

## Cavendish Close Infant and Nursery School

### **Statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff 2022.23**

This statement is taken directly from our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, section 9, page 38. It is fully in line with the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding

#### **Section 9:**

#### **What staff should do if they have an allegation or a safeguarding concern about another member of staff or concerns about safeguarding practices within the school?**

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding there are processes in place for continuous vigilance, maintaining an environment that deters and prevents abuse and challenges inappropriate behaviour. Our culture and environment support staff to discuss matters that concern them in the workplace and, where appropriate, outside the workplace which may have implications for the welfare and safety of children.

**All** allegations/concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, contractors, and volunteers) will be reported, recorded, and dealt with promptly and appropriately.

By doing so everyone in the school will:

- Create and embed a culture of openness, trust, and transparency
- Help to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour at an early stage
- Minimise risk of abuse
- Ensure that school staff are clear about professional boundaries and act within these, in accordance with the ethos and values of the school.

The school recognises there are two levels of allegation/concern

1. Allegations/concerns that **may** meet the harm threshold
2. Allegations/concerns that **do not** meet the harm threshold, also known as 'low level concerns'

Our response to allegations/concerns is consistent with the DDSCP Safeguarding Children [Allegations against Staff, Carers and Volunteers](#) procedure and we also refer to the DDSCP Briefing Note: [Low-Level Concerns about Staff](#). This response is also entirely in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022.

#### **1. Allegations that may meet the harm threshold**

This is where an allegation/concern might indicate that a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in their present position, or in any capacity with children in a school. Where it is alleged that anyone working in the establishment, including supply teachers, contractors and volunteers 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 he or she 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.

This includes any behaviour that may have happened outside school and is known as a transferable risk.

### **If you have concerns about another staff member**

Staff who are concerned about the conduct of a colleague (including supply staff, contractors, and volunteers) must remember that the welfare of the child is paramount.

All concerns of poor practice or concerns about a child's welfare brought about by the behaviour of colleagues should be reported without delay to the headteacher. If the headteacher is not available, communication will be with the Deputy Headteacher (or the next most senior leader available). Where there are allegations/concerns about the headteacher, this should be referred to the chair of governors. Contact will be made in writing through the clerk to the governing board and marked as 'confidential'. In a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the headteacher this should be reported directly to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The member of staff should make a record which will include time, date, place of incident, persons present, what was witnessed, what was said etc; this should then be signed and dated. See Appendix 1 in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

### **Looking after the welfare of the child**

Where a child has been harmed, or there is an immediate risk of harm to a child or if the situation is an emergency, local authority children's social care should be contacted and where appropriate the police. It is the designated safeguarding lead's responsibility to ensure the child is not at risk and refer cases of suspected abuse to children's social care.

Allegations/concerns which may meet the harms threshold will be investigated, recorded and managed, including non-recent allegations by a child. A referral should be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

## **2. Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold**

Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold are referred to as 'low-level concerns'. A low-level concern does not mean it is insignificant, rather that the behaviour towards the child does not meet the harm threshold as outlined above.

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is:

- Inconsistent with the staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, or
- Does not meet the harm threshold or is not serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum. Further information about distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be found in the school staff behaviour (code of conduct) policy.

Staff should share low-level concerns in confidence with the Headteacher, this may include self-referral where staff have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others and/or on reflection they believed that they have behaved in a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards. If the headteacher is not available, communication will be with the Deputy Headteacher (or the next most senior leader available). Low-level concerns about the headteacher should be reported to the chair of governors. Contact will be made in writing through the clerk to the governing board and marked as 'confidential'.

The headteacher will be the decision maker in respect of all low-level concerns; however this may be undertaken in collaboration with the designated safeguarding lead.

Reports about supply staff or contractors will be notified to their employers.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing to include details of the concern, the context and the action taken.

**Concerns about safeguarding practices within the school**

All staff are encouraged to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school safeguarding regime. These concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

For information about how to raise concerns with the senior leadership team or other channels, see the whistleblowing policy.