

Safeguarding Policy

Date last updated	January 2026
Reason for last update	Annual review
Next review date	April 2027
Version	2.1
Last amended by	Faith Altamura & Maddy Gazzard
Amendments	Appointed leads – Clarifying responsibilities Definitions – Change of definition in line with guidance Definitions – Updated to current ACT Policy Statement – update statement on DBS guidance Implementation – sentence added from 2023 statutory guidance about online risks Grant applicants – updated with local safeguarding board info
Owner	Board
Job title	Trustees
Approved by Oxfordshire Community Foundation Board of Trustees	April 2026
Related procedures (if applicable)	Whistle Blowing Policy, Anti-Bribery & Hospitality Policy, Grants Making Policy, Data Protection Policy, Employee Handbook, Volunteering Policy

Introduction

Oxfordshire Community Foundation takes seriously its responsibility to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people under 18, and vulnerable adults involved in its activities.

This policy outlines the standard practices that protect children and adults at risk as well as OCF staff, trustees, volunteers and people representing OCF from situations or allegations of abuse and provides procedures that must be followed.

Children, young people and adults at risk are most likely to be severely impacted by the social issues we strive to alleviate; reducing poverty and inequality. Whilst direct contact with children and /or adults at risk is limited for staff, trustees and volunteers at Oxfordshire Community Foundation (OCF;), we recognise that they are at the very heart of our core work and as such must be at the heart of our Safeguarding policy. It is incumbent upon us to have a policy which serves to identify and deal with any safeguarding red flags. OCF will ensure that any children or adults at risk who encounter OCF staff through the day to day working of the organisation, are protected.

Policy Statement

OCF is committed to ensuring that all staff, trustees and volunteers operate in line with safe practice. During their induction they are made aware of safeguarding issues, its fundamental importance and what procedures to follow in given situations. These follow best practice and current legislation, encourage appropriate whistle-blowing procedures, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk to be addressed.

Responsibility and Leads

Trustees have overall responsibility for safeguarding and child protection, even where some activities are delegated to staff.

The Trustees have delegated day to day responsibility for the implementation of this policy to the Chief Executive Officer. The CEO or senior member of staff is required to have sufficient qualification to Level 3 Safeguarding to become the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Where a new DSL is recruited to the organisation, they shall be required to undertake appropriate training within their induction process to be effective in the role as Safeguarding lead. Thereafter this training will be maintained within their CPD.

Everyone in OCF, regardless of their role, has a responsibility to protect children and vulnerable adults and be familiar with the local policy and procedure in reporting a concern.

Contact Details

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Name: Zoe Sprigings

Contact information: 01865 419472

Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Name: Kate Parrinder

Contact information: 01865 419467

Local External Contacts relevant to locality/nation:

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) The front door to Children's Social Care for all child protection and immediate safeguarding concerns. If there is an immediate safeguarding concern, for example: A child or young person disclosed physical abuse If there are signs of physical abuse e.g. injury A child or young person discloses sexual abuse A child presents a very different/scared to go home anxious and you are aware home could be risky Partners should call the MASH immediately:

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub: 0345 050 7666

Emergency Duty Team (outside office hours): 0800 833 408

Police: 999

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or equivalent:

Name: Jo Lloyd

Role: LADO

Contact information: lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk or call 01865 810603

Definitions

- **Children** or child refers to anyone aged under 18 years of age, as supported by legislation and guidance across the UK. This includes infants and unborn babies.
- **Adults at risk** refers to a person aged 18 years and over, who is in need of care and support, regardless of whether they are receiving them, and because of those needs are unable to protect themselves.
- **Abuse** can take a number of forms, all of which can cause long term damage: physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and discrimination on any of the grounds in the Equality Act 2010. Financial, bullying and domestic violence are also forms of abuse. Abuse can be a single incident or repeated. It can be intentional or unintentional. The victim may not recognise they are being abused. Exploitation is a common factor. A non-exhaustive list of Indicators of abuse are included in Appendix One.
- **Safeguarding** means protecting an adult or child's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks



and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. Safeguarding is covered by legislation and related regulations, including the Children and social Work Act 2017 (which abolished Local Safeguarding Children Boards and established new multi-agency arrangements), and the Care Act 2014.

DBS Checks

Trustee, staff and volunteer roles at the Foundation do not involve regulated activity relating to children or adults at risk. Therefore, they are not eligible for standard or enhanced Disclosure or Barring Service (DBS) checks. Where roles are *not* eligible, OCF will *not* request Standard/Enhanced DBS checks and notes it is unlawful to do so for ineligible roles.

If OCF introduces any role in future that meets the legal definition of *regulated activity* with children or adults, Enhanced DBS with the relevant barred-list check will apply in line with DBS eligibility guidance, SVGA 2006 and PoFA 2012.

Implementation

The induction process for all trustees, staff and volunteers will emphasise the importance of our safeguarding policy. This will be discussed with all appointed candidates during their induction period. Trustees and staff must sign a code of conduct confirming that they have read and understood OCF's safeguarding policy.

