

## Oxford City Council

### Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult Policy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

1. Oxford City Council aims to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm, and support their development as residents and members of the Oxford community.
2. This Council will ensure that:
  - all Council employees and volunteers involved in working with children, young people and vulnerable adults implement good working practices to ensure a safe and healthy environment;
  - all Council employees and volunteers are aware of safeguarding issues both in the context of organised activities and within the home and community;
  - standard procedures are in place to protect the children, young people and vulnerable adults, first and foremost when suspected abuse or actual abuse is reported and that all Council employees and volunteers providing services for children understand these procedures;
  - when abuse is reported it is recognised that the child, young person or vulnerable adult is potentially at risk and safety is paramount.
3. The Council recognises that in providing services there is a need to provide and maintain a high degree of physical and emotional wellbeing for children, young people and vulnerable adults. Therefore the following procedures will be implemented through Council employees and volunteers:
  - make sure staff and volunteers are aware of the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures;
  - make sure that staff, volunteers and members of the public can effectively report concerns about children, young people or vulnerable adults at risk;
  - operate sound recruitment and selection procedures for Council employees and voluntary staff to ensure suitability for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults;
  - identify and enable appropriate training to take place for employees and volunteers who work with children, young people and adults;
  - demonstrate best practice in ensuring the safety of children young people and vulnerable adults.
4. Oxford City Council has completed a Self Assessment Tool and developed an Action Plan to ensure that it can effectively deliver this

Policy. The Action Plan will be monitored every 3 months and the Policy and Procedures will be reviewed annually.

5. A list of definitions is available in Annex 1.

## **2. DUTIES**

### **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults**

1. The council has a duty to ensure that, in discharging their functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
2. The council also has a duty to ensure that other organisations commissioned to provide services on their behalf have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
3. In order to carry out this duty, the council requires staff and councillors to be aware of how they can contribute to this aim whilst undertaking activities for and on behalf of the council.
4. All staff should be aware of their responsibilities and how to act in ways that protect themselves from wrongful allegations of abuse.
5. The Council has a duty to have a Designated Officer to be involved in the management and oversight of individual cases.

### **Reporting of child deaths**

6. All members of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board are required to provide a senior officer contact to the Board. This person will act as a first point of contact for any deaths of children /young people on council premises that the organisation may be the first to be aware of and to ensure that there is an effective response.
7. If you become aware of a child death you should immediately contact:

The Head of People and Equalities: Tel: 01865 252547.

8. Otherwise you should contact one of the Designated Offices. Contact details are given at the end of this document in Appendix 11.

### **Contracted services**

9. We will refer our contractors to the following guidance document, which was issued under section 11(4) of the Children's Act 2004 and the Department of Education and Skills Statutory Guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children's Act 2004 (issued 2007).

## **Contracted staff**

10. Where relevant to the post, all agencies that provide us with contracted staff must have procedures in place to safeguard young people and vulnerable adult's equivalent to those described in this policy.

### 3. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **The Designated Officers** have responsibility for:
  - Ensuring that the City Council operates procedures for dealing with allegations in accordance to Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Guidance.
  - Resolving inter-agency issues.
  - Liaison with the Oxfordshire Children and Young People Safeguarding Board and the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board on any issues.
  - Overseeing the implementation of the policy and procedures.
  - Supporting the development and review of the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy, Procedures and Action Plan.
  - Ensuring effective policies and procedures are in place in relation to key areas of the council services, in particular housing and community, people and equalities and corporate procedures.
2. The Designated Officers will ensure that the Policy, Procedures and Action Plan are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure compliance with Safeguarding legislation. The Designated Officers will meet at least 3 times a year to review progress on the Action Plan.

#### Additional responsibilities

- a. **The Partnership Development Manager** is responsible for primary liaison with the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Boards and for the coordination and dissemination of information across the authority. **The Partnership Development Officer will also ensure that the Chief Executive, Directors, the Leader of the Council and relevant Executive Board members are informed.**
- b. **The Head of People and Equalities** is responsible for ensuring that recruitment procedures for posts with direct access to children, young people or vulnerable adults is in line with this policy and that appropriate training is provided. They are also responsible for the reporting of child deaths.
- c. **The Corporate Secretariat Manager** is responsible for coordinating information searches across the relevant Council services and liaising with the Safeguarding Teams in relation to Investigations and Serious Case Reviews.

- d. **The Head of Community Housing and Community Development** is responsible for providing advice and guidance with regard to vulnerable adults.
- e. **All Heads of Service** must ensure that their staff are subject to appropriate Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and that their staff comply with the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures.
- f. **All Line managers** are responsible for ensuring that their staff undertake appropriate training. Guidance on which members of staff should receive training and at what level is available from People and Equalities, Training and Development staff.
- g. **All members of staff and volunteers** are responsible for carrying out their duties in a way that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. They must also act in a way that protects them from wrongful allegations of abuse as far as possible, in line with this policy. They must bring matters of concern about safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults to the attention of the Designated Officer.

