



**SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
SEPTEMBER 2011**

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

1.1.1 OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL (“the School”) is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and believes that all pupils, regardless of age, special needs or disability, racial/cultural heritage, religious belief or sexual orientation have the right to be protected from all types of harm and abuse. This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (“this Policy”) forms a fundamental part of our approach to providing excellent pastoral care to *all* pupils, including young people who may be over the age of 18 years.

1.1.2 Key documents with which this Policy is in accordance:

- The Education Act 2002
- Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations 2010
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Children Act 2004
- What to do if you are worried a Child is being Abused 2006
- Working Together to Safeguard Children DCSF March 2010 (A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children)
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007 (as may be updated following the March 2010 consultation)
- Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers 2008
- ISA Referral Guidance 2010
- Independent Schools Inspectorate Handbook September 2010 - the regulatory requirements (and as amended)
- National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools September 2010

1.1.3 The School recognises and acts upon the legal duties set out in the above statutes, regulations and guidance, to protect its pupils (and staff) from harm, and to co-operate with other agencies in carrying out those duties and responding to safeguarding concerns.

1.1.4 This Policy is used in accordance with locally agreed inter-agency procedures, and specifically in accordance with **OXFORDSHIRE** Local Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) guidance.

1.1.5 This Policy is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers at the School. Adherence to this Policy is mandatory for all staff and volunteers and its use is not subject to discretion. This Policy applies whenever staff or volunteers are working with pupils including where this is away from the School, for example at another institution, school visits and trips, as well as sporting and cultural activities

1.1.6 This Policy is available to all parents, staff and volunteers on the School’s website. A paper copy of this Policy is also available to parents upon request to the School office.

1.1.7 Pupils are made aware of this Policy through their programme of PSHE and other means of sharing information appropriate to their age and understanding.

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1.2 Creating a Culture of Safeguarding

1.2.1 The School recognises that safeguarding covers much more than child protection and so this Policy will operate in conjunction with other related policies and procedures, covering areas such as Anti-Bullying, Behaviour Management, Information Sharing and Consent and the safe use of ICT.

1.2.2 ‘Safeguarding’ is broader than ‘child protection’. As well as protecting children from harm, ‘safeguarding’ widens the responsibility to preventing harm and promoting the well being of children. It is recognised that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children includes:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing the impairment of children’s health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

1.2.3 The School takes its responsibilities very seriously. As well as ensuring the School’s policies and procedures support its safeguarding responsibilities, the School will work with pupils, their families, Social Services Departments and other relevant agencies to ensure the risk of harm to children is minimised.

1.2.4 The School is committed to working in partnership with parents, Social Services Departments and diverse communities, to continuously develop and improve the safeguarding culture within our School.

1.2.5 Having these safeguards in place not only protects and promotes the welfare of children but also it enhances the confidence of our staff, volunteers, parents/carers and the general public.

1.2.6 The School has systems to:

- Prevent unsuitable people working with pupils
- Identify pupils who are at risk of and/or are likely to suffer significant harm and take appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are safe
- Promote safe practice and challenge poor practice and unsafe practice
- Ensure that staff do not, through their actions, place **pupils** at risk of harm, or themselves at risk from an allegation of harm (by providing guidance on areas such as 1-1 tuition, sports coaching, conveying by car, inappropriate electronic communication).

1.2.7 The School encourages the pupils in its care to raise any concerns that they might have and ensure that these are taken seriously. The School also encourages pupils to contribute their own ideas, according to their age and understanding, about how their safety and welfare could be further improved.

1.2.8 In accordance with paragraph 8.1 of this Policy, the School will notify the Legal Department at Trust Office of any safeguarding issues affecting a pupil, member of staff, volunteer or governor within one working day of the issue occurring.

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1.3 Early Years Foundation Setting

1.3.1 [Schools with EYFS Provision] This Policy applies to the School's provision for the Early Years Foundation Setting ('EYFS'). The identity of and contact details for the Designated Teacher/s with lead responsibility for safeguarding within this setting are set out at paragraphs 4.1 and 12.1 below.

1.3.2 [Where the School is registered with OFSTED] In relation to a child protection issue within the EYFS, the Designated Teacher with lead responsibility for safeguarding within this setting will, (in addition to the reporting duties set out in paragraphs 6.7, 6.8 and 8), inform Ofsted of any allegations of serious harm or abuse by any person living, working, or looking after children at the School (whether that allegation relates to harm or abuse committed on the premises or elsewhere), or any other abuse which is alleged to have taken place at the School, and of the action taken in respect of these allegations. In such cases the relevant Designated Teacher will inform Ofsted as soon as reasonably practicable, but at the latest within 14 days.

