

# PACE NORTHWEST

## Reporting Low-Level Concerns Policy

Version 1.0 | Review Cycle: Annual

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Rebecca Hambleton**

### 1. Policy Statement

PACE Northwest is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. Creating and maintaining a culture of openness, transparency and accountability is essential. This policy enables staff to share low-level concerns about adults working with children at an early stage, helping to identify concerning behaviour before it escalates.

### 2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to encourage the reporting of low-level concerns, support a culture of professional curiosity, and ensure that concerns about adult conduct are dealt with promptly, fairly and appropriately.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors, agency workers, governors/trustees and any adults working on behalf of Pace Northwest.

### 4. Definition of a Low-Level Concern

A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, regarding the behaviour of an adult towards a child that does not meet the threshold for a formal safeguarding allegation but is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct or expected professional standards.

### 5. Examples of Low-Level Concerns

Examples may include being overly familiar with a student, using inappropriate language, showing favouritism, communicating outside agreed protocols, breaching professional boundaries, or behaviour that causes a sense of unease or concern.

### 6. Reporting a Concern

All low-level concerns should be reported as soon as possible. Concerns should normally be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Rebecca Hambleton. If the concern relates to the DSL, it should be reported to the most senior leader or proprietor responsible for safeguarding oversight.

### 7. Recording and Management

All low-level concerns will be recorded securely and reviewed appropriately. Records will include the nature of the concern, actions taken, outcomes and any patterns identified over time. Information will be managed in accordance with data protection requirements.

## **8. Response and Investigation**

PACE Northwest will assess each concern proportionately, seeking clarification where necessary and determining whether further action is required. Repeated low-level concerns may indicate a pattern of behaviour and may result in formal management action or safeguarding procedures.

## **9. Confidentiality**

Concerns will be handled sensitively and confidentially. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis to ensure safeguarding and fair process.

## **10. Staff Support**

PACE Northwest recognises that reporting concerns can be difficult. Staff who raise genuine concerns in good faith will be supported and protected from detrimental treatment.

## **11. Links to Other Policies**

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Whistleblowing Policy, Behaviour Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance.

## **12. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if changes in legislation, statutory guidance or organisational practice require it.

## **Approval**

This policy has been approved by the senior leadership team of Pace Northwest and forms part of the organisation's safeguarding framework.