#### 4. RECRUITMENT AND ISA/CRB CHECKS

1. Oxford City Council has an 'Employment of people with criminal records policy'. This is available from the People and Equalities staff.
2. **The Head of People and Equalities** is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate recruitment procedures take place as detailed below:
3. If the applicant will have any direct access to children, young people or vulnerable adults the following statement will be included in the job description:
4. *'The post holder must at all times carry out their duties and responsibilities with due regard to the Child Protection Act (1999), the Children's Act (2004) and the Council's Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult Policy'.*
5. Information provided by applicants and referees will be scrutinised by:
  - Taking up and satisfactorily resolving any discrepancies or anomalies
  - Verifying identity and any academic or vocational qualifications
  - Obtaining independent professional character references
  - Checking previous employment history and experience
  - Checking that a person has the health and physical capacity for the job
  - Making the application for criminal record checks, where appropriate, and responding to any disclosures –as set out below.

#### Criminal Record Checks

6. **Heads of Service** are responsible for ensuring that members of staff in relevant posts will be subject to the appropriate level of criminal record checks, as set out below:
7. Where members of staff are working in a 'regulated activity' as defined by the SVGA 2996, they will be required to have a ISA registration and enhanced CRB check.
8. When it is uncertain whether a member of staff fits into one of these categories, the Head of People and Equalities and Head of Service must discuss the issue to agree a joint decision. Where agreement cannot be reached the Head of People and Equalities will make the final decision.
9. It will be made clear to applicants for posts of this nature that the position is exempt from the provisions of the rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and they will need to obtain Independent Safeguarding Association (ISA) registration and an enhanced Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) disclosure prior to commencing employment..

10. **The Designated Officers** , as members of the Safeguarding Board will be required to have ISA registration and satisfactory enhanced CRB check

### **ISA Registration**

11. If an applicant for a position working in a 'regulated' activity' does not obtain ISA Registration i.e. they are on a barred list, their employment will not be confirmed as it is a criminal offence for someone who is on a barred list to work in a 'regulated activity'.

12. If an applicant applying for a position working in a 'controlled' activity is found to be on a barred list the Council will carry out a risk assessment to determine whether with suitable safeguards the individual could still be employed or whether to withdraw the employment offer.

### **CRB Disclosures**

13. In the event that a CRB check discloses a criminal record the People and Equalities staff will undertake a risk assessment (see Appendix 5) to ascertain the suitability of the members of staff in the specified role.

14. The applicant will not be employed or the post holder will have their employment terminated if the disclosure reveals a caution or conviction related to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

### **Councillors**

15. **Councillors** who may have significant unsupervised access to children and who do not already have a current CRB check are required to have an enhanced check.

### **During Employment**

#### **ISA**

16. Employees who have ISA registration are expected to maintain this registration for the duration of their employment. The Council will be alerted if an employee's registration becomes barred and their employment situation will be reviewed. This may result in termination of their employment.

#### **CRB**

17. Employees working in regulated activity positions will be expected to renew their CRB disclosure on a regular basis (currently every three years). If a criminal record is disclosed the individual's employment situation will be reviewed and this may result in the termination of their employment.

### **Duty of referral to ISA**

18. The Council has a duty to refer an individual to the ISA where they consider that person has caused or may pose a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adult. Managers will be made aware of the procedures to follow in such circumstances and that failure to follow them will result in a disciplinary offence.

## 5. TRAINING

1. Line managers are responsible for ensuring that members of staff in relevant posts have the appropriate level of training for their role, as set out below:
2. There are different levels of training available to members of staff defined by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board.
3. All new members of staff, paid or voluntary, will be briefed on their responsibilities towards children, young people and vulnerable adults during their induction.
4. All members of staff who are:
  - Come into contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults during the normal course of their role; or
  - Responsible for a child or young person for any period during work experience at Oxford City Council will be required do the OCSB on line 'Introduction to safeguarding' standard.
  - People who work directly with children will be required to do the OSCB Generalist Training standard course..
  - People who recruit staff should undertake the CWDC Safer recruitment online training.
5. The Designated Officers will be required to attend the OSCB Specialist Safeguarding Children/ Refresher Specialist course no less than once in a two year period. They will also attend the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, Multi-Agency Training Provider Course, no less than once in a three year period.
6. When it is uncertain whether a member of staff fits into any of these categories, line managers should discuss the issue with the Head of People and Equalities and if necessary another of the Designated Officers.
7. Details of all the above the training courses, and more, are available are on the OSCB web site:

[www.oscb.org.uk](http://www.oscb.org.uk)

8. The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Board is currently in the process of developing a multi-agency training programme for members of staff and volunteers who come into contact with, or who work directly with vulnerable adults. The People and Equalities Team

will liaise with the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults team to develop a training programme for Oxford City Council staff.

## **6. WORK EXPERIENCE WITH CHILDREN OR YOUNG PEOPLE**

1. All members of staff responsible for any child during work experience will be required to do the OSCB on line Introductory Training course.
2. The member of staff responsible for the work experience placement must be satisfied that the health and safety needs of every student can be met , will ensure the above training takes place and for the following actions:
  - acquiring a signed parent/carer permission for the student to take part in the scheme, where they are under 16
  - acquiring information from parents/carers about any medical conditions and emergency contact information for parents/carers
  - acquiring relevant information about the student's history or behaviour from the organiser of the work placement
  - ensuring that a confidentiality and a statement of responsibility form is signed by the student
  - ensuring that there is a timetable of activities for the extent of the placement, including what member of staff will be supervising the student at any one time.
  - ensuring that there is an up to date risk assessment for all activities, which is returned to parents / carers, either directly or via the organiser of the work experience..
  - ensuring that the student is aware of health and safety, fire and first aid procedures while they are on placement
  - being the initial point of contact for the student to report any complaints/incidents to during their work experience particularly if in relation to their supervisor.

