



2021/22

Child Safeguarding & Protection Policy

## CHILD SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTION POLICY

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Act 1989, and in line with the following:

- “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013”
- “Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families” 2000
- “What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused” 2003
- “Keeping Children Safe in Education” 2014
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board

The Board of Trustees takes seriously its responsibility under section 11 of the Children Act and duties under “working together” to safeguard <sup>2</sup> and promote the welfare of children; and to work together with other agencies to ensure adequate arrangements exist within our setting to identify and support those children who are suffering harm or are likely to suffer harm.

We recognise that all staff<sup>3</sup> and trustees have a full and active part to play in protecting our users and clients from harm, and that the child’s welfare is our paramount concern.

Our organisation should provide a safe, caring, positive and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical, and moral development of the individual child free from discrimination or bullying where children can learn and develop happily.

This policy applies to all staff, trustees and volunteers working in our organisation

The aims of this policy are:

- To support the child’s development in ways that will foster security, confidence, and resilience
- To provide an environment in which children and young people feel safe, secure, valued, and respected, feel confident and know how to approach adults if they are in difficulties.
- To raise the awareness with all staff of the need to safeguard children and of their responsibilities in identifying and reporting possible cases of abuse.
- To provide a systematic means of monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm, and ensure we, contribute to assessments of need and support plans for those children where appropriate.
- To acknowledge the need for effective and appropriate communication between all members of staff in relation to safeguarding children and young people.
- To develop a structured procedure within the school which will be followed by all members of the staff in cases of suspected abuse.
- To develop effective working relationships with all other agencies, involved in safeguarding children.

## Title

---

- To ensure that all adults within our organisation who have access to children have been checked as to their suitability. This includes other community users of our facilities, following correct staff recruitment and selection procedures

## Procedures

Our organisation procedures for safeguarding children will be in line with Oxfordshire Local Authority (the LA) and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures, and “Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013”.

- We will ensure that: The Board of Trustees understands and fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities.
- We have a designated member of staff who have undertaken appropriate training for the role, as recommended by the LA, within the past two years.
- Our Designated staff will update their training with LA approved training every two years.

Our designated staff members are **Amy Farrell and Anji Hall**

- In the absence of an appropriately trained member of staff, the Project Manager will assume this role.
- All adults, (including volunteers) new to our organisation will be made aware of this policy and the procedures for child protection, the name and contact details of the Designated Person and have these explained, as part of their induction.
- All members of staff are provided with opportunities at least every three years to receive training in order to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse, how to respond to a user who discloses abuse and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse.
- Community users organising activities for children are aware of and understand the need for compliance with the schools’ child protection guidelines and procedures.
- The name of any member of staff considered not suitable to work with children will be notified to the DBS (Disclosure and Barring service), with the advice and support of Human Resources and or LADO.
- Our procedures will be annually reviewed and updated, and a summary report of findings sent to our governing body and the local Authority Safeguarding Team.

## Responsibilities

Clean Slate staff, trustees and volunteers will follow the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Procedures/Local Authority guidance in all cases of abuse, or suspected abuse (these can be found at [www.OSCB.org.uk](http://www.OSCB.org.uk) ).

We will therefore:

- Understand that our responsibility to safeguard children requires that we all appropriately share any concerns that we may have about children.
- Ensure that we refer a child if there are concerns about a child’s welfare, possible abuse, or neglect to Social Care. A written referral using the Common Referral Form will be faxed/posted/e-mailed to Social Care as soon as possible within 24 hours.

- Ensure that detailed and accurate written records of concerns about a child are kept even if there is no need to make an immediate referral. See guidance on record keeping:

[http://portal.oxfordshire.gov.uk/content/public/CYPF/schools/behaviour\\_attendance/safeguarding\\_child\\_protection/Keeping\\_Child\\_Protection\\_Records.doc](http://portal.oxfordshire.gov.uk/content/public/CYPF/schools/behaviour_attendance/safeguarding_child_protection/Keeping_Child_Protection_Records.doc)

- Ensure that all such records are kept confidentially and securely
- Ensure that the designated staff member, or another appropriate member of staff, attends case conferences, family support meetings, core groups, or other multi-agency planning meetings, contributes to the Framework for Assessments process, and provides a report which has been shared with the parents.
- Establish and maintain links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with enquiries of a child protection nature.
- Ensure that all school staff are aware of the CP policy and procedures, and understand their responsibilities in being alert to, and acting appropriately in cases of abuse, or suspected abuse, and know how to recognise and refer any concerns.
- Provide, where requested, an annual report for the governing body, detailing any changes to the policy and procedures; training undertaken by the Designated Person, and by all staff, number and type of incidents/cases, and number of children referred to Children's Social Care and subject to Child Protection Plans (anonymised). The committee will use this report to fulfil its responsibility to provide the LA with information about their Safeguarding policies and procedures when requested.
- Keep themselves up to date with knowledge to enable them to fulfil their role, including attending relevant training, at least every two years, provided by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.
- Ensure that all staff, trustees, and volunteers understand that there is a procedure to be followed in dealing with child protection allegations made against staff. This procedure must be followed on all occasions. All staff must be made aware of this process and how it differs from other concerns about children.
- Ensure that we have staff on all interview panels who are Safer Recruitment Trained.
- Ensure that all staff/trustees/volunteers are selected and recruited only after having gone through appropriate checks.

