

Islamiyah Girls High School



Low-Level Concern Policy

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Approved by:	Governing Body

Low-Level Concerns Policy

Islamiyah School is fully committed to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils, vulnerable adults and vulnerable groups and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Aims

The overarching aim of our Low-Level Concern Policy is to facilitate a culture in which the clear values and expected behaviours which are set out in our Staff Code of Conduct are lived, constantly monitored, and reinforced by all staff. This is consistent with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023.

In particular, the intention of this policy is to:

- maintain a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which staff are confident and clear about expected behaviours of themselves and their colleagues, the delineation of boundaries and reporting lines;
- ensure staff feel empowered to raise any low-level concern, whether about their own or a colleague's behaviour, where that behaviour might be construed as falling short of the standards set out in our Staff Code of Conduct;
- provide for responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised – maintaining on the one hand confidence that concerns when raised will be handled promptly and effectively whilst on the other hand protecting staff from false allegations or misunderstandings.

What is a low-level concern?

The school recognizes that even small concerns or nagging doubts about an adult's behaviour towards or around children can be significant. These concerns may not be directly linked to a specific act or omission but can still create a sense of unease. It is possible for individuals to find themselves in compromising situations or have behaviour that could be misunderstood. The school encourages individuals to self-report in such situations, as it shows an understanding of the expected behavioural standards and a willingness to reflect on their own actions. The self-reporting of low-level concerns is seen as crucial in maintaining a culture where everyone strives for the highest standards of conduct and behaviour.

Further examples of Low-Level Concerns are given in the Child Protection Policy Appendix 5.

What should I do if I have one?

Where a low-level concern exists it should be reported to the DSL as soon as reasonably possible and in any event within 24 hours of becoming aware of it (where the concern relates to a particular incident). If the low-level concern is about the DSL, it can either be reported to the Chair of Governors. All low level concerns should be reported to both the DSL and the Headteacher.

How will my low-level concern be handled?

The DSL will ensure that all low-level concerns are documented appropriately and stored securely. If the concern is about a member of staff, their line manager will be informed and appropriate action will be taken in line with the organisation's policies and procedures. If the concern is about a student,

the DSL will work with the relevant staff members to address the issue and provide appropriate support if necessary.

If, during the investigation of a low-level concern, the DSL becomes aware of information that suggests a higher level of concern or potential harm to a pupil, then the appropriate child protection procedures will be followed without delay, and the matter will be escalated accordingly.

It is important for the DSL to maintain accurate records and communicate effectively with all relevant parties throughout the process of dealing with low-level concerns. This will ensure that appropriate action is taken, risks are managed effectively, and the safety and well-being of children and young people are safeguarded.

What records will be kept?

Where a low-level concern has been communicated, a confidential record will be kept in a central file which logs all low-level concerns. This is necessary to enable any patterns to be identified. However, no record will be made of the concern on the individual's personnel file (and no mention made in job references) unless either: (a) the concern (or group of concerns) has been reclassified as an allegation as above; or (b) the concern (or group of concerns) is sufficiently serious to result in formal action under the school's disciplinary procedure.

Summary Table to help identify differences between low level concerns and Allegations. (Please note it is anybody's responsibility to report but the DSL's role to determine how to deal with the report)

Approved by:

Date: Mrs. Yaasmin Mubarak
Headteacher
September, 2023

Mubarak Patel
Chair of Governing Body
September,2023

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;

Low-Level Concern Any concern – no matter 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.