1.4 Implementation Procedures

1.4.1 The School has implementation procedures to assist staff and volunteers when handling safeguarding concerns.

1.4.2 Information on these procedures is available to all staff and volunteers at the School and the procedures must be followed at all times.

2. Aims

2.1 Our aims are to:

2.1.1 create an environment in our School which is safe and secure for all pupils

2.1.2 encourage our pupils to establish satisfying relationships within their families, with peers and with other adults

2.1.3 encourage children to develop a sense of autonomy and independence

2.1.4 work with parents to build their understanding of and commitment to the welfare of all pupils.

2.2 In order to fulfil these aims the Head will take the necessary steps to ensure that:

2.2.1 all staff and volunteers receive training in Safeguarding Children as part of their induction

2.2.2 all staff, volunteers and the Head receive updated safeguarding training every three years

2.2.3 the school operates safe recruitment procedures. This includes ensuring that at least one member of any recruitment panel involved in all stages of the recruitment process has undertaken the appropriate training in Safer Recruitment, and carrying out all required checks on the suitability of all staff and volunteers to work with children and young people in accordance with the guidance and regulations set out at paragraphs 1.1.2 and in accordance with the GDST recruitment and selection procedures

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- 2.2.4 the school obtains assurance that appropriate child protection checks are carried out and procedures apply to any staff or volunteer of another organisation who work with the School's pupils on another site (for example, in a separate institution)
 - 2.2.5 the school carries out the mandated checks on the suitability of all people who serve on our School Governing Board in accordance with the guidance and regulations set out at paragraphs 1.1.2 and in accordance with GDST policy
 - 2.2.6 where the school ceases to use the services of any person (staff (including agency staff), peripatetic teacher, volunteer or any other person) because it is considered that the person may be unsuitable to work with children, a referral will be made to the Independent Safeguarding Authority promptly and in any event within 28 days in accordance with its legal duty
 - 2.2.7 all School staff are alert to signs of abuse and neglect (appropriate to their role) and all staff know to whom they should report concerns or suspicions of abuse or neglect
 - 2.2.8 all School staff keep themselves updated on safeguarding issues and child protection procedures by accessing advice, guidance and training as appropriate to their role.
- 3.3 This Policy is compatible with and meets all applicable requirements of **Oxfordshire SCB** (OSCB) www.oscb.org.uk . The school ensures that it has positive communication with OSCB to ensure compliance with any changes in local protocol and access to relevant support. OSCB can be contacted through the Local Social Services Department (Children's Services) "Social Services". Their contact details are set out in paragraph 12.3 below.

3. Identifying Abuse

- 3.1 Staff who have day-to-day contact with pupils are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse such as changes in behaviour or developmental concerns. A child protection concern may come to the attention of School staff or volunteers in a variety of ways, such as pupil disclosure, third party disclosure or staff suspicion.
- 3.2 Any suspicion, allegation or incident of abuse must be reported to the Designated Teacher immediately.
- 3.3 It is not the responsibility of the School to investigate suspected or alleged abuse; this is the role of the Police and Social Services.
- 3.4 What is Child Abuse?
The definitions in this document are drawn from paragraphs 1.33-1.36 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm in the following four categories:
 - 3.4.1 **Physical abuse** - 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 symptoms, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.
 - 3.4.2 **Emotional abuse** - persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on a child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or

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unvalued. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on a child, or causing children to feel frightened or in danger.

- 3.4.3 **Sexual abuse** - involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is fully aware of what is happening and whether or not such an act was consensual. It may involve physical contact and/or non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at or the production of pornographic material, watching sexual activity or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.
- 3.4.4 **Neglect** - the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional and/or psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision, or failing to ensure access to appropriate medical care of treatment. It can also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.
- 3.4.5 **Who are the abusers?** - abusers can be parents or carers, siblings or members of the extended family, neighbours, teachers, strangers or other pupils; in short, an abuser could be anyone.

