



# Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk

## Group Policy & Guidance

Oasis Charitable Trust

Oasis College of Higher Education

STOP THE TRAFFIK

All Oasis Academies fully recognises their responsibilities for child protection.

Our policy applies to all staff, academy councillors and volunteers working in Oasis Academies.

Oasis Charitable Trust (OCT) and its subsidiaries are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, young people and adults who may be 'at risk'. Oasis is committed to promoting a climate in which anyone can feel confident about sharing any concerns that they may have about their own safety or the well-being of others.

This policy is approved and endorsed by the Board of Trustees of Oasis Charitable Trust and all subsidiaries are required to operate in line with this guidance.

**Who this policy applies to:**

This policy applies to everyone who is connected with Oasis Charitable Trust and its subsidiaries regardless of their status as Trustee, Employee, Volunteer, Student, or Service User.

**Definition of who this policy is intended to Safeguard:**

**A child:** defined as a person who is under the age of 18

**Adult at risk:** defined as someone aged 18 or over:

- Who is, or may be, in need of community services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability
- Who is, or may be, unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation
- (NB: in relation to Adults at Risk, the ability to make an 'Informed Decision' has to be taken into consideration once abuse has been disclosed/suspected (which has been made in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005). If someone is deemed to have capacity, a referral to Safeguarding services can only be made with their consent).

**Who is an adult at risk?**

Abuse can affect any able adult, but particularly someone who is, or may be, unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation, for example:

- Older people
- People with mental health problems

- Disabled people
- People with learning difficulties
- People with acquired brain damage
- People who misuse substances

Whilst childhood is defined and recognised in the eyes of the law, vulnerability is not a fixed category. We recognise that all of us can be 'at risk' to a wide range of pressures which can impact our ability to safeguard ourselves from abuse and therefore Oasis is committed to 'retain independence, wellbeing and choice and to access their human right to live a life that is free from abuse and neglect.'

Everyone, including children and other adults at risk, has a right to be treated equally regardless of age, gender, ethnic origin, culture, religious belief, language, disability or sexual orientation.

There are six main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children, young people and adults at risk.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Raising awareness of safeguarding issues relating to adults at risk and how to equip them with the appropriate knowledge and information needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- Supporting children and young people who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children, young people and adults at risk can thrive.

We recognise that because of the regular contact with children, young people and adults at risk, Oasis staff are well placed to observe the outward signs of abuse. Oasis will therefore:

- Establish and maintain an environment where children, young people and adults at risk feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- Ensure children, young people and adults at risk know that there are adults whom they can approach if they are worried.

Oasis Charitable Trust and its subsidiaries will:

- Ensure there is a nominated Executive responsible for Safeguarding.
- Ensure there is a designated senior person, and a deputy, responsible for Safeguarding in each subsidiary who have received appropriate training and support for this role.
- Ensure each subsidiary will have a sub-policy that details the named person responsible for Safeguarding, their deputy, responsibilities and procedures.

- Ensure every member of staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) know the name of the designated senior person responsible for Safeguarding and their role, responsibility and procedures.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for Safeguarding.
- Ensure that parents/guardians/carers have an understanding of the responsibility placed on Oasis and its staff for Safeguarding by setting out its obligations and publishing our policy on the website.
- Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding Safeguarding matters including attendance at case conferences.
- Keep written records of concerns about children, young people or adults at risk, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.
- Ensure all records are kept securely and in locked locations.
- Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

**How the policy will secure an environment where children and vulnerable adults feel safe from harm and can address behaviours resulting from abuse:**

Oasis recognises that children, young people or adults at risk who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. Oasis or one of its subsidiaries may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children/young people or adults at risk. Their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. Oasis and its subsidiaries will therefore endeavour to support them by:

- Ensuring the Oasis ethos is evident in practice, promoting a positive, supportive and secure environment that gives a sense of being valued.
- Liaising with other agencies that support the child/young person or adult at risk, such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service.
- Ensuring that, where a child/young person/adult at risk subject to a Safeguarding referral/Child Protection plan leaves the service/activity run by Oasis, the relevant social worker/agency (ie LD Team, Mental Health Services) is informed.