## **7. RISK ASSESSEMENTS**

### **Work placements**

1. For the purposes of work experience placements, all students are regarded as employees.
2. Managers must assess the risks to children, young people and vulnerable adults before they start work, taking into account their inexperience, lack of awareness of risks, immaturity and other specific needs.
3. There is no need to carry out a new risk assessment each time a young person is employed, as long as the current risk assessment takes into account the characteristics of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
4. However, whenever there is a change to the activities or nature of work carried out a new risk assessment will be required.

### **Other activities**

5. A risk assessment should be carried out for events that we organise for groups of children, young people or vulnerable adults, for example disability forums and young people's networking events.
6. For regular events there is no need to carry out a new risk assessment for each occurrence if there is a standard risk assessment in place which takes account of activities and characteristics of different children, young people and vulnerable adults attending.
7. There is no need to carry out a new risk assessment each time a child, young person or vulnerable adult visits the council unless you are aware of a particular child, young person or vulnerable adults needs that would not be met by the current buildings risk assessment.

## **8. TRANSPORTING A CHILD, YOUNG PERSON OR VULNERABLE ADULT**

1. Wherever possible, it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult in addition to the driver acting as an escort.
2. **Members of staff and councillors** can transport children or vulnerable adults 12 years or over in the course of their duties as long as the following conditions apply:
  - Insurance is valid and covers the use of the vehicle for business purposes
  - The vehicle is roadworthy with a valid MOT certificate
  - The child, young person or vulnerable adult wears a seat belt
  - Prior permission of the parent/guardians has been obtained.
3. These are the responsibility of the member of staff/councillor transporting the child, young person or vulnerable adult.
4. **Staff members/councillors** should:
  - be aware of the safety and welfare of the child and vulnerable adults is their responsibility
  - report the nature of the journey, route and expected arrival time to their line manager or the relevant member of staff
  - accommodate any specific needs the child or vulnerable adult may have.

### **Use of taxis**

5. If children or vulnerable adults are to be transported unaccompanied by taxi then the checklist and booking form shown in Appendix 8 and 9 must be followed. Taxi firms from the Oxfordshire County Council approved list on the internet must be used. All taxi drivers have to be police checked but the approved list is recognition that they may have received specific instruction/training about how to deal with young people in their taxis.

## **9. RECORDED IMAGES**

1. Staff should be aware of the potential for the recording of images to be misused for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes.

### **Images of Children and Young People**

2. Images recorded of children and young people should be functional as opposed to attractive and children and young people should be fully clothed.

3. Staff should make clear about the purpose of recording images and what will happen to the photographs.

4. Photographs where children are identifiable require the written consent of the parental/carer. This can be satisfied by the written confirmation from a school or youth organisation that the parents/carers of all children have already given their consent for the recording of images (see example Appendix 4).

5. Photographs where young people over the age of 16 are identifiable should have the young person's written consent (see example form Appendix 6)

6. Any images of children or young people that are published should not include names without specific parent/carer consent (for children) or young person over the age of 16, written consent.

### **Images of Vulnerable Adults**

7. Photographs where vulnerable adults are identifiable require consent from the subject(s) of the photograph. The photographer should satisfy themselves that this consent is informed and should record this either as a signature from the adult or as a written record (see sample form Appendix 6).

8. In some circumstances it is acceptable to seek the views of the adult's carer as to whether this consent is informed.

## **10. RAISING CONCERNS ABOUT CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULTS**

1. You may become concerned about the safety or welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult in a number of ways:
  - The person may tell you
  - The person may say something that worries you
  - A third party may voice concerns
  - You may see something – an incident or an injury or other sign

### **Procedure for dealing with concerns**

2. All concerns that a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been harmed or is at risk must be reported to one of the Designated Officer at the earliest opportunity.
3. All concerns must be recorded using the appropriate report of concern form (see Appendix 7) and be:
  - Brief
  - Factual (who, what, when, where, how)
  - Supported by available evidence e.g. a summary of what has been disclosed.
4. If staff or volunteers do not feel that they can complete the form themselves they should contact one of the Designated Officers.
5. It is not the individual responsibility of any council employee to decide if abuse is taking or has taken place. The incident should be reported, following the correct procedure, and left to the Designated Officer /appropriate agencies to take the matter further.

### **Emergencies**

6. Where an immediate police or medical response is required e.g. if the child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger of harm/injury you should contact the emergency services and inform the Designated Officer at the earliest opportunity once it is safe to do so.

### **Responding to Verbal Allegation of Abuse**

7. The person who receives the information concerning actual/suspected case of abuse should:
  - react calmly and quietly

- take the allegation seriously
  - say little and give time for the other person to talk
  - keep questions to an absolute minimum, do not probe or lead
  - make a full record of what has been said as soon as possible (see report of concern form at Appendix 7)
  - pass the information on to a Designated Officer, or the Chief Executive if the allegation is against a Designated Officer.
8. Do not:
- Make promises to keep secrets
  - Panic
  - Allow your shock/ distaste to show
  - Speculate or make assumptions
  - Make negative comments
  - Approach the alleged abuser.

