



Safeguarding Policy for Down's Syndrome Oxford

Charity Number: 1103850

Website address: www.dsoxford.org.uk

Safeguarding Coordinator Name: Amanda Foulds

Safeguarding Coordinator Contact Number: 07769 707855

Email: amanda@dsoxford.org.uk

This policy was agreed by the trustees and will be reviewed annually. Next review Oct 2025

Agreed by: Jos Smith

Position: Chair

Author: Amanda Foulds

Position: Trustee

A copy of this policy is held on Down Syndrome Oxford's website.

Down's Syndrome Oxford is a charity organised and funded by volunteer parents and supporters to provide information, support and activities for children and adults with Down's Syndrome and their families living in Oxfordshire

Defining child abuse or abuse against an adult is a difficult and complex issue. A person may abuse by inflicting harm or failing to prevent harm. Children and adults in need of protection may be abused within a family, an institution or a community setting. Very often the abuser is known or in a trusted relationship with the child or adult.

As a charity we recognise the need to provide a safe and caring environment for children, young people and adults. The trustees are committed to on-going safeguarding awareness and developing a culture of awareness of safeguarding issues to help protect everyone.

As a charity working with children, young people and adults with care and support needs we wish to operate and promote good working practice. This will enable members to run activities safely, develop good relationships and minimise the risk of false or unfounded accusation.

Paid Employees

The trustees will ensure all workers will be appointed, trained, supported and supervised in accordance with the following guidance on safe recruitment ensuring that:

- Safeguarding has been discussed with the member/employee.
- A disclosure and barring check has been completed where necessary (we will comply with Code of Practice requirements concerning the fair treatment of employees and the handling of information).
- A suitable training programme is provided for the successful applicant
- The applicant is given a copy of the charity's safeguarding policy and knows how to report concerns.

Responding to allegations or suspicion of abuse

Under no circumstances should a member or worker carry out their own investigation into an allegation or suspicion of abuse. Follow procedures as below:

The person in receipt of allegations or suspicions of abuse should report concerns as soon as possible to:

Name: Amanda Foulds (hereafter the "Safeguarding Co-ordinator")

Tel: 07769 707855

Email: amanda@dsoxford.org.uk

The above is nominated by the trustees to act on their behalf in dealing with the allegation or suspicion of neglect or abuse, including referring the matter on to the statutory authorities.

In the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or, if the suspicions in any way involve the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, then the report should be made to:

Name: Marion Simon (hereafter the "Deputy")

Tel: 07834 380268

Email: marion@dsoxford.org.uk

Name: TBA

Tel:

Email:

If the suspicions implicate both the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the Deputy, then the report should be made in the first instance to Social Services or the police.

The role of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy is to clarify the precise details of the allegation or suspicion and pass this information on to statutory agencies who have a legal duty to investigate.

- The Safeguarding Coordinator or deputy should then contact Social Services in the area the child or adult lives.
- The Safeguarding Co-ordinator may need to inform others depending on the circumstances and/or nature of the concern.
- The Safeguarding Co- Ordinator may need to advise the Chair or trustee who may need to liaise with the insurance company or the charity commission to report a serious incident.
- Whilst allegations or suspicions of abuse will normally be reported to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, the absence of the Safeguarding Co-ordinator or Deputy should not delay referral to Social Services or the Police.
- The trustees will support the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy in their role and accept that any information they may have in their possession will be shared in a strictly limited way on a need-to-know basis.

It is, of course, the right of any individual as a citizen to make a direct referral to the safeguarding agencies, although the trustees hope that members of the charity will use this procedure. If, however, the individual with the concern feels that the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy has not responded appropriately, or where they have a disagreement with the Safeguarding Co-ordinator(s) as to the appropriateness of a referral they are free to contact an outside agency direct. We hope by making this statement that the trustees demonstrate their commitment to effective safeguarding and the protection of all those who are vulnerable.

Safeguarding Procedure for Down's Syndrome Oxford

Concern about a child:

Allegations of physical injury, neglect or emotional abuse.

If a child has a physical injury, a symptom of neglect or where there are concerns about emotional abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact Children's Social Services for advice in cases of deliberate injury if concerned about a child's safety or if a child is afraid to return home.
- Not tell the parents or carers unless advised to do so, having contacted Children's Social Services.
- Seek medical help if needed urgently, informing the doctor of any suspicions.
- For lesser concerns, (e.g. poor parenting), encourage parent/carer to seek help, but not if this places the child at risk of significant harm.
- Where the parent/carer is unwilling to seek help, offer to accompany them. In cases of real concern, if they still fail to act, contact Children's Social Services direct for advice.

Allegations of sexual abuse

In the event of allegations or suspicions of sexual abuse, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Children's Social Services Department Duty Social Worker for children and families or Police Child Protection Team direct. They will NOT speak to the parent/carer or anyone else.