## Supporting Children

- We recognise that a child who is abused, who witnesses violence or who lives in a violent environment may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame him/herself, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth.
- We accept that research shows that the behaviour of a child in these circumstances may range from that which is perceived to be normal to aggressive or withdrawn.

Clean Slate will support all children and young people by:

- Encouraging the development of self-esteem and resilience in every aspect of life.
- Promoting a caring, safe, and positive environment.

## Title

---

- Liaising and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.
- Notifying Social Care as soon as there is a significant concern.
- Notifying Social Care when a child/young person attending the centre is privately fostered.

## Confidentiality

- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- The Designated Person will disclose personal information about a child or young person to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only.
- However, all staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or well-being or that of another.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents /careers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with Safeguarding Teams or Social Care on this point.
- We will take no names consultations with our local Assessment Teams to discuss concerns we may have, but we understand that if they then ask for a name, we will disclose those details and it will become a referral.

## Supporting Staff

- We recognise that staff working in the organisation who have become involved with a child who has suffered harm or appears to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We will support such staff by providing an opportunity to talk through their anxieties with the Designated Person and to seek further support. This could be provided by another trusted colleague or a representative of a professional body, as appropriate.
- In consultation with all staff, we have adopted a code of conduct for staff at our centre. This forms part of staff induction and is in the staff handbook. We understand that staff should have access to advice on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour.
- We recognise that our Designated Person(s) should have access to support and appropriate workshops, courses, or meetings as organised by the LA.

## Allegations against staff

- All staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.
- We understand that a child or young person may make an allegation against a member of staff. If such an allegation is made, the member of staff receiving the allegation will immediately inform the centre manager or the most senior member of staff available.
- The manager on all such occasions will discuss the content of the allegation with the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) **before taking any action.** In our county contact, should be made with **Barry Armstrong LADO (01865 815956)** or **Alison Beasley, Safeguarding Coordinator (01865 323457)**

- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the manager themselves, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of Trustees who will consult with LADO, without notifying the manager first.
- Clean Slate will follow the procedures for managing allegations against staff, a copy of which can be accessed through the OSCB website.
- Suspension of the member of staff against whom an allegation has been made needs careful consideration, and we will consult with above named professionals in making this decision.
- Our lettings agreement for other users requires that the organiser will follow LA procedures for managing allegations against staff and, where necessary, the suspension of adults from premises.

### **Whistleblowing**

- We recognise that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice will be sought from the LADO or Safeguarding Team where necessary.

### **Physical Intervention/Positive Handling**

- Our policy on physical intervention/positive handling by staff is set out separately, as part of our Behaviour Policy. It complies with LA Guidance, 'The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils' 2010.
- Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness.
- We recommend that staff who are likely to need to use physical intervention should be appropriately trained.
- We understand that physical intervention of a nature, which causes injury or distress to a child, may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.

### **Anti-Bullying**

Our policy on the prevention and management of bullying is set out in a separate policy and acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.

### **Health & Safety**

Our Health & Safety policy, set out in a separate document, reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both physically within the school environment and, for example, in relation to internet use, and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

### **Role of the Board of Trustees**

- The Board of Trustees at Clean Slate undertake the regular review of safeguarding related policies and procedures that operate in our school.
- The governing Body have a crucial role in monitoring and challenging staff on the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements
- All staff have a responsibility for action in cases of suspected child abuse. This document outlines the procedures which should be followed if any member of staff suspects a student is being abused, or if a disclosure is made.

**Immediate action is required where there is  
Concern about possible abuse, written records must be made at each stage  
of the process.**

All staff are asked to be alert to possible physical or emotional problems being experienced by children and young people.

**If a student asks to speak to you about a problem do not promise  
confidentiality but explain that it may be necessary to consult a  
colleague.**

### Categories of Abuse

The table below outlines the four main categories of abuse as defined by the Department of Health 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' document 2010. (Full definitions can be found in this document). Staff should be aware that the possible indicators are not definitive and that some children may present these behaviours for reasons other than abuse.

