



Brenchley Preschool

Low-level concerns Policy

Date written: **September 2026**

Date of last update: **September 2026**

Date agreed and ratified by **October 2026**

Date of next full review: **September 2027**

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any lessons learnt and/or updates to national or local guidance and procedures.

Key Contacts

	Name	Contact information
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Zena Ames	01892 724261 brenchleyzena@gmail.com
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead(s)	Sian Scovell	01892 724261 brenchley.preschool@gmail.com
Designated Safeguarding Leads contact email	Zena Ames and Sian Scovell	Safeguarding.BPS@gmail.com
Safeguarding Committee Member point of contact	Vic Relle	01892 730307 victoria.goldsmith@ubs.com

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff. It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents.

Introduction:

- Brenchley Preschool recognises its statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children. Safeguarding is **everybody's responsibility**, and everyone involved in the care, learning and development of young children has a role to play in keeping them safe.
- Brenchley Preschool will provide a high-quality, welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children can learn, play, develop, build positive relationships and grow in confidence.
- Brenchley Preschool believes that the best interests of children must always come first. All children, defined in law and in this policy as anyone under the age of 18, have a right to be heard, protected and supported. Children's wishes, feelings, behaviour, communication, development and lived experience will be taken into account when deciding what safeguarding action to take and what support to provide.
- For the purpose of this policy any member of the preschool community such as staff members, visitors, volunteers or contractors will be collectively referred to as 'adults' or 'staff' and this policy will apply to each person involved in the care and education of the children at Brenchley Preschool.
- All staff members are expected to uphold professional expectations and follow the ethos of our Preschool. The staff code of conduct must be followed and details our expectations of staff behaviour, attitudes and professionalism. Consistency between staff ensures the children's safety and well-being, maintaining the Preschool values and creating a safe space for all.
- This low-level concerns policy should be explored in conjunction with other relevant policies and procedures such as staff behaviour – code of conduct, Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, Managing allegations against staff, Whistleblowing, safer recruitment, Image Use, Mobile phone and smart devices, Acceptable Use policy and the preschool Social Media policy. All of which can be found in the policy folder in the foyer, under the documents section on Tapestry and on the preschool website. All members of staff are provided with copies of the policy during induction and at least yearly as the policies are updated
<https://brenchleypreschool.co.uk/policies>

Intent:

- Staff at Brenchley Preschool will maintain an attitude of **“it could happen here”** where safeguarding is concerned. If any member of our setting community has a safeguarding concern about a child or adult, they should act and act immediately.
- The welfare requirement of the EYFS requires providers *‘to take all necessary steps to keep children safe and well’*. Everyone involved in the care of young children has a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare.
- Children have a right to:
 - feel safe, be listened to, and have their wishes and feelings taken into account in ways that are appropriate to their age, development, communication needs and understanding
 - communicate worries, concerns or experiences in a way that is possible for them, including through words, behaviour, play, presentation or interactions

- have any concerns, disclosures or changes in presentation taken seriously and responded to appropriately
- receive help, comfort and support from safe adults
- be supported to understand how to keep themselves safe in age-appropriate ways, including when using technology or spending time online
- be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and harm, and receive the right help at the right time.

Definition: Concerns that do not meet the ‘harm threshold’

(For further information - The [low-level concerns terminology](#) comes from KCSIE but is relevant for all organisations working with children. The EYFS does not use the term “low-level concerns” in the same way as KCSIE. However, adopting a low-level concerns approach is recommended safeguarding practice and can help settings create an open culture where concerns about adult behaviour are shared, recorded and responded to before they escalate)

- Brenchley Preschool recognises that concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the setting which do not meet the harm threshold, sometimes referred to as low-level concerns, should still be shared, recorded and responded to appropriately in line with our staff behaviour - code of conduct, our wider Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and this ‘low-level concerns’ policy.
- A low-level concern does not mean that the concern is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the setting may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with expected professional standards or the setting’s staff behaviour policy/code of conduct. This includes behaviour inside or outside of work where this may affect the adult’s suitability to work with children, and where the concern does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO or police for example.
- A low-level concern could be behaviour that leaves a nagging, uneasy or uncomfortable feeling that something just doesn’t feel right or something does not feel professional.
- Low-level concerns may arise in several different ways, including through suspicion, complaint, disclosure, observation, allegations made by a child, parent/carer or adult, self-referral, or information arising from vetting or suitability checks.
- Brenchley Preschool will promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the setting are shared responsibly with the right person and dealt with promptly and appropriately. This helps identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early, minimises the risk of abuse, and supports adults to understand and maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Low-level concerns are problematic as behaviour could escalate, leading to abuse or could highlight the need for further training or supervision for example.

Inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated and should be challenged in the correct way to ensure the safety and well-being of the children in our care.

What are low-level concerns?

- Low-level concerns could include
 - Inadvertent or thoughtless behavior
 - behaviour that might be considered inappropriate depending on the circumstances,
 - behaviour that is intended to enable abuse

- Examples of these behaviours could include
 - being over-friendly with children,
 - having favourites, adults taking photographs of particular children,
 - engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door,
 - humiliating children or being harsh e.g. tone, facial expressions, body language,
 - Using inappropriate sexualized, intimidating or offensive language,
 - Discussing personal or adult topics in front of the children,
 - Engaging with parents/carers in an unprofessional manner, being overly familiar or in a derogatory way,

The reporting process:

- If you have a concern about a staff member then it is important to notify the DSL , Zena Ames, or Deputy DSL in her absence, Sian Scovell, in a timely manner. If the concern relates to either DSL, then as with the whistleblowing policy, the next point of contact would be the Chair of the Committee, Victoria Relle.
- The concern should ideally be shared verbally within 24 hours to ensure that the correct action can be taken, quickly and efficiently.
- As with any concern, it is important that the incident or concern is recorded accurately, detailing the concern and the context as to when the concern arose, recording this on the safeguarding 'concern' forms. The forms can be found in both Rainbows and Teddies in the accident/incident folders, as well as additional forms on the Rainbows fire door and in the black folder in the safeguarding box in the office.
- The concern form should be fully completed and ideally named and signed by the witness. The form should then be given to the DSL or in her absence the Deputy DSL, unless the concern regards them, then it should be securely sent to the Chair of the Committee, Victoria Relle. The form can initially be placed in the yellow 'pending' folder in the office to be reviewed by the DSL, unless the concern regards them, then it should be securely sent to the Chair of the Committee, Victoria Relle.
- If the witness would like to remain anonymous, then the recording of the concern still applies so that we have an accurate record of the situation.
- It is important that the records are accurate and shared in a timely manner as these could help to identify any patterns of behaviour or represent an escalation in behaviour.

Review and Action of the concern:

- The DSL will then review the report to see whether the concern meets the harm threshold and requires a referral or if it is indeed a 'low-level' concern.
- If the concern crosses the harm threshold then the allegations against staff policy will be followed, seeking advice from the LADO, Police or any other relevant outside statutory agency.
- If the record shows a 'low-level' concern, then the DSL will speak to all adults involved in the incident or concern, including witnesses, unless advised to do so by any other agencies that could become involved.
- If the staff member who raised the concern does not wish to be named, then Brenchley Preschool will respect that person's wishes as far as possible. However, there may be circumstances where the staff member who raises the concern will need to be named (for example, where it is necessary in order to carry out a fair disciplinary process) and, for this reason, anonymity should never be promised to members of staff who share low-level concerns. Where possible, we will encourage staff to consent to be named, as this will help to create a culture of openness and transparency.
- The concern should be measured against the safeguarding policies and procedures, as well as staff behaviour- code of conduct and explored alongside any other information collected throughout the process.
- The LADO may need to be consulted for advice, even if the concern does not meet the threshold of harm.
- If the concern relates to a volunteer, visitor or external contractor, then the agency or company would be notified by the DSL.
- A decision should then be taken on whether any disciplinary or safeguarding action is required. This should be recorded in writing, along with an explanation of why this decision was made.
- **An Action Plan would then be created which could include:**
 - No further action required (the behaviour was entirely innocent and misunderstood).
 - Informal words of advice or a review of the Staff Code of Conduct.
 - Targeted training, mentorship, or increased supervision.
 - Escalation to formal disciplinary procedures if a pattern of behaviour is discovered,

- Referral to outside agencies such as LADO or police.

Record keeping:

- The Records will be kept securely and confidentially in the locked safeguarding cupboard in the office, which only the DSL's have access too.
- The files will be kept securely until the person involved leaves employment at Brenchley Preschool to see if patterns of behaviour occur.