The following information is taken from Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board website:

<https://www.oscb.org.uk/reporting-concerns/>

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board
Call: 01865 815843 Email: oscb@oxfordshire.gov.uk

To report a new concern

Immediate Concerns about a Child

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is 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:

- * Allegations/concerns that the child has been sexually/physically abused
- * Concerns that the child is suffering from severe neglect or other severe health risks
- * Concern that a child is living in or will be returned to a situation that may place him/her at immediate risk
- * The child is frightened to return home

* The child has been abandoned or parent is absent

You should call the MASH immediately **Tel: 0345 050 7666** (This number will take you through to Customer Services who will ask a series of questions and triage into MASH where safeguarding concerns are raised).

A No Names Consultation should **not** be used for the above scenarios.

[The Oxfordshire MASH Referral Form](#) (MASH Enquiry online referral form) may be used by professionals only to refer children to social services.

Or you can email a report to MASH on the secure email on: mash-childrens@oxfordshire.gcsx.gov.uk

To talk about an on-going concern

If you want to speak to someone about an already open case contact the relevant Children's Social Care Team.

- Oxford City – **01865 328563**
- North Oxfordshire (including Banbury, Witney and Bicester): **01865 323039**
- South Oxfordshire (including Abingdon, Faringdon, Wantage, Thame, Didcot and Henley): **01865 323041**
- Emergency Duty Team: **0800 833 408**

John Radcliffe Hospital Assessment Team: **01865 221236** (for antenatal safeguarding concerns and issues concerning children in the hospital).

If you are unsure whether to make a referral

You can contact the Locality and Community Support Service (LCSS) and request a '**no names' consultation** (meaning you don't give the child's name). You can then discuss the situation with them and they will advise you on what to do next. If a referral needs to be made, they will advise you of this.

- **LCSS Central: 0345 241 2705**
- **LCSS North (including Banbury, Witney, Bicester, Carterton and Woodstock): 0345 241 2703**
- **LCSS South (including Abingdon, Faringdon, Wantage, Thame, Didcot and Henley): 0345 241 2608**

To report concerns about child sexual exploitation

If a child or young person has made a disclosure regarding sexual exploitation, or if you think a child may be at risk of being sexually exploited please contact the Kingfisher Team on: **01865 309196**. Out of hours calls to this number will be diverted to the Thames Valley Police Referral Centre.

To report concerns about a professional or person in a position of trust

Please contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to report an allegation or concern on: **01865 810603** or email: LADO.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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Concern for an adult:

Suspicious or allegations of abuse or harm including: physical, sexual, organisational, financial, discriminatory, neglect, self-neglect, forced marriage, modern slavery, domestic abuse.

If there is concern about any of the above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator/Deputy will:

- Contact the Adult Social Care Team who have responsibility under the Care Act 2014 to investigate allegations of abuse.
- If the adult is in immediate danger or has sustained a serious injury contact the Emergency Services, informing them of any suspicions.

Oxfordshire County Council have procedures for dealing with cases of vulnerable adult abuse. <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/adult-social-care/adult-social-care-policies/policy-safeguarding-adults>

If the person you wish to raise a concern about is in immediate danger, then please call the emergency services on 999.

You can report concerns of abuse using the following forms:

Adult Social Services**REPORT BY A PROFESSIONAL:**

<https://service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/raisingconcernprofessional>

REPORT BY A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC:

<https://service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/raiseconcernforadult>

Thames Valley Police

Abuse is often a crime; if it is an emergency you should call 999 otherwise you should call the Thames Valley Police Public Enquiry Centre on 101.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with children/young people

If an accusation is made against a member/worker (whether a volunteer or paid member of staff) whilst following the procedure outlined above, the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures will:

- Liaise with Children's Social Services in regard to the suspension of a worker
- Make a referral to a designated officer formerly called a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) whose function is to handle all allegations against adults who work with children and young people whether in a paid or voluntary capacity.
- Make a referral to Disclosure and Barring Service for consideration of the person being placed on the barred list for working with children or adults with additional care and support needs. This decision should be informed by the LADO if they are involved.

Allegations of abuse against a person who works with adults with care and support needs

The safeguarding co-ordinator will:

- Liaise with Adult Social Services in regards the suspension of the worker
- Make a referral to the DBS following the advice of Adult Social Services

The Care Act places the duty upon Adult Services to investigate situations of harm to adults with care and support needs. This may result in a range of options including action against the person or organisation causing the harm, increasing the support for the carers or no further action if the 'victim' chooses for no further action and they have the capacity to communicate their decision. However, this is a decision for Adult Services to decide.

Supporting those affected by abuse

The trustees are committed to offering pastoral care, working with statutory agencies as appropriate, and support to all those who have been affected by abuse who have contact with or are part of our charity.

Working with offenders and those who may pose a risk

When someone attending the organisation is known to have abused children, is under investigation, or is known to be a risk to adults with care and support needs; a trustee will be nominated supervise the individual concerned and offer pastoral care, but in its safeguarding commitment to the protection of children and adults with care and support needs, set boundaries for that person, which they will be expected to keep. These boundaries will be based on an appropriate risk assessment and through consultation with appropriate parties.