**How the policy and procedures are communicated to those it is intended to safeguard and those responsible for them:**

The policy and procedures will be included as part of the induction process for anyone working, either in a paid or voluntary capacity, or connected with a project or activity where children or other adults at risk receive services provided by Oasis and its subsidiaries. It is the responsibility of the line manager of any project or activity to ensure that the policy and local procedures are communicated and understood by those receiving them. It is also the responsibility of the person in charge of the project and/or activity to ensure that service users are aware of it and what to do if they are abused or suspect that someone else is being abused.

**All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to:**

- Read and understand the Safeguarding Policy and local procedures
- Co-operate with team leaders and managers on safeguarding matters;
- Follow the instructions of the safeguarding procedures
- Take reasonable care to avoid placing themselves or those in their care at risk of mistreatment
- Report all Safeguarding concerns to the designated person as detailed in the sub-policy statement.

## **Protection for Children, Young People and Adults at Risk**

All staff and volunteers must recognise and accept that children/young people and adults at risk have a fundamental right to be protected from harm. In upholding this fundamental right we recognise there are four common definitions of abuse (a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by another person or persons which results in significant harm, which could include a single act/repeated acts/an act of neglect/failure to act):

1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional and Psychological Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Neglect
5. Financial and Material
6. Discriminatory
7. Institutional

An explanation of these four common definitions is provided here:

### **Physical Abuse**

May include: Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or adult at risk including the deliberate fabrication or causation of illness.

May be recognised by: Physical injury, such as bruising, bite marks, burns and scalds, fractures but also by aggressive behaviour or learning difficulties due to neurological damage. It may also be an indicator of concern where a parent/guardian/carer gives an explanation inconsistent with the injury or gives several different explanations for the injury.

Where physical abuse is suspected, staff and volunteers should be made aware that is not appropriate to undress, photograph or body map any child/young person or adult at risk in an attempt to see physical injury; this is the role of child protection/social services and investigating agencies.

### **Emotional Abuse**

May include: The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child or adult at risk such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on their emotional development, mental health, behaviour and self-esteem. This may be caused by conveying to the person that they are worthless, unloved or unvalued or by developmentally inappropriate expectations being made or by causing them to frequently feel frightened or the exploitation or corruption of a child or adult at risk.

May be recognised by: Developmental delay, attachment issues, aggressive behaviour, appeasing behaviour, watchfulness or stillness, low self-esteem,

withdrawn or a loner, or having difficulty in forming relationships. Emotional abuse may be difficult to recognise as signs are usually behavioural rather than physical. Signs of emotional abuse may be associated or similar to other forms of abuse so presence of emotional abuse may indicate other abuse is prevalent as well.

### **Sexual Abuse**

May Include: Involving or forcing or enticing a child or adult at risk to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the victim is aware of what is happening. Such activities may involve sexual acts (penetrative or non-penetrative) or may include involving a child or adult at risk in watching or taking part in pornographic material or to encourage pupils to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

May be recognised by: Inappropriate sexualised conduct, age inappropriate sexualised play or conversation, sexually harmful behaviour – contact or noncontact, self-harm, eating disorders, continual, inappropriate or excessive masturbation, anxiousness or unwillingness to remove clothes – sports / PE etc, pain or itching in genital area, blood on underclothes, bruising in genital region and / or inner thighs etc.

A sexually abused person may also be recognised by disturbed behaviour such as sadness, depression or loss of self-esteem. Disclosure of sexual abuse must be taken seriously as it is recognised that victims are frequently scared to disclose due to guilt or fear. Therefore, staff should never attempt to question, interrogate or interpret a disclosure of sexual – disclosures should be listened to carefully and all reports of abuse recorded factually and objectively.

### **Neglect**

May include: The persistent failure to meet a child or adults' at risk basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development (growth and intellect) such as failing to provide adequate food, shelter (including keeping them safe), clothing, or neglect of or unresponsiveness to a person's basic emotional needs.

May be recognised by: Being constantly hungry; constantly tired; have a poor state of clothing; be emaciated; have untreated medical problems; be frequently late or have poor or non-attendance at school; have low self-esteem; display neurotic behaviour and/or have poor social relationships, have poor personal hygiene.