### **Confidentiality**

9. Do not discuss the nature of your concern with anyone other than the Designated Officer. It is the Designated Officer's responsibility to decide what action to take and who to share these concerns with.
10. It is important that information is shared appropriately and sensitively with relevant agencies. This will be the decision of the Designated Officer.
11. Decisions on who needs to be informed are set out in the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board Information Sharing Protocol.
12. If required the Designated Officer will seek advice from the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Team (in the case of a child or young person) or the Local Authority Safeguarding Adults Manager (in a case involving a vulnerable adult).

## **Data Protection**

13. Occasionally there will be a requirement to collect and use certain types of information on children and young people. This personal information must be dealt with properly, however it is collected, recorded or used.
14. Personal information is data that relates to an individual who can be identified from the data. The lawful and correct treatment of personal information is very important and wherever such information is kept there is a need to comply and adhere to the principles of data protection, as enumerated in the Data Protection Act 1998. The City Council Data Protection Policy can be found in the link below
15. All staff and volunteers must comply with the Council's internet and e-mail policy and IT Security Policy.

## **Allegations involving a council employee**

16. All members of staff are responsible for acting in a way that protects them from wrongful allegations of abuse as far as possible, in line with this policy (see Appendix 2 for guidance on safe working practices).
17. If an allegation involves a City Council employee, the Designated Officer will work with the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Team in a case involving a child or young person or the Safeguarding Adults Manager in a case involving a vulnerable adult and the Head of People and Equalities to respond (this process is outlined in Appendix 11).

## **Behaviour outside the workplace**

18. Where there are concerns about a member of staff's behaviour outside the workplace towards a child, young person or vulnerable adult that may constitute abuse, this should be reported to the Designated Officer at the earliest opportunity.

## **11. SAFEGUARDING AND PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

1. As well as our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults, all staff are expected to promote the welfare of these groups.
2. Oxford City Council provides a number of services that promotes the well being of children and young people and vulnerable people.
3. The Oxford City Children and Young People's Plan sets out in detail what services they provided for children and young people.
4. There has recently been a substantial mapping exercise on the services that Oxford City Council provides for older and vulnerable people in order to contribute to the Aging Successfully Strategy which is being developed by Oxfordshire County Council.

## **ANNEX 1 - DEFINITIONS**

### **Members of staff**

1. All members of staff employed by Oxford City Council, permanently or temporary and agency staff. This includes paid staff and voluntary staff, and also elected councillors.

### **Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)**

2. The ISA is a new body set up under the SVGA 2006 to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. It operates the vetting and barring scheme which aims to prevent unsuitable people from working with children, young people or vulnerable adults. It operates in conjunction with the CRB.

### **Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)**

3. The CRB is a national organisation conducting police checks to enable an assessment to be made on the suitability of a person to care or work with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

### **Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB)**

4. The Children's Act 2004 required each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board (OSCB) is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how all relevant organisations in Oxfordshire will cooperate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people in the county, and for ensuring the effectiveness of their arrangements for safeguarding.

### **A young person**

5. Is defined as a person under the age of 18.

### **A child**

6. Is defined as a person who is of compulsory school age (a child is of a compulsory school age until the last Friday in June in the school year which they reach 16).

### **A vulnerable adult**

7. Is defined as a person aged 18 or over:
  - Who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and

- Who is or may be unable to undertake care of him or herself, or unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or exploitation (Department of Health (2000) 'No secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse).
- This could include:
  - people with dementia
  - people with learning difficulties
  - people with mental health problems
  - people with drug or alcohol problems
  - people with sight and hearing or physical disabilities
  - people who through age or illness are dependent upon other people to help them
  - people who care for others
- A person aged 18 or over who has a condition of the following type:
  - A learning or physical disability
  - A physical or mental illness, including addiction to alcohol or drugs; or
  - A reduction in physical or mental capacity

### **Designated officer**

8. Is a term used throughout this policy to describe the council employee who is responsible for handling all cases of abuse / suspected abuse within the council.

### **Welfare**

9. Is defined in terms of children/young people's health and development and adults' health, well being and independence.

### **Health**

10. Health means 'physical or mental health' and development means 'physical, emotional, social or behavioural development (adapted from the Children's Act 1989).

### **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people**

11. Is defined as:

- Protecting children and young people from mal treatment
- Preventing impairment of children/young people's health and development

- Ensuring that children/young people are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe effective care; and
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those children/young people to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

### **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable adults**

12. Is defined as:

- Protecting vulnerable adults from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of vulnerable adults' health and well being
- Ensuring that vulnerable adults are living in circumstances consistent with their needs and with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- Undertaking that role so as to enable those vulnerable adults to have optimum life chances and independence

## **2 – GUIDANCE FOR SAFE WORKING PRACTICES WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

### **EXERCISE OF PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT**

There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff will have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of the child or young person which could contravene this guidance or where no other guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interest and welfare of the child/young person and in so doing will be seen to be acting reasonably.

### **GROOMING**

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of the child or young person, and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Staff should be aware that in conferring special attention as a favour upon a child or young person might be construed as being a part of a 'grooming' process, which is an offence.

### **BEHAVIOUR**

An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting:

- Adults should act as a role model and not drink alcohol or smoke in front of children/young people
- At no time should adults enter children/young people's rooms.

