

Broomfield House School
NEUTRAL NOTIFICATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

This Policy, which applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), is publicly available on the School website and upon request a copy, (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required), may be obtained from the School Office.

Rationale

1. It is accepted that there are occasions when school staff, as professionals, have to act in a particular way in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of their pupils. Such situations could put the adult in a potentially vulnerable position and perhaps cause them, with hindsight, to consider that they might have chosen to act in a different manner.
2. There may be occasions when an incident occurs which is out of the ordinary and which causes a member of staff to have doubts about the behaviour of an adult towards a pupil or another child [*Such doubts which fall below the threshold for a Safeguarding Concern Report*].
3. There may also be occasions when a member of staff has concerns about how their own behaviour in a specific situation might be misinterpreted. It is important that any occasions or incidents which might give rise to such concerns are reported to the DSL. In the vast majority of cases, there will be a perfectly innocent and reasonable explanation for what has occurred.

Procedure

The procedure for self-reporting or reporting a concern of this nature is called 'Neutral Notification'. The purpose of neutral notification is to protect both pupils and the staff working with them and allows a system for a simple record to be kept in case events are later referred to or any patterns emerge.

Where a member of staff is the subject of a notification [self-notification or by a colleague] they will suffer no detriment or stigma. Notifications of these types are a neutral act, and the DSL will, on receipt of a notification, determine how to best approach the issue.

Neutral Notifications can be made in person in the first instance. The Neutral Notification Form (available on the staffroom and in the Teachers Admin folder) should be passed to the DSL. If the notification is made in person in the first instance, staff may be required to complete a Neutral Notification Form later.

The DSL will receive all Neutral Notifications. Such records will be kept confidentially and shared with the relevant safeguarding team and relevant agencies **only** in cases where it leads to a Safeguarding Report being generated and such liaison / reporting is required.

A staff member who makes a Neutral Notification in good faith will suffer no detriment as a result but failure to make a Neutral Notification could, however, constitute misconduct and lead to the implementation of the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

Broomfield House School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. It is our aim that all pupils fulfil their potential.

The circumstances in which staff **should** make a Neutral Notification are as follows:

- any incident where s/he feels that his/her actions or behaviour towards a pupil could be misinterpreted;
- any incident which a member of staff is aware of actions of a colleague towards a pupil which could be misinterpreted;
- any incident of which a staff member is aware where the interactions of a colleague with a pupil are not appropriate to the pupil's age or need at that time;
- inadvertent email, messaging, use of social media sites or other communication between adults and pupils outside agreed protocols;
- any unsupervised contact with a pupil other than in the context of a one-to-one lesson or discussion about academic, extracurricular or pastoral issues or other situations which fall within expected boundaries of professional conduct;
- any incident where a member of staff has been alone with a pupil or pupils in a vehicle where this has not been authorised in advance;
- any inadvertent and potentially inappropriate social contact with pupils outside of school (such as restaurants or pubs);
- if a pupil uses a staff member's home address, mobile or home phone number, or private e-mail address;
- one-to-one contact with a pupil on school trip [residential / non-residential] which falls outside expected boundaries of professional conduct;

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list but representative. Anything which causes staff to have a 'nagging doubt' about the way in which other adults behave or interact with pupils (or their own actions could be viewed) should be notified, in order to protect both pupils and the members of staff involved.

NB

Where there is evidence that a professional boundary has been broken and the threshold for a Safeguarding Concern Report has been met, Neutral Notification must be bypassed and the usual Safeguarding Concern reporting lines **must** be followed. See *Safeguarding Policy* .

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