3.5 Signs of abuse

The following may help staff be aware of possible signs of abuse but *these do not necessarily mean that the child has been abused*:

3.5.1 Physical Abuse

- Unexplained injuries/ burns
- Untreated injuries
- Bruises/ abrasion around the face
- Bi-lateral injuries e.g. two bruised eyes
- Bite marks
- Bruising abrasions to lips, cheeks, outer ear

3.5.2 Emotional Abuse

- Excessive overreaction to mistakes
- Continual self-deprecation
- Excessive rocking, thumb sucking, hair twisting
- Extreme compliance/aggression
- Drug, alcohol and substance misuse
- Significant peer relationship difficulties

3.5.3 Sexual Abuse

- Sexual awareness inappropriate to child's age, including provocative sexual behaviour
- Self harm
- Pregnancy
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Sudden changes in behaviour or school performance
- Fear of undressing for gym
- Depression/withdrawal
- Drug, alcohol, substance abuse

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3.5.4 Neglect

- Constant hunger, tiredness and/or poor personal hygiene
- Untreated medical problems
- Destructive tendencies
- Social isolation
- Poor self esteem and/or relationship with peers
- Excessive rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking

4. Designated Teacher

4.1 The School has appointed two Designated Teachers and a person to contact in their absence. The Designated Teachers are members of the School's Senior Leadership Team with the necessary status and authority to take responsibility for child protection matters. The Designated Teachers at the School are **Mrs Olwen Curry (Senior School) and Mrs Ellie Stacey (Junior School and EYFS)** The Designated Teachers will:

- 4.1.1 be responsible for ensuring that all cases of suspected or actual child protection concerns are investigated and managed in accordance with the guidance and regulations set out at paragraphs 1.1.2
- 4.1.2 refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the local Social Services Department as appropriate and in accordance with OSCB procedures
- 4.1.3 ensure that he/she/they is/are aware of the latest national and local guidance and requirements and will keep the Head, staff and volunteers informed as appropriate
- 4.1.4 receive appropriate training in child protection matters and interagency working, to include both national and local bodies, at least every two years
- 4.1.5 ensure that the Head, staff and volunteers have access to and understand their role as appropriate in the child protection procedures, including but not limited to part-time staff, supply staff, peripatetic staff, newly appointed staff, before/after school care staff, volunteers, catering staff, cleaning staff and caretakers
- 4.1.6 act as a source of advice and support within the School and co-ordinate action regarding referrals in relation to both children and allegations against staff.

5. Responding to Disclosures of Abuse

- 5.1 Children are more likely to be abused by someone they know and trust than by a stranger.
- 5.2 Staff and volunteers should make themselves available to listen and demonstrate to the pupil that what they are saying is being taken seriously and without criticism and should respond in a supportive, calm manner and avoid asking detailed questions. The role of the staff or volunteer is to listen, record and report; not to investigate.
- 5.3 If a pupil reports abuse from another pupil or pupils, staff should follow the procedures in this section. The Designated Teacher will liaise with local agencies in relation to handling any such cases which arise.

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5.4 Immediate Response

If a disclosure is made, the member of staff or volunteer **should**:

- 5.4.1 allow the pace of the conversation to be dictated by the pupil
- 5.4.2 ask neutral questions which encourage the pupil to talk such as “can you tell me what happened?”
- 5.4.3 accept what the pupil says and do not ask for further detail
- 5.4.4 acknowledge how hard it was for them to tell you
- 5.4.5 note carefully any clearly visible external signs of possible injury or neglect (but note paragraph 5.5.4 below)
- 5.4.6 reassure the pupil that they have done the right thing, explain whom you will have to tell (the Designated Teacher) and why.

5.5 The member of staff or volunteer **should not**:

- 5.5.1 burden the pupil with guilt by asking questions such as “why didn’t you tell me before?”
- 5.5.2 interrogate or pressure the pupil to provide information
- 5.5.3 ask any potentially leading questions such as those that start with the words, how, what, when, where and why
- 5.5.4 undress the child or examine clothed parts of the child’s body in an attempt to determine the nature of any such injuries/neglect
- 5.5.5 criticise the perpetrator, this may be someone they love
- 5.5.6 promise confidentiality (see paragraph 5.6 and 5.7)
- 5.5.7 make promises that they cannot keep such as “I’ll stay with you all the time” or “it will be alright now”.

5.6 If a pupil confides in a member of staff or volunteer and requests that the information is kept secret, staff/volunteers **must not make promises about confidentiality**. Staff must tell the pupil sensitively that they have a responsibility to tell the named Designated Teacher (see paragraph 4) so that the child can be helped to stay safe and feel better.