### **SOCIAL CONTACT**

Staff should not seek to establish social contact with children/young people that they have met through work for the purpose of securing a friendship or to strengthen a relationship. If a child/young person or parent seeks to establish a social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise their professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such contact could be misconstrued as grooming.

### **COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN USING TECHNOLOGY**

Children and young people use technologies as a positive and creative part of their activities. Children and young people often use these methods to make plans with friends or organise events so if you are working with young people it might be necessary to communicate with young people in this way.

By technologies we mean:

- Mobile phones
- E-mail
- Social networking sites e.g. Facebook –socialising with friends and making new ones within on line communities
- Instant Messenger – chatting with friends live on line

Staff should not give their personal contact details to children/young people including e-mail home or personal mobile numbers.

Adults, where possible, only use equipment provided through work to communicate with children/young people.

An exception to this maybe where councillors are communicating with young people in their constituency for the purpose of representing them in the council. In these circumstances adults should be circumspect in their communications with children/young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming.

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES**

Under no circumstances should personal accounts in social networking sites be used to communicate with children/young people that staff members have met in the course of their work. The use of a professional networking site may only be used in line with council policy.

If staff do use a social networking site to communicate with young people staff should set up an account using their work email address and only join groups that are managed by the City Council or County Council, Participation and Play team and those that are you are specifically invited to join such as UK Youth Parliament or Oxfordshire Youth Parliament Groups.

If young people you don't know 'invite you to be a friend' you should not accept their invitation.

Do not pass on any young persons e-mail or mobile phone number without their permission.

## **ONE TO ONE SITUATIONS**

Staff should avoid spending time alone with a child/young person. Where possible they should ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one.

## **PHYSICAL CONTACT**

There are occasions when it might be appropriate for staff to have physical contact with children or young people e.g. sports coaching (see below), but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact. Staff should use their professional judgement at all times. They should be aware that any physical contact may be misconstrued.

Adults should:

- Never touch a child or young person in a way which may be considered indecent
- Never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights
- Always encourage children or young people, where possible, to undertake self-care tasks independently
- Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny

Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child or young person has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's / young person's view physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff being vulnerable to allegations of abuse.

## **SPORTS COACHING**

Some staff, for example, those who coach sports will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with children/young people in order to support them so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidential information about a child or young person should never be used casually in conversations or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the child/young person's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

For circumstances in which a member of staff is expected to share information about a child/young person, for example, when abuse is alleged or suspected, they have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only to this with designated child/young person protection responsibilities.

## **DRESS AND APPEARANCE**

Staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their role. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

References: This guidance has been adapted from: 'Guidance for safe working practice for the protection of children and staff in education settings', Department for Education and Skills, 2006.

## **APPENDIX 3 – DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Taken from Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board 2008

'Child' is taken to mean person under the age of 18.

### **SEXUAL ABUSE**

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative (i.e. rape, buggery or oral sex) or non penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual in line images, watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in a sexually inappropriate ways.

### **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

### **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless, unloved or inadequate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's development capability, over protection and limitation of exploring and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction.

It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children to feel frightened or in danger or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of children.

### **NEGLECT**

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet the child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of the child's health and development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- provide adequate food, clothing and shelter
- protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- ensure adequate supervision (including the use of adequate care givers)
- ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

## **APPENDIX 4 – DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE IN VULNERABLE ADULTS**

### **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

Being physically hurt or harmed, or put at risk of harm, either deliberately or through rough, careless or thoughtless behaviour.

Physical abuse may include:

- non-accidental actions causing injuries, such as bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocations
- threats of violence
- refusing consumers a service food because they have not done what they were asked to
- hitting, smacking, biting, shaking or kicking
- pulling arms, hair or ears
- bending back fingers or bending the arm up behind the back
- placing hot substances in the mouth
- leaving consumers in clothing or bedding that has been soiled
- physical restraint which is not justified, authorised or excused by law
- being lifted or moved roughly or carelessly or in a way that makes a person frightened or puts them at risk.
- misuse of medication e.g.:
  - giving medication that has not been prescribed
  - giving too much medication or over prescribing medication like anti psychotics (to make the care of people with dementia or challenging behaviours easier for staff)
  - giving over the counter medication without first checking with the consumer's doctor for appropriateness or any potential harmful side affects.

### **EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Being humiliated or put down or made to feel anxious, frightened or intimidated. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all forms of ill-treatment, though it may also be happening on it's own. Emotional abuse is often the first sign of other forms of abuse happening.

Emotional abuse may include:

- humiliating the person for losing control of their bladder or bowels
- shouting orders
- using humiliating or patronising names, or failing to address the person in their preferred manner
- treating adults as children
- humiliation, emotional blackmail, blaming, swearing, intimidation, name calling or isolation from friends and relatives
- the use of social isolation (ignoring)
- locking the person in their bedroom
- using other service users to provide physical control over another service user
- harassing a person to eat food they don't want to eat (which is contrary to their religious or cultural beliefs)
- threats of harm or abandonment
- verbal or racial abuse
- isolation or withdrawal from services or emotional supports.

## **FINANCIAL ABUSE**

This includes theft, fraud, or exploitation and the misuse of position or authority for financial gain.