A neglected child/young person or adult at risk may also be apathetic, fail to thrive, or be left with or in the care of adult's under the influence of alcohol or drug misuse.

### **Factors determining vulnerability in Adults at Risk**

Personal characteristics of the adult at risk that **increase vulnerability** may include:

- Not having mental capacity to make decisions about their own safety including fluctuating mental capacity associated with mental illness
- Communication difficulties
- Physical dependency – being dependent on others for personal care and activities of daily life
- Low self-esteem
- Experience of abuse
- Childhood experience of abuse

Social/situational factors that **increase the risk** of abuse may include:

- Being cared for in a care setting, that is, more or less dependent on others
- Not getting the right amount or the right kind of care that they need
- Isolation and social exclusion
- Stigma and discrimination
- Lack of access to information and support
- Being the focus of anti-social behaviour

Personal characteristics of the adult at risk that **decrease vulnerability** may include:

- Having mental capacity to make decisions about their own safety
- Good physical and mental health
- Having no communication difficulties or if so, having the right equipment/support
- No physical dependency or if needing help, able to self-direct care
- Positive former life experiences
- Self-confidence and high self esteem

Social/situational factors that **decrease the risk** of abuse may include:

- Good family relationships
- Active social life and a circle of friends
- Able to participate in the wider community
- Stigma and discrimination
- Good knowledge and access to the range of community facilities
- Remaining independent and active
- Access to sources of relevant Information

### **Guidance on Responsibility and Immediate Action to Signs of Abuse**

All adults working for Oasis and its subsidiaries (including visiting staff, volunteers and students) are required to report instances of actual or suspected abuse or neglect of children, young people or adults at risk to their local Designated Safeguarding Officer/Alerting Manager (as detailed in the local sub-policy)

Where there are signs that a child/young person or adult at risk is suffering significant harm or is likely to suffer significant harm or is being neglected the Designated Safeguarding Officer may take advice before making a referral to the Local Authority's designated Officer (LADO) for Child Protection and/or Social Services.

Where there are any doubts as to the seriousness of this concern or disagreement between the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the person reporting the concern, advice will be sought from the Oasis Group Chief Executive Officer.

In circumstances where a child or adult at risk has a suspicious injury that requires urgent medical attention, the referral process should not delay the administration of first aid or emergency assistance. If a child/young person or adult at risk is thought to be at immediate risk (because of parental violence or intoxication, for example) urgent police intervention will be requested. Particular vigilance will be exercised in respect of children/young people who are subject to a Child Protection Plan and any incidents or concerns involving these children/young people/adults at risk will be

reported immediately to Social Services (and confirmed in writing). In all cases of injury to a child consideration will always be given as to whether an urgent paediatric medical assessment is required to document injuries or to protect any forensic evidence.

If it is suspected that a child may be at further risk of harm if the parent is contacted, then in the first instance the LADO, or Social Services in the case of adults at risk, will be consulted.

### **Guidance on Training Staff and Volunteers**

The Oasis Group, along with HAYS, has developed an on line Safeguarding Training Programme. All staff and volunteers will undertake the training at least every two years. Newly recruited staff will complete the online training as part of their induction. The Designated Senior Person for Child Protection will attend Local Authority and other training courses as necessary and other appropriate inter-agency training at least every two years. The Deputy Designated Senior Person will also be given the opportunity to attend these courses.

### **Guidance on Recruitment, Selection and Induction**

It is a condition of engagement either as an employee, volunteer, student for anyone employed to work in projects or activities with children and/or other adults at risk to receive a cleared Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate. This will be renewed every three years. If such a person is engaged and later found not to be appropriate to work with children and/or adults at risk then their ability to work will be terminated. All workers will be informed of the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Protection policy as part of the Induction process.

### **Guidance on Involving Volunteers**

Volunteers will work under the direct supervision of an established staff member (or senior volunteer) and will be subject to the same expectations as paid employees. They will be provided with the appropriate induction and volunteers will have a 'job outline' pertaining to the volunteering role they are to perform.

The requirements resulting from the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 equally apply to volunteers. This includes complying with the legal requirement to ensure all employees undergo a Vetting & Barring Check and not barred from working with children and young people, before commencing work.