5.7 In every case, the staff/volunteer should consider whether the pupil is able to provide consent for the information to be shared and if so, seek to obtain that consent in accordance with the GDST Safeguarding Procedures relating to information sharing and consent. If the pupil does not consent, the staff/volunteer should explain that they need to share the information with the Designated Teacher and reassure them that the information will *only be disclosed* to other people who *need to know*. The member of staff/volunteer should refer to the GDST Safeguarding Procedures for further information and guidance.

5.8 The School recognises that a child who is abused may feel helpless and humiliated, may blame themselves, and find it difficult to develop and maintain a sense of self worth. We recognise that the School may provide the only stability in the lives of children who have been abused or who are at risk of harm.

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5.9 The School will provide continuing support to a pupil who has disclosed abuse through promoting a caring and safe environment within the School and encouraging self-esteem and self-assertiveness through the curriculum and through relationships. In doing so, the Schools will act in accordance with guidance from the relevant authorities to ensure that, for example, legal proceedings are not compromised.

5.10 Recording Information
Staff/volunteers should:

5.10.1 make brief notes at the time or immediately afterwards, which record the date, time, place and context of the disclosure or concern, and what has actually been said, not assumption or interpretation. Notes must be signed and dated

5.10.2 clearly distinguish between fact, observation, allegation and opinion

5.10.3 record any observed injuries and bruises

5.10.4 note the non-verbal behaviour and the key words in the language used by the pupil (do not translate into “proper terms”)

5.10.5 complete a Safeguarding Concern Form, attach any original notes and pass them to the Designated Teacher

5.10.6 appreciate that their records may be used in criminal proceedings or disciplinary investigations.

5.11 Reporting to the Designated Teacher

5.11.1 Any concerns about pupils must be discussed with the Designated Teacher (or in their absence the Deputy Designated Teacher) as soon as possible and at latest by the end of the school day.

5.11.2 Where the disclosure identifies a safeguarding issue, the Designated Teacher will report the disclosure to the local Social Services Department within 24 hours and will notify the Legal Department at Trust Office.

6 Allegations against staff

6.1 The GDST has procedures for handling allegations made against staff and/or volunteers which adheres to chapter 5 of the government guidance Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007 and Appendix 5 of Working Together 2010, which the School will follow. The policy aims to strike a balance between protecting pupils from abuse and protecting staff and volunteers from false allegations. What follows is a summary of those procedures.

6.2 Where a safeguarding related allegation or cause for concern is made against any member of staff or volunteer, the matter should be reported immediately to the Head, **who will in turn inform the Designated Teacher** (unless the allegation relates to the Designated Teacher). The Head should **not speak** to the member of staff who is the subject of the allegation at this point.

6.3 Where a safeguarding related allegation or cause for concern is made against the Designated Teacher, the matter should be reported immediately to the Head, who will not in this case refer to the Designated Teacher.

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- 6.4 Where a safeguarding related allegation or cause for concern is made against the Head, the person receiving the allegation should immediately inform the Director of People at Trust Office (or in their absence the Chief Executive) and must **not** notify the Head.
- 6.5 A decision as to how to proceed and eventually whether or not to suspend a member of staff or volunteer will be taken by the Head **following consultation with the LADO¹** and the GDST. Suspension is not an automatic response and the decision will be taken according to the circumstances of each particular case. The decision as to whether or not to suspend the Head is taken by the GDST alone (having consulted the relevant authorities).
- 6.6 In considering the available options, including redeployment of the member of staff or volunteer, the GDST and the Head will ensure that their primary concerns are the safety and wellbeing of the pupils, together with the need for a full and fair investigation.
- 6.7 As noted in para. 2.2.6 above, where we cease to use the services of any person (staff member (including agency staff), peripatetic teacher, volunteer or any other person) because it is considered that the person may be unsuitable to work with children, a referral will be made to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) promptly and in any event within 28 days in accordance with our legal duty.
- 6.8 Where required to do so, we will provide information requested by the ISA or GTC in respect of a member of staff or volunteer in accordance with our legal duty.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 The GDST and the School have separate procedures which detail the roles and responsibilities of all staff, volunteers and governors in relation to safeguarding. In summary every member of staff, members of the School Governing Board, and every volunteer who assists the School should:
- 7.1.1 protect pupils from abuse
 - 7.1.2 be aware of the GDST and the School's safeguarding procedures
 - 7.1.3 know how to access and implement those procedures
 - 7.1.4 follow those procedures at all times
 - 7.1.5 know the identity of the School's Designated Teacher/s and to whom one should speak in the absence of the Designated Teacher/s
 - 7.1.6 report all safeguarding concerns to the Designated Teacher (subject to paragraphs 6.3 and 6.4 of this Policy)
 - 7.1.7 keep a record of any safeguarding concern, conversation or incident (in accordance with paragraph 5.10 of this Policy)
 - 7.1.8 undertake appropriate training including refresher training every three years.