Financial abuse may include:

- denying the person access to or control over their money and personal finances
- taking the person's money or other property without their consent (which is also likely to constitute a criminal offence) or where their consent is fraudulently obtained
- misappropriation of money, valuables or property
- changes to wills or other legal documents, by coercion, misinterpretation or where consent for the changes were fraudulently obtained

- denying the person access to information or documentation concerning their personal finances or individualised funding package
- personal use of a person's telephone which is not recorded or reimbursed
- staff borrowing or asking to borrow client's money or personal possessions even for a brief period e.g. CDs, lawn mowers etc.
- staff purchasing clients possessions at a grossly below real and accepted value of the item
- staff using clients vehicle for their own purposes
- theft or burglary
- grooming for the purpose of financial gain.

## **NEGLECT**

- ignoring a persons medical or physical care needs
- withholding the necessities of life, such medication, food/drink and heating
- failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services.

Neglect may also occur where there is failure to take appropriate action to safeguard a person's welfare or to be negligent in the face of risk.

Concerns or allegations of physical or sexual abuse are often seen as more serious than neglect. But long standing physical neglect is often a major factor in deaths from abuse.

Neglect may include:

- not giving the necessary help or support so that the person can eat or drink
- failure to provide adequate food or drink or ensure that the person can eat and drink it, e.g. by placing it out of reach or not providing the equipment a person needs
- not providing adequate food, shelter, clothing or personal health care
- not using the person's communications devices to allow expression of needs, choices or preferences

- failing to recognise or acknowledge non verbal messages conveyed of people who have limited communication abilities
- leaving the person alone in a vehicle for extended periods
- Not obtaining or seeking the appropriate medical, specialist, therapy or other health support the person may need e.g. dental care
- Not ensuring that a person has access to regular medical support including assessments for medication blood levels, blood pressure, diet and nutrition or access to regular health screening tests.
- Failure to access or provide proper care or medical services for the person
- Failure to report concerns
- Negligence in the face of risk taking
- Failure to give prescribed medication.

## **SEXUAL ABUSE**

This includes all unwanted sexual acts or being made to do something that you don't want to, didn't or couldn't agree to. Sexual abuse does not have to be physical, for example it could include jokes or comments or being made to watch, look or listen to something that makes you feel uncomfortable or embarrassed.

All adults have the right to express their sexuality. However, where there is any doubt as to a persons capacity to make informed decisions it is essential that the concern is reported and the necessary assessments are carried out in accordance with the mental Capacity Act.

Non contact:

- Unwanted comments or sexual innuendo
- Involving people against their wishes, or where they are unable to consent, in looking at, or in the production of pornographic material or sexual activities
- Encouraging a person who lacks capacity to behave in a sexually inappropriate or provocative way e.g. dressing provocatively, soliciting

Contact:

- Unwanted sexual touching or touching the person could not consent to or was coerced into
- Other sexual activity the person could not consent to or was coerced into e.g. masturbation, oral sex or rape.

## APPENX 5 - RISK ASSESSMENT RECORD FOLLOWING DISCLOSURE OF CRIMINAL RECORDS

**This assessment form needs to be completed by the People and Equalities Staff in conjunction with the person who has committed the offences.**

Appointing Officer

Your Criminal Records Check has been returned and has disclosed an offence or offences. We would therefore like to give you the opportunity to provide an explanation for these offences, as well as the circumstances around you at the time. We need to know who was involved, when it occurred, what occurred, where the offence was committed and why it was committed.

Name of subject	Date of birth
Address of subject	Disclosure number
Role of person conducting Assessment	
Name of person conducting Assessment	

Offence:
Date of offence:
We need to know who was involved, when it occurred, what occurred, where the offence was committed and why it was committed. It is also necessary to establish how the person feels about the offence/reprimand etc.

Declaration by applicant:

I certify that the information I have provided on this document is true and complete.

Signature:	Print:
------------	--------

**RISK ASSESSMENT TO BE COMPLETED BY THE MANAGER**

**Risks Associated:**

<b>High Risks</b>	
<b>Medium risks</b>	
<b>Low risks</b>	

**Risk of re-offending (tick relevant box)**

<b>Opportunity to re-offend</b>	<b>High</b>		<b>medium</b>		<b>low</b>	
<b>Severity of risk</b>	<b>High</b>		<b>medium</b>		<b>low</b>	

**Can protective measures be put in place?                      Yes/No**

**Outline Protective measures:**

**Overall risk (tick relevant box)**

<b>High</b>	<b>medium</b>	<b>low</b>
-------------	---------------	------------

**Signed (People and Equalities Team member) .....**

**Print name (People and Equalities Team member) .....**

**Date: .....**

**I understand and agree to abide by these protective measures.**

**Signed (Subject): .....                      Date: .....**

**Risk Assessment to be reviewed (date): .....**

## APPENDIX 6 – MEDIA CONSENT FORM

### FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

**Any child under 16 needs to have parental consent for taking and using a photograph or being filmed. Once a child is 16 years of age they can give their own consent and parent consent does not need to be sought or given. We believe that children and young people of all ages should be asked and to make the decision as to whether they want to be photographed or filmed.**

Parent name: .....

Child's name: .....

Phone number: .....

Address: .....

.....