OCF's representatives have limited direct contact with children or adults at risk. This would, normally, only take place during events or visits to projects that have received or requested grants.

Through grant assessment, monitoring, general project visits and events OCF staff, trustees and volunteers may come into contact with adults at risk or children. The organisation that has received a grant from OCF is the responsible body for the safeguarding of the individuals receiving their service, and is therefore responsible for ensuring that OCF staff, trustees or volunteers follow the appropriate procedures during their visit.

In addition, all OCF staff, trustees and volunteers should follow standard practice during any project visits and/or events, including events organised by OCF:

1. They should not be alone with children or adults at risk at a project or during any other OCF activity.
2. They should not travel alone (in any type of transport) with children or adults at risk.
3. They should not make arrangements to meet users/clients of projects without the presence or prior written authorisation of management/project leaders.
4. They should not make unauthorised visits to the homes of users/clients.
5. They should not engage in private communications including but not limited to any form of electronic communications or any other means with users/clients.
6. They should not discuss the personal circumstances of one user/client with another user/client.
7. They should only give or receive gifts from users/clients in line with OCF's Anti-Bribery & Hospitality Policy.
8. They should not use any behaviour that could give rise to complaint e.g. physical punishment, physical or sexual contact, humiliation or bullying.
9. Permission for the taking and using of photographs must be sought from organisations whose beneficiaries or clients are being photographed and from individual grant beneficiaries in line with GDPR. Where appropriate and possible, an OCF permission form should be employed.
10. Permission must be obtained from a parent/guardian/carer on publicity being used by OCF involving children and adults at risk.
11. They should refrain from any disclosure about themselves beyond the professional boundaries of OCF.



12. They must adhere to the guidelines regarding acceptable details for sharing within the OCF Social Media Policy.

13. For online/virtual activity (e.g., video calls, webinars, digital messaging), OCF representatives must follow *online safeguarding* precautions: no 1-to-1 unsupervised video calls with under-18s; use organisation accounts (not personal), disable private chat and recording unless consented, and follow project-hosted protocols. This aligns with current statutory guidance on multi-agency working and online risks

14.

Grant Applicants

OCF recognises that it has a duty to put in place safeguards to protect grant recipients in accordance with all applicable legislation, as well as their own trustees, staff and volunteers.

The Foundation is committed to ensuring that all grant recipients understand and are aware of this duty and must, where relevant, have in place a safeguarding policy that is in line with current legislation, and procedures for dealing with issues of concern or abuse and prevention of risk. Best practice includes obtaining an appropriate criminal record check from the Disclosure and Barring Service and other relevant checks for appropriate trustees, staff and volunteers. We would expect to see a statement to this effect within all safeguarding policy document and also confirming the appointment of a designated safeguarding lead and the existence of appropriate whistleblowing policies. Further, we would expect all grant applicants to have appropriate training in place and other recruitment procedures, such as references and risk assessments where there is a flag on the DBS and an appointed person who approves and signs off the risk assessment. For CQC registered services there will be a CQC inspection rating.

An organisation failing to provide evidence in meeting the above will not be recommended to receive a grant.

Should OCF or any funding programme managed by OCF require young people to be part of the decision-making process, OCF will ensure that panel members and advisors understand and adhere to OCF's Safeguarding Policy and in addition, will operate within best practice guidelines. Further guidance may be sought if deemed appropriate from Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP) Home - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) Home - Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board

Reporting Procedures/Dealing with Safeguarding Concerns

It is important that any concerns are dealt with in an appropriate and timely manner.

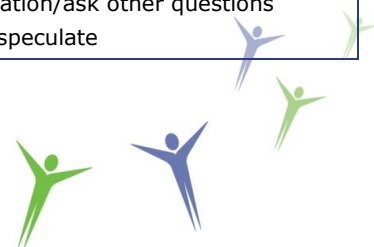
Staff and volunteers must report any allegations or suspicions of abuse as soon as possible to the host organisation or to our DSL(the CEO) on 01865 798666 who will take responsibility for further action. If you are unable to contact the DSL, you should contact the Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team for Oxfordshire on 0800 833 408 or the Police on 999. Under no circumstances can you investigate claims yourself but do keep a written record of all events.

In operating this policy, it may be necessary in some circumstances to share what might normally be regarded as confidential information. The following principles should be adhered to:

- Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis, and when it is in the best interest of the vulnerable person.
- Informed consent should be sought. If other adults or children under 18 are at risk consent may be overridden even if consent is refused.

Should a child or adult at risk disclose abuse to a representative of the Foundation in the course of a visit, it is important to react appropriately.