All permanent staff and volunteers will be inducted which will include the provision of the local policies and procedures, this will include temporary staff.

### **Guidance on Responses to Complaints/Allegations made Against Staff**

Oasis takes seriously all allegations made against members of staff. Mechanisms are in place for children, service users, parents/carers and staff to share any concerns that they might have about the actions of any member of Oasis' staff. All such allegations will be dealt with in line with Oasis' 'Allegations Against Professionals Policy' and must be brought immediately to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Officer. If the allegation is about the Designated



Safeguarding Officer it should be reported to the next level of management within the organisation and ultimately to a member of the Oasis Board of Trustees.

Staff who are formally disciplined for any abuse of children, young people or adults at risk (or who resign before disciplinary action can be instigated) will be notified to the Local Authority, (if they are not already part of this process) and must be notified to the Independent Safeguarding Authority, for possible inclusion on their list of persons barred from working with children, young people and adults at risk.

### **Guidance on Keeping Records**

Accurate written notes should be kept of all incidents of Safeguarding concerns. If a staff member or volunteer has a safeguarding concern they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible. These will be kept on Child Protection file for that service user.

Safeguarding records are not available to service users, parents or carers. Safeguarding records are kept by the Designated Senior Person for Safeguarding, separately from HR or other records, and can only be accessed by the Designated Senior Person or their Deputy. Other members of in senior leadership positions may have access to certain information on a need to know basis as appropriate.

Upon receipt of any request regarding direct access to documentation on a Safeguarding file appropriate steps may be taken to adopt the procedure of not allowing such access without the order of a court.

### **Policy, Monitoring and Review**

This group policy was created by the Oasis Charitable Trust Board of Trustees in line with their Governance duty to Safeguarding.

This policy is available on the Oasis Zone. Upon request, parents or carers will be issued with a hard copy of this policy.

Oasis Charitable Trust will actively evaluate the effectiveness of this policy by monitoring staff group's understanding and application of the procedures within this policy as their overall duty to safeguard children, young people and adults at risk. Oasis will undertake an annual robust audit checklist to assure that safeguarding systems and processes are working effectively across its subsidiaries and activities.

**Date of Acceptance:**      Enter Date Here

**Date of Next Review:**      Enter Date Here

**SUB-POLICY:**

This Policy details the specific policy and procedures for Oasis Subsidiaries

**SUBSIDIARY: OASIS HUB WATERLOO**

These guidelines cover all activities in Waterloo, including (but not limited to):

- Breakfast and after school clubs
- Hub athletic and Hub Youth
- Sunday church service and the children and youth groups within this.
- Transition activities
- St Thomas' youth inclusion project
- Hullabaloo
- Sports clubs
- Debt Advice Centre
- Waterloo Foodbank
- Oasis Farm
- School holiday children and youth activities
- Oasis Kids activities

All children and youth work activities connected to the Hub are projects of Oasis UK, and are governed by the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk policy for the organisation.

Role & Name	Contact Details
Safeguarding Officer Louisa Parrales	Louisa.parrales@oasiswaterloo.org Mobile: 07769933148
Safeguarding Officer Felicity Maries	Felicity.maries@oasiswaterloo.org Mobile: 07772412247

**Guidelines for interacting with children/vulnerable persons**

- Any staff member or volunteer must have a cleared Enhanced DBS Disclosure, with a registered number, before entering any establishment where he/she may come into contact with children and/or adults at risk. (If they are unsupervised),
- The staff member or volunteer must never be left alone in a room with a single child without another adult present or the door open – this is as much to safeguard yourself as for that of the child/adult at risk.
- Staff/volunteers may want to express concerns if they see bullying or intimidation. This should be reported if necessary (see below).
- A child/adult at risk may want to tell you what has happened to them; in this case try and have another adult present and never offer confidentiality. Report to project leader and/or safeguarding officer, as soon as possible any concerns.
- All staff/volunteers should be aware of the Child/Adult at Risk's welfare, therefore if they notice a suspicious, unexplained injury to the child/adult at risk they should bring this to the attention of the Team Leader of their activity.