Type of Abuse	Description	Possible Indicators
<p><b>Neglect</b></p>	<p>The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairments of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy because of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide food, clothing, and shelter.</li> <li>• protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger.</li> <li>• ensure adequate supervision.</li> <li>• ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obvious signs of lack of care including:</li> <li>• Problems with personal hygiene.</li> <li>• Constant hunger.</li> <li>• Inadequate clothing.</li> <li>• Emaciation.</li> <li>• Lateness or non-attendance at school.</li> <li>• Poor relationship with peers.</li> <li>• Untreated medical problems.</li> <li>• Compulsive stealing and scavenging.</li> <li>• Rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking.</li> <li>• Running away.</li> <li>• Low self-esteem.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Physical Abuse</b></p>	<p>May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical signs that do not tally with the given account of occurrence</li> <li>• conflicting or unrealistic explanations of cause</li> </ul>

	symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>repeated injuries</li> <li>delay in reporting or seeking medical advice.</li> </ul>
<b>Sexual Abuse</b>	Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, penetrative or non-penetrative acts and includes involving children in watching pornographic material or watching sexual acts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sudden changes in behaviour</li> <li>Displays of affection which are sexual and age inappropriate</li> <li>Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance</li> <li>Tendency to cry easily</li> <li>Regression to younger behaviour – e.g. thumb sucking, acting like a baby</li> <li>Unexplained gifts or money</li> <li>Depression and withdrawal</li> <li>Wetting/soiling day or night</li> <li>Fear of undressing for PE</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional Abuse</b>	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 or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rejection</li> <li>Isolation</li> <li>child being blamed for actions of adults</li> <li>child being used as carer for younger siblings</li> <li>affection and basic emotional care giving/warmth, persistently absent or withheld.</li> </ul>

### **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)**

The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people, (or a third person or persons) receive something, (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affections, gifts, money) as a result of them performing and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion, and intimidations are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child’s or young person’s limited availability of choice, resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability. (DCSF 2009)

### **Key facts about CSE**

- Sexual exploitation often starts around the age of 10 years old. Girls are usually targeted from age 10 and boys from age 8.
- It affects both girls and boys and can happen in all communities.
- Any person can be targeted but there are some particularly vulnerable groups: Looked After Children, Children Leaving Care and Children with Disabilities.



## Title

---

- Victims of CSE may also be trafficked (locally, nationally, and internationally).
- Over 70% of adults involved in prostitution were sexually exploited as children or teenagers.
- Sexual violence or abuse against children represents a major public health and social welfare problem within UK society, affecting 16% of children under 16. That is approximately 2 million children.

### Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject. Warning signs that FGM may be about to take place, or may have already taken place, can be found on pages 11-12 of the Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines referred to above. Staff should activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care.

### Good practice – Individuals

- Recognise the symptoms and distinguish them from other forms of abuse
- Treat the child/young person as a victim of abuse
- Understand the perspective / behaviour of the child/young person and be patient with them
- Help the child/young person to recognise that they are being exploited
- Collate as much information as possible
- Share information with other agencies and seek advice / refer to Social Care
- **Good practice – Organisations**
- Ensure robust safeguarding policies and procedures are in place which cover CSE
- Promote and engage in effective multi-agency working to prevent abuse
- Work to help victims move out of exploitation
- Cooperate to enable successful investigations and prosecutions of perpetrators

### Dealing with Disclosures

Receive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Always stop and listen straight away to someone who wants to tell you about incidents or suspicions of abuse.</li><li>• Listen quietly and actively, giving your undivided attention.</li><li>• Allow silences when needed.</li><li>• Do not show shock or disbelief but take what is said seriously.</li></ul>
Reassure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stay calm, no judgements, empathise.</li><li>• <b>Never make a promise that you can keep what a child has said a secret.</b></li><li>• Giving reassurance that only those who need to know will be told.</li><li>• Reassure the young person that they were right to tell you.</li></ul>
React	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• React to the student only as far as is necessary for you to establish whether you need to refer this matter or not, but do not interrogate for full details.</li><li>• Do not ask leading questions – keep the open questions e.g. "is there anything else you want to say?"</li><li>• Do not criticize the perpetrator; the student may have affection for him/her.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain what you will do next – inform designated teacher, keep in contact.</li> </ul>
<b>Record</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, take notes about what they are telling you at the time. Keep these notes, however rough they are. <i>If you are unable to take notes at the time write down what was said as soon as you can.</i></li> <li>• Try to record accurately what was said by the student rather than your interpretation of what they are telling you.</li> <li>• Record the date, time, place, and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour</li> </ul>
<b>Report</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report the incident to the designated teacher and do not tell any other adults or students what you have been told.</li> <li>• <b>Never attempt to carry out an investigation of suspected abuse by interviewing the young person or any others involved. This is a highly skilled role and any attempts by yourself could affect possible criminal proceedings.</b></li> </ul>
<b>Record Keeping</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The designated staff/trustee/volunteer for child protection are responsible for ensuring that the necessary paperwork is completed and sent to the relevant people and stored in a safe and confidential place.</li> </ul>

Version	Date	Approved by
1.0	02/02/2021	Nadia Brown - Project Manager