

# SOGA Low Level Concerns Policy

SOGA is committed to maintaining a strong safeguarding culture, which enables any concerns within the organisation to be identified and discussed.

SOGA members are recruited in line with Safer Recruitment guidelines, receive safeguarding advice and training, prevent training, health and hygiene, first aid and training on our professional code of conduct.

All SOGA Members are aware of the expectation of appropriate behaviour towards children and the need to report any concerning behaviour to Mrs Pam Keracher if appropriate and/or the concerns relate to Mrs Pam Keracher, concerns must be reported to the Local Authority.

This policy aims to outline what would be considered a “low-level concern” and the policy and procedure for dealing with a report. This policy also aims to empower all SOGA Members to report any concerns, no matter how small, in the interests of a robust safeguarding culture.

This policy has been written with reference to <https://www.farrer.co.uk/news-and-insights/safeguarding-developing-and-implementing-a-low-level-concerns-policy/>

## What is a Low-Level Concern?

A low-level concern as described by Farrer & Co in the above guidance would constitute: 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.

Low level concerns are different to allegations against an adult who works with children. An allegation would constitute behaviour which has or may have harmed a child, possible crimes committed against or related to a child, behaviour towards a child or children which indicates that they may pose a risk of harm to children. However, it is not the responsibility of the person making the report to decide whether it is a low-level concern or an allegation, that will be determined by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Mrs Pam Keracher. Concerns should be reported immediately to the DSL Mrs Pam Keracher, or in her absence Mr Peter Keracher. Reports can be made verbally or in writing. If the concern relates to the DSL, Pam Keracher or DDSL Duncan Wright, the report can be made directly to the Local Authority. If the reporter requests to remain anonymous, this will be respected where possible.

However, it is not possible to make guarantees of anonymity.

Process for receiving a report of a low-level concern:

- The DSL Mrs Pam Keracher (or Deputy DSL) Mr Duncan Wright will receive the report in writing or verbally.
- If the report is made verbally, the DSL Mrs Pam Keracher will write an account of the report as it is being given, or immediately afterwards.
- The written copy of the report will be kept securely in a password protected folder on the Office Laptop.
- If the report is not made anonymously, the DSL Mrs Pam Keracher will speak to the person who reported the concern and review whether the concern breaches the Code of Conduct. The DSL Mrs Pam Keracher will also determine whether it is a low-level concern or should be escalated to the LADO Child Protection/Social Work at the Local Authority and considered an allegation. -If the DSL Mrs Pam Keracher is not sure whether the report is a low-level concern or an allegation, they should consult with the Child Protection/Social Work at the Local Authority - Once the DSL Mrs Pam Keracher has determined the report is a low-level concern, they should speak to the individual involved, make a record of all conversations, their decision about the incident, any action taken and rationale.
- If the DSL Mrs Pam Keracher feels that the report does not constitute a low-level concern, they should still speak to the individual involved to let them know about the report and allow them to respond. The DSL Mrs Pam Keracher should explain the decision, action and rationale to the person who reported the concern.
- If the DSL Mrs Pam Keracher decides that the report does constitute a low-level concern, they will then need to decide whether the issue is best resolved through a conversation, closer working together or further training or a combination of all.
- The DSL Mrs Pam Keracher should seek to speak to the individual involved in a calm and sensitive manner and avoid being critical or threatening.
- If the DSL Mrs Pam Keracher considers that the issue also involves misconduct or poor performance, she will decide how best to proceed. Consultation with other external agencies may be necessary.
- If the concern, when taken in the context of a pattern of low-level concerns constitutes an allegation, a referral should be made to the LADO Child Protection and Social Work at the Local Authority. If in doubt as to whether the pattern of concerns does meet the threshold for an allegation, the LADO Child Protection and Social Work at the Local Authority should be consulted.
- Once the low-level concern has been evaluated, all notes will be kept in a secure folder on the office Laptop and will remain there until the Member departs SOGA. When the member departs the SOGA family, the folder will be assessed again to see whether it is still necessary to retain

the information.

-Any concerns or allegations which have been proven to be false, unsubstantiated, or malicious should not be included in references for future employment and SOGA remains mindful of its duty to provide accurate information.

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Contact Mr Duncan Wright Tel 07476350802

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