The Beacon
Pupil Referral Unit

LOW LEVEL CONCERNS POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2025

Purpose

This policy sets out how low-level concerns about staff conduct are defined, reported, recorded, and managed within the Beacon Pupil Referral Unit. It ensures safeguarding standards are upheld, while promoting a culture of openness, accountability, and professional boundaries.

Definition of Low-Level Concern

A **low-level concern** is any behaviour by a staff member, volunteer, or contractor that does not meet the threshold of harm or abuse but may:

- Be inconsistent with the Beacon's Code of Conduct.
- Breach professional boundaries.
- Cause a child or adult to feel uncomfortable.
- Indicate a pattern of behaviour that could escalate if not addressed.

Examples include:

- Using overly familiar language with pupils.
- Having "favourites" or giving special treatment.
- Inappropriate jokes or comments.
- Minor breaches of safeguarding procedures.

Principles

- **Safeguarding first:** All concerns, however small, are taken seriously.
- **Transparency:** Staff are encouraged to report concerns without fear of reprisal.
- **Proportionality:** Responses are measured, supportive, and focused on improvement.
- **Learning culture:** Concerns are used to strengthen professional practice, not punish unnecessarily.

Reporting Concerns

- Any member of staff, pupil, parent, or visitor can raise a concern.
- Concerns should be reported to the Headteacher.
- Any concerns regarding the Headteacher should be reported to the chair of the Management Committee
- Staff should use the low-level concern reporting form
- Anonymous reporting is permitted but discouraged, as openness supports resolution.

Recording Concerns

- All concerns are logged in the **Low-Level Concern Register** maintained by the Headteacher.
- Records include: date, nature of concern, person reporting, action taken, and outcome.
- Patterns of behaviour are monitored over time.
- Records are stored securely and confidentially, in line with GDPR.

Responding to Concerns

- The Headteacher will review each concern and decide on next steps.
- Possible responses include:
    - Informal conversation and reminder of expectations.
    - Additional training or supervision.
    - Monitoring of practice.
    - Escalation to formal disciplinary procedures if concerns accumulate or escalate.
- Concerns that meet the threshold of harm are immediately escalated to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Staff Responsibilities

- All staff must familiarise themselves with this policy.
- Staff should self-report if they recognise their own conduct may have crossed boundaries.
- Leaders must model openness and encourage a “speak up” culture.

Governance and Oversight

- The Management Committee receive termly anonymised reports on low-level concerns.
- Policy effectiveness is reviewed annually.

Training

- All staff receive annual safeguarding training, including recognising and reporting low-level concerns.
- Induction for new staff includes explicit reference to this policy.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if statutory guidance changes.