The following consents are subject to Conditions of Use on the reverse side of this Media Consent Form

For the parent/carer if child is under 16	For the young person
I give my consent for my child to be photographed or interviewed by staff from Oxford City Council for the use on the Council's web site / Youth web site/ publications etc	I am happy to be photographed or interviewed by staff from Oxford City Council for the use on the Council's web site / Youth web site/ publications etc
I give my consent for my child's name to be used in reports or photos in Oxford City Council for the use on the Council's web site / Youth web site/ publications etc	I am happy for my name to be used in reports or photos in Oxford City Council for the use on the Council's web site / Youth web site/ publications etc
I permit staff from Oxford City Council to use the photographs/ interviews in any of the following ways:  In any printed publications produced On the Council web sites or Oxfordshire County Council web site In council advertising campaigns	I am happy for staff from Oxford City Council to permit staff from Oxford use the photographs/ interviews in any of the following ways:  In any printed publications produced On the Council web sites or Oxfordshire County Council web site In council advertising campaigns
Parent signature	Young Person signature

Date:	Date
-------	------

Insert contact details
------------------------

## **MEDIA CONSENT CONDITIONS OF USE**

1. This form is valid for 5 years from the date you sign it, or for the period of time your child attend the project/s. The consent will automatically expire after this time. However, you acknowledge and understand that there may still be materials in circulation after this time.
2. You are entitled to withdraw your consent at any time provided that you tell us in writing.
3. We will not include personal, e-mail or postal or telephone or fax numbers on video, on our web site or in other printed publications.
4. If we use the photograph of individual children, we will not use the full name of that child in the accompanying text or photo caption.
5. If we name a child in the text, we will not use a photograph of that child to accompany the article.
6. We may use photographs or footage with very general labels, to identify the activity being carried out.
7. We will only use images of children who are suitably dressed, to reduce risk of such images being used inappropriately.
8. Please note that websites can be viewed throughout the world and not just in the United Kingdom.

If you have any queries please contact:

Insert contact details:

**APPENDIX 7 – CHILD /YOUNG PERSON/ VULNERABLE ADULT  
PROTECTION POLICY REPORTING FORM**

Print and fill this form in by hand.

Form to be given to the Designated Officer at the earliest opportunity.

You may become concerned about the safety or welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult in a number of ways:

1. The young person may tell you
2. the person may say something that worries you
3. A third party may voice concerns
4. You may see something – an accident or injury or some other sign.

Your name:

Your job title:

Child /young person/vulnerable adult's name:

Child /young person/vulnerable adult's address (if you have it):

Child /young person/vulnerable adult's date of birth (if you have it):

Please include details of any third party involved:

Please include details of your concerns below, including how you became concerned:

Ensure you are brief and factual (think about who, what, when, where, how).  
Please attach any additional available evidence.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a signature.

Your signature:

Date:

**At all times remember to maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss the nature of your concern with anyone other than the Designated Officer. It is the Designated Officer's responsibility to decide what action to take and who to share these concerns with.**

**Use Email –to be added**

**To be completed by the Designated Officer**

Details of who and which organisation you have spoken to about this issue:

Name of person / job title	Organisations	Date of contact

Details of any action taken, including dates:

Your signature:

Date:

## **APPENDIX 8: CHECKLIST FOR BOOKING TRANSPORT FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

- Ensure parent has agreed to their child being transported in a taxi and has signed the relevant consent forms.
- Confirm with parents, where child/young person needs collecting from e.g. home, school, college and get the full address and postcode.
- Find a local taxi company from the Oxfordshire County Council approved taxi list (drivers on this list are CAB checked – list available on the internet).
- Telephone the company and make the booking, get a quote, booking number and confirm payment by invoice. They may require a purchase order to be able to invoice.
- Email taxi company to confirm details of young person, pick up and drop off details using the booking form (available on the internet).
- Receive confirmation of pick up times from the taxi company.
- Confirm pick up details with the parents /young persons and telephone number of worker contact in case there is a problem.
- On the day of meeting ensure worker has taxi details in case taxi does not arrive or there is delay.
- Worker to meet young person at the venue/meeting.
- At the end of the meeting worker to ensure that young person is collected from venue /meeting by taxi and returned home/school safely.

**APPENDIX 9 – TAXI BOOKING FORM**

Request from: (Name) .....

Contact telephone number ..... Mobile .....

Ref for invoice: (What event /visit) .....

Invoice Code: .....

Date of event .....

Pick up time to arrive at (address).....

.....

For (time) .....

Collect (Name of young person) .....

From (pick up address) .....

.....

- When collecting a child from school or college, please go to meet them in the school/college main reception, unless otherwise directed.
- When collecting a child **from home** knock the clients door, do not use the horn.
- Do not leave a child or young person at the destination until they have met by myself or a co worker.
- If the child/ young person is not picked up at the designated place please call worker.
- Do not leave until the worker has investigated and gets back the driver.
- Please let the worker if the taxi is running late.
- Please carry names, addresses for young people on the transport
- Carry ID badge, workers or clients may ask to see badges.

Return: Collect (at time) .....

From (address) .....

And drop at (address) .....

Please let me know approximate collect and return times as soon as you can, by e-mail if that is easier so that I can pass on information to the children and young people.

Please e-mail back to (insert name) ..... to confirm details:

E: mail address . .....