The specific procedures relating to the activities of Oasis Hub Waterloo and how the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults at Risk policy will be implemented are detailed below:

**If a Child, Young Person or Adult at Risk Confides in you about abuse, you must:**

- Stay calm and approachable.
- Listen actively to what is being said without interrupting.
- Find an appropriate 'early' opportunity to explain that it is likely the information being given will need to be shared with others – to those who need to know. Do not in any circumstance promise to keep secrets.
- Allow the person to continue at his or her own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that are probing or suggesting a particular answer – you do not need to know all the details, that is the job of the child protection specialists.
- Make it clear that you are taking them seriously and acknowledge how difficult this must be for them.
- Reassure them that they have done the right thing by telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record in writing what has been said using the person's own words as much as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.
- Do not delay in passing this information on.
- Make sure you have up to date contact details in case follow up action is required

**The process for reporting concerns internally**

If you have any suspicion or concern that abuse has been disclosed to you, you must:

**Step 1**

Write down your concerns on a 'logging a concern/disclosure' form, (pages 14 to 18 of this document), with as much detail as possible. It is really important to use the same language the child, young person or adult at risk uses.

**Step 2**

Inform your Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately, giving them all the information you have.

**Step 3**

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will consider all factors and information and decide what to do, following the Oasis Safeguarding Policy. They may decide to speak to the Child, young person or adult at risk to gather further information.

**Step 4**

The Designated Safeguarding Officer will:

- Contact and report concerns to Social Services, the Police and or parents/carers (as appropriate)
- Continue to monitor the situation as appropriate, recording all decisions and actions taken.

#### Step 5

Record all decisions made and sign and date the records

### **Responsibilities and immediate action**

All staff (voluntary or paid) working for Oasis are required to report instances of actual or suspected abuse or neglect of young/adults at risk to their designated supervisor. Reports should be made to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy as indicated above.

In exceptional circumstances where the member of staff is unable to contact any of those listed above and the person is at immediate risk of serious harm, they should contact the local Social Services directly or where necessary, the Police. In such circumstances the Designated Safeguarding Officer should be contacted at the earliest possible opportunity. Advice can also be sought from a CCPAS Churches Protection Advisory Service who run a 24 hour help line 01322 667207.

### **Social Services Numbers**

Lambeth Social Services      020 7926 6010, 020 7926 6583, 020 7926 7868

Based at Referral and Assessment Team, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, International House, Canterbury Crescent, Brixton SW9 7QE

Fax 020 7926 6874

Southwark Social Services      020 7525 1921 or out of hours 020 7525 5000

Email : RAD@southwark.gov.uk

Police Emergency 999 and non-emergency 101

**If using an internal phone handset remember to dial 9 for an outside line**

### **External Support**

In addition to the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Social Services and/or Police detailed above the following agencies may also be contacted in the event of concern. The contact details will be clearly displayed and accessible.

Organisation	Phone Number
NSPCC	0800 800 500
Childline	0800 1111
London Rape Crisis (for victims of rape or sexual abuse)	020 7837 1600
Survivors UK (for male survivors of abuse)	020 7357 6677
Incest Crisis Line	020 8890 4732
Samaritans (national)	08457 90 90 90
Youth reach (counselling and advice for young people)	020 8854 7744

## LOGGING A CONCERN/DISCLOSURE

### *Referrer's Details*

Name of referrer	Job
Title	
Date of referral	

### Person's Details

Name	
D.O.B	
Address	
Sex	Disability
Ethnic origin	
Previous address	
Any other names the person or family members may be known by	

The Person's Family:

Any relevant information about other children/young people/adults at risk in the family/household?

Family structure including any other significant people in the person's life

Involvement with other agencies

**DETAILS OF THE CONCERN / DISCLOSURE**

Date.....Time.....Venue.....

Context.....

Describe why you are concerned about this person (record actual words spoken by the person where possible)

Have there been any significant changes in the person's behaviour or presentation?

Describe any action you (the referrer) took at the time





THIS FORM MUST BE PASSED ON IMMEDIATELY AND CONFIDENTIALY TO YOUR DESIGNATED PERSON.

Signed..... (referrer) Name: .....

Date.....

Action taken by designated person

Signed .....

Name: .....

Date: .....