Do:	Do NOT:
• Remain calm and receptive • Listen without interrupting	• Allow shock or distaste to show • Probe for more information/ask other questions • Make assumptions or speculate



• Only ask questions of clarification if unclear about what the child/adult is saying • Make it clear you take them seriously • Acknowledge their courage in telling you • Tell them they are not responsible for the abuse • Let them know you will do what you can to help them and, where possible, get consent to inform an appropriate authority • In the case of Vulnerable Adults explain the Safeguarding process • Use accessible and age-appropriate language	• Make negative comments about the abuser • Make promises that cannot be kept • Agree to keep the information secret • Try to deal with the issue personally/in isolation •
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- It is essential that any OCF staff member, trustee or volunteer experiencing such an incident during a visit or event, also informs the most senior person available in OCF immediately and files a written report of the facts of the case.
- Should OCF staff, trustees or volunteers witness abuse or suspect potential abuse this too should be reported in line with the above procedure and passed on only to the relevant authorities e.g. Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (<https://www.oscb.org.uk/>) or Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adult Board (<https://www.osab.co.uk/>) .
- OCF will ensure that a register is kept of any relevant issues and that all staff are aware of its presence.

Breaches of Policy

Concerns around safeguarding and reporting should be dealt with as above. Where the concern is not around safeguarding but other aspects of compliance with this policy, employees and trustees must inform the CEO as soon as possible.

Volunteers should notify their normal point of contact within the Foundation in the first instance. Where any concern relates to the CEO, the Chair of the Board must be notified and if they relate to the Chair then the President should be contacted.

Any alleged breach of this policy by an employee will be dealt with under the Foundation's disciplinary procedure and could result in dismissal for gross misconduct.

Any alleged breach by a trustee will be investigated by a temporary sub-committee of the Board in the first instance and could result in disqualification from the Board.

Any alleged breach by volunteers or others associated with the Foundation will be investigated by the CEO and could result in individuals being removed from voluntary roles or contracts being terminated.

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APPENDIX 1

Indicators of abuse

A child / adult at risk may be experiencing abuse if he or she is:

- left in unsafe situations or without medical attention
- constantly "put down", insulted, sworn at or humiliated
- is living in a home where there is domestic abuse
- living with parents/ carers involved in serious drug or alcohol misuse

The following is a list of some indicators of abuse, but it is not exhaustive:

PHYSICAL INDICATORS	BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS:
• Unexplained bruising in soft tissue areas • Repeated injuries • Black eyes • Injuries to the mouth • Torn or bloodstained clothing • Burns or scalds • Bites • Fractures • Marks from implements • Inconsistent stories/excuses relating to injuries • Self-harm or mutilation	• Unexplained changes in behaviour - becoming withdrawn or aggressive • Difficulty in making friends • Distrustful of parents / carers /adults or excessive attachment to adults in the case of children • Sudden drop in performance • Changes in attendance pattern • Inappropriate sexual awareness, behaviour or language • Reluctance to remove clothing • Eating disorders

N.B. Abuse (e.g. grooming) and bullying can also take place via mobile phones and the internet through e-mail, chat rooms and social networking websites.

The Care Act categories of abuse for adults are as follows:

- 15.** Physical abuse - Examples include: Slapping, pushing, kicking, rough handling, misuse of medication, inappropriate sanctions or misuse of restraint.
- 16.** Sexual abuse - Examples include: Rape, sexual assault, forced marriage, female genital mutilation or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented, could not consent or was pressured into consenting. Non-contact abuse such as voyeurism, involvement in pornography and comments, jokes or innuendos that cause harm.
- 17.** Psychological/Emotional/Mental abuse - Examples include: verbal assault or intimidation, deprivation of contact, threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation or blaming, overriding of consent, choices or wishes, making someone feel worthless, frightened or unloved.
- 18.** Financial abuse - Examples include: theft, fraud (including internet, postal and doorstep scams), exploitation, controlling behaviour including not allowing an adult self management of their finances where they have capacity and pressure in connections with wills, property, possessions or benefits.
- 19.** Neglect and acts of omission - Examples include: ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- 20.** Discriminatory abuse (including disability & other forms of hate crime) - This abuse is usually motivated by discriminatory and oppressive attitudes towards race, gender, culture background, religion, physical and/ or sensory impairment, sexual orientation and age.
- 21.** Organisational abuse, neglect and poor practice - This may take the form of isolated incidents of poor or unsatisfactory professional practice at one end of the spectrum, through to pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct.



- 22. Domestic Violence - This may include physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse within a domestic setting, including honour based violence and the offence of coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate and familial relationships (introduced by the Serious Crime Act 2015).
- 23. Modern Slavery - An umbrella term for the activities involved when one person obtains, moves or holds another person in compelled service. It includes human trafficking, domestic servitude, being forced into sex work or other exploitative work and/or being kept in squalid living conditions.
- 24. Self-neglect - Including neglect by the person of their personal care, nutritional needs or healthcare needs or neglect of their environment such as living in squalid conditions or hoarding.

Useful Resources

OCF keeps up to date with current guidance on safeguarding, legislation and resources via:

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership: <https://www.oscp.org.uk/> 01865 815843

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adult Board: <https://www.osab.org.uk/>

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/keeping-children-and-young-people-safe>

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/keeping-safe/raising-safeguarding-concern>

Useful telephone numbers: NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000 Childline: 0800 1111

Oxfordshire Social Services contact details: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (Mash): 0345 050 7666