Invoices can be e-mailed or posted to:

## **APPENDIX 10 – PROCEDURE FOR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE BY A THIRD PARTY MADE TO A MEMBER OF STAFF**

### **Reporting concerns**

1. If you have any concerns you should write down what you have seen or heard that gives you concern using the form in Appendix .../ Keep that document safe and confidential, and contact your line manager as soon as possible.
2. Otherwise you can contact City Council's Nominated Officers or the Oxfordshire County Council Children's Social Care Team directly (see contact details below).
3. Further information and a 'What To Do' leaflet is also available on the every child matters web site:

[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)

### **Nominated Officer**

4. The lead officers for Safeguarding Children and Young People in Oxford City Council are:

Head of Corporate Services. Tel: 01865 252140

Head of Human Resources: Tel: 0186501865 252547

Corporate Manager, Partnership Development Tel: 01965 252209

If you have any concerns please contact the Designated Officers above, or you may also choose to contact:

08450507666 (Oxfordshire County Council Access team)

800833408 (emergency out of hours)

### **In an emergency please contact the Police directly.**

5. These people are available to discuss and advise staff, volunteers and Councillors and they are required to:
  - be familiar with child protection procedures;
  - ensure there are effective internal procedures to handle concerns;
  - be the link person with relevant agencies;
  - attend appropriate training.

## **APPENDIX 11 – PROCEDURE FOR ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE INVOLVING A COUNCIL EMPLOYEE**

### **Suspected Abuse or Bullying by Council Employees or Volunteers**

1. Should an allegation of abuse be made against a Council employee, the Council's Complaints and/or Disciplinary Procedures will be followed and appropriate action taken. Allegations against volunteers will be investigated in a similar way, but the Council's Disciplinary Procedure will not apply.
2. In either case, all allegations of abuse against an employee or volunteer will be reported to Oxfordshire County Council Children's Social Care Team by the Designated Officers. In cases involving employees or volunteers in an allegation of sexual abuse, including the observing, handling or distributing of materials in any media that involve the sexual abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults, the matter will be immediately referred to the police by the Designated Officers.
3. The Council recognises that it may be difficult to inform on colleagues but assures all staff and volunteers that it will fully support and protect anyone who, in good faith (without malicious intent), reports his or her concerns about a colleague's practice or the possibility that a child may be being abused or bullied.

### **Acceptable and unacceptable behaviour**

4. The Council has published Guidance to support staff, volunteers and Councillors who work with children, young people to understand what is acceptable and what is not acceptable behaviour. (See Appendixes 2)

## **ANNEX 12 - CONTACTS**

### **OXFORD CITY COUNCIL**

#### **Designated Officers**

Corporate Secretariat Manager: 01865 252140

Head of People and Equalities: 01865 252547

Head of Community Housing and Community Development 01865 252447

Corporate Manager Partnership Development: 01865 252209

### **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

#### **Oxford City Assessment Team**

01865 323048

Emergency out of hours (after 5.00 pm Mon-Thursday – Friday 4.00 pm)

#### **Police Abuse Investigation Unit**

01865 335200

In an emergency dial 999

#### **Central Locality Social Worker**

01865 323054

#### **NSPCC Child Protection Helpline**

080 0800 500

#### **Reporting Child Deaths on City Council premises**

Head of Corporate Services: 01865 252140

Child Death Overview Panel

01865 231974

[www.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk](http://www.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk)

#### **Safeguarding Children's Board**

[www.oscb.org.uk](http://www.oscb.org.uk)

#### **Safeguarding Children Team**

General enquiries: 01865 810628

Training: 01865 815843

#### **Useful publication**

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused

Copies available from the department of Education or tel: 01865 815186

## **VULNERABLE ADULTS**

### **OXFORD CITY COUNCIL**

#### **Designated Officers**

Corporate Secretariat Manager: 01865 252140

Head of People and Equalities: 01865 252547

Head of Community Housing and Community Development 01865 252447

Corporate Manager Partnership Development: 01865 252209

#### **Oxfordshire County Council**

Social and Community Services, Access

Team 08450 507666

Emergency out of hours 800 833 408

[access@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:access@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

#### **Thames Valley Police**

0845 8 505 505

In an emergency dial 999

#### **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Team**

01235 547141

[safeguardingadults@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingadults@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

#### **The Quality Care Commission**

03000 616161

Enquiries @ [cqc.org.uk](http://cqc.org.uk)

#### **Oxfordshire Age Concern Advice and Helpline**

01235 849400

[admin@ageconcern.org.uk](mailto:admin@ageconcern.org.uk)

#### **Useful Publication**

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults- What is adult abuse?

[www.safefromharm.org.uk](http://www.safefromharm.org.uk)



## Document Control

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<b>Owner</b>	Val Johnson, Partnership Development Manager
<b>Author</b>	Val Johnson <i>Policy Culture and Communications</i> <i>vjohnson@oxford.gov.uk</i> <i>01865 252209</i>
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1	1st April 2010	First draft based on Policy adopted by South Oxfordshire and Vale of the White Horse District Councils  Circulated to all heads of service and relevant Council Officers
2	26 <sup>th</sup> April 2010	Meeting held with Simon Howick Head of People and Equalities. Comments received from Angela Bowman
3.	26 <sup>th</sup> May 2010	Updated following receipt of comments and added useful contacts page
4	September 2010	Updated following receipts of comments from the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Team and Safeguarding Children Team
5.	October 2010	Reviewed in preparation for CEB
6.	October 2010	Further review in preparation for CEB