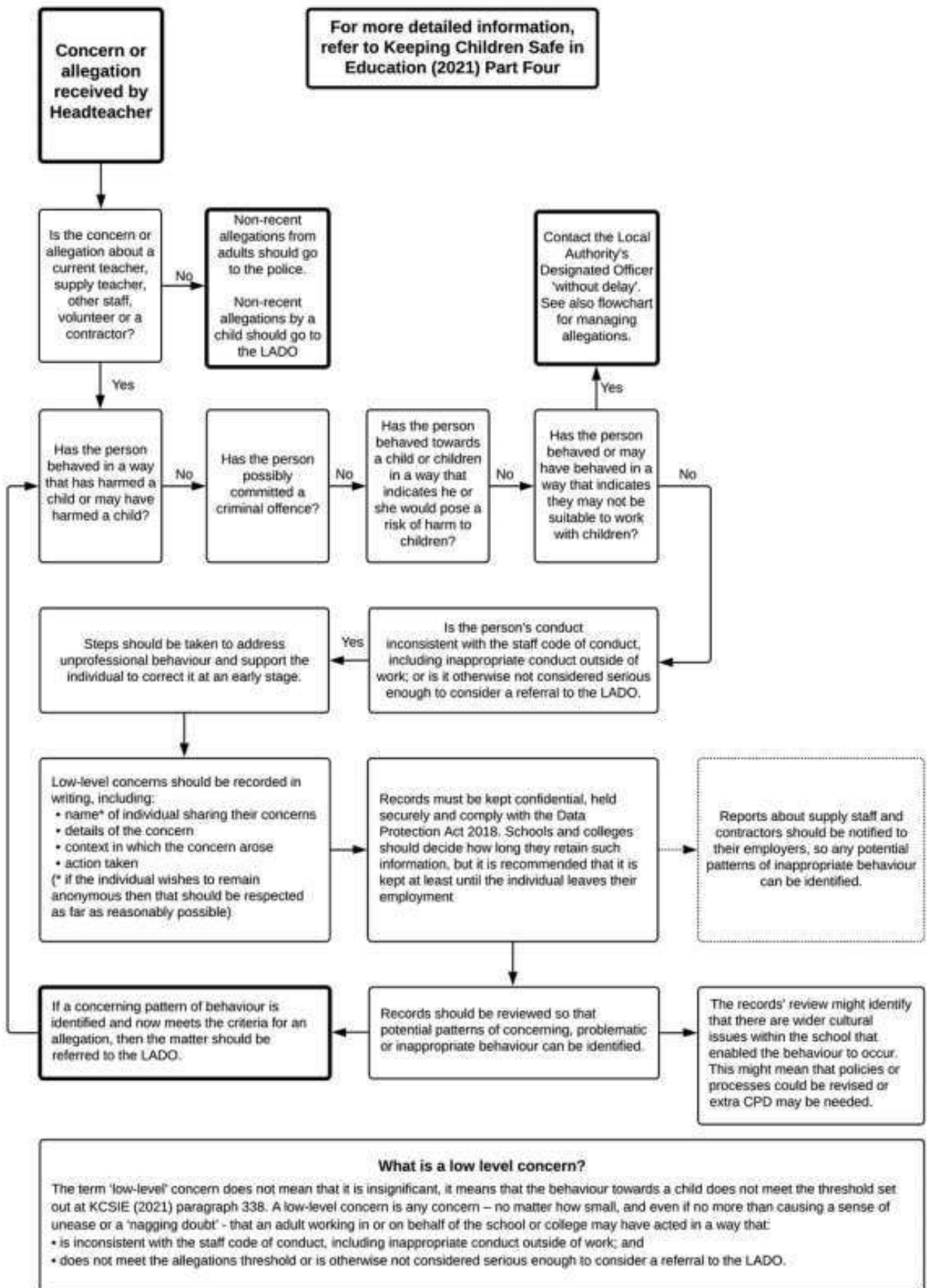
Behaviour which is entirely consistent with the organisation's Code of Conduct, and the law.

#### 5. Storing and use of Low-Level Concerns and follow-up information

Low-Level Concern forms/information and follow-up information will be stored securely within the school's safeguarding systems, with access only by the **Principal**. 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 principal or those aware in **BBIS**. 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 **BBIS**, 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:

- 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
- if, on balance, any record is not considered to have any reasonably likely value, still less actionable concern, and ought to be deleted accordingly.

## 6. Process to follow when a Low-Level Concern is raised



## **7. Low-Level Concern Reporting**

All reporting of Low-Level Concerns should be completed via email directly to the principal using the form below where appropriate. This should be followed by a meeting with the principal to gain further insight.

### **Low-Level Record of Concern Regarding a Staff Member**

Please use email to share any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- is not consistent with the school’s Code, and/or
- relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult’s suitability to work with children.

Where possible please speak with the Principal as soon as possible. It is also helpful to document your concerns, which can be done using this form (or email) and passed to the Principal. When completed, please pass this form to the Principal. If the concern is about the Principal, please pass it onto the Chair of the Trustees and the Owner: [nigel.archdale@bbis.hu](mailto:nigel.archdale@bbis.hu) and [petra.szalai@bbis.hu](mailto:petra.szalai@bbis.hu)

**Remember, a low-level concern is different to an allegation.**

### **Low-Level Concern Form**

Please use this form to share any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- is not consistent with [Insert name of the organisation] Code of Conduct, and/or
- relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult’s suitability to work with children. You should provide a concise record – including brief context in which the low-level concern arose, and details which are chronological, and as precise and accurate as possible – of any such concern and relevant incident(s) (and please use a separate sheet if necessary). The record should be signed, timed, and dated.

**Details of concern:**

**Name of staff member:**

**Department & Role:**

**Signed:**

**Time & Date:**

**Received by At: (Time):**

**On: (Date)**

**Action Taken: (Specify)**

This record will be held securely in accordance with BBIS's low-level concerns policy. Please note that low-level concerns will be treated in confidence as far as possible, but BBIS , may in certain circumstances be subject to legal reporting requirements or other legal obligations to share information with appropriate persons, including legal claims and formal investigations.