

**November 2011**

## **Safeguarding Children (Child Protection)**

### **Guide for childminders, home childcarers, out-of-school and day care providers**

**Children have a right to protection from being hurt, and from violence, abuse and neglect** (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 19)

No one likes to think of children being abused, but child abuse is a reality. It is important that all those involved with children or young people are alert to the possibility of abuse, and know what to do if they have concerns about a child's safety or welfare.

This leaflet provides very basic guidelines, and important telephone numbers. You should also have a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused – summary', ref DFES-04319-2006. Download this from <http://publications.education.gov.uk>

**Training** on Safeguarding Children is available through Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB), [www.oscb.org.uk](http://www.oscb.org.uk), 01865 815843. There is currently no charge.

Everyone who works three or more days a month with children, young people and/or their families needs to attend a three-hour 'generalist' safeguarding training session. This must be renewed every three years.

Group settings must have a designated person with lead responsibility for safeguarding, who has attended the one-day OSCB 'specialist' safeguarding training within the last two years.

### **Your responsibilities**

**A safeguarding self-assessment** to help you check you are meeting your responsibilities is available at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/earlyyears](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/earlyyears)  
Select 'information for childcare providers' then 'EYFS welfare requirements'.

All Ofsted-registered childcare providers are legally required to report all cases of actual or suspected abuse of any child in their care.

If you are registered with Ofsted, make sure you know when Ofsted should be informed of matters relating to safeguarding children.

Childcare settings that are not required to register should also follow these guidelines.

It is important that parents/carers are made aware of your safeguarding responsibilities when their child joins your setting. They should also know who to contact if they have concerns about your setting. The leaflet or brochure you provide for parents should include this information.

### **How do I know if a child is at risk of abuse?**

You play an important role in identifying signs of possible abuse because of your regular contact with children.

Abuse takes many forms – physical, emotional, sexual, neglect. You may see suspicious marks or bruises, you may notice a change in the child's behaviour, you may be aware of family difficulties, a child may fail to attend without explanation (in circumstances which make you anxious) or a child may say something directly about ill-treatment.

Make a confidential, factual record of what you have seen or heard. Do this at the time of the event.

### **What should I do if I'm worried about a child?**

If you think a child may be suffering (or has suffered) abuse or neglect, you must take action. If you are concerned about divided loyalties between parent and child, remember – the safety and welfare of the child must come first and may depend on you reporting your concerns. Act promptly, particularly in cases of suspected physical abuse or neglect which could be life threatening.

Contact your local Children and Families Assessment Team in Oxfordshire County Council. Have the child's records with you when you call. You can discuss your concerns with a social worker on a no-names basis before making a formal referral about the child.

### **What should I say to the child's parents/carers?**

In most cases, you should notify the parents before making a formal referral. However, there are times when this could put a child at risk of greater harm.

Go straight to the Assessment Team if, for example:

- a child makes a clear disclosure of sexual abuse  
or
- a child has an injury and makes a disclosure about it.

If you are discussing on a no-names basis or making a referral, always:

- tell the Assessment Team worker what, if anything, you have already said to the child's parents
- write down the name of the Assessment Team worker and the date, time and details of your discussion
- write down the details of any subsequent conversation you have with the parents.

### **Allegations**

You must have a procedure to follow if an allegation of abuse is made against you.

If someone makes an allegation that any worker/volunteer in your setting has harmed a child, or has behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children, you must inform the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) without delay. The LADO will advise you on actions that need to be taken.

## Telephone numbers

### Children and Families Assessment Teams in Oxfordshire County Council

- **Central Team**  
(Oxford)  
01865 323048
- **North Team**  
(Cherwell and West Oxon)  
01865 816670
- **South Team**  
(South Oxon and Vale)  
01865 897983
- **Emergency Duty Team** after 5pm (4pm on Fridays) and at weekends  
0800 833 408

### Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Team

Barry Armstrong  
Alison Beasley  
01865 815956 / 323457

### Police Enquiry Centre

0845 850 5505

### NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000  
Textphone 0800 056 0566

## Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB)

The OSCB is an independent body. It co-ordinates the work that agencies do to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

It also has a wider responsibility to keep children and young people safe – not only from abuse and neglect but from other things that can impair their health and development, such as accidents and domestic violence.

The OSCB Procedures Manual is available at [www.oscb.org.uk](http://www.oscb.org.uk)

The procedures aim to encourage close working between agencies, to facilitate early intervention in a supportive way, to meet the needs of children and their families.

The OSCB publishes a regular newsletter. Its website includes sections for children, parents, professionals and members of the public.

Contact for this publication:  
Community Childcare and Play  
01865 323772