8. Referring Concerns to Social Services

¹ Each Local Childrens' Services Department must have a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for child protection. Schools seeking advice on child protection matters should ask to speak to the LADO in the first instance.

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- 8.1 The decision to make a referral which could activate a child protection investigation, and the issue of gaining parental consent, are serious matters and require careful judgement. These decisions must only be taken by the Head or by the Designated Teacher, who will liaise with the Head as appropriate, following consultation as appropriate with the LADO and the Legal Department at Trust Office.
- 8.2 The Head and/or Designated Teacher should notify the Legal Department at Trust Office of any referral made.
- 8.3 Subject to 8.1 above and the advice of the LADO, the consent of parents should be obtained before making a formal referral, unless to do so could place the child at risk of significant harm.
- 8.4 In accordance with paragraph 5.11.2 of this Policy, where the disclosure relates to actual abuse or the suspicion of abuse, the Designated Teacher will report the disclosure to Social Services within 24 hours.
- 8.5 In the event of the School making a referral to Social Services, they should agree with the recipient of the referral what exactly the child and parents will be told, by whom and when. The Designated Teacher should ask to be kept informed of the timing of the strategy discussion between Social Services and the police, which will decide whether and how to investigate. The Designated Teacher should be prepared to contribute to the strategy discussion.
- 8.6 Social Services are required to acknowledge written referrals within one working day. If the School has not heard from Social Services after two working days the School should contact Social Services again. A record of each contact with Social Services, including the name of the officer with whom the School has spoken should be kept.

9. Whistle-blowing

- 9.1 The School recognises that children cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff fail to do so.
- 9.2 Where staff or volunteers reasonably believe that safeguarding concerns exist, or where they have concerns regarding the management of safeguarding issues, it is their duty to raise concerns.
- 9.3 The member of staff or volunteer should bring their concerns to the attention of the Designated Teacher, or in a case where the concerns relate to the actions or inaction of the Designated Teacher, to the Head.
- 9.4 If it becomes necessary to consult outside the School, the staff or volunteer should first liaise with the Director of People at Trust Office.

10. Monitoring and Review

- 10.1 The working of this Policy will be monitored by the Designated Teacher in the School and will report as required to the Head.

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- 10.2 The GDST, as proprietor of the School, will undertake an annual review of the School's safeguarding policies and procedures together with a review of the safeguarding incidents that have arisen and how they were managed. This Policy will also be reviewed as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, guidance and practice. This process is carried out to ensure that the GDST is continuing to provide the very highest standard of safeguarding possible.
- 10.3 The annual review will be reported back to the GDST's Audit Committee, which will monitor compliance. The Health and Safety Committee will also consider the processes in place for promoting the welfare of GDST pupils.
- 10.4 Any deficiencies or weaknesses identified in this Policy or in any of the School's child protection arrangements will be remedied without delay.

11. Equal Opportunities

All staff, volunteers and governors with responsibilities under this Policy must take into account the Equal Opportunities Policy when discharging their duties.

12. Key Contacts

12.1 **Oxford High School oxfordhigh@oxf.gdst.net**
Head

Mrs Judith Carlisle Headmistress 01865 559888

Designated Officers

Mrs Olwen Curry (Senior School) 01865 559888

Mrs Ellie Stacey-also responsible for Child Protection in Early Years Foundation Stage EYFS) (Head of Junior School) 01865 515647 or 01865 510841

Deputy Designated Officers

Mrs Denise Flannery (Senior School) School Nurse 01865 559888

Mrs Susan Young- also responsible for EYFS (Junior School) 01865 515647 or 01865 510841

12.2 **Trust Office - 020 7393 6666 (tel) 020 7393 6789 (fax)**

People Department

Legal: LegalDepartmentTrustOffice@UK.GDST.NET

Tel: 020 7393 6652

HR: hrdepartment@wes.gdst.net

Tel: 020 7393 6680

Innovation and Learning Department

innovationandlearning@wes.gdst.net

Tel: 020 7393 6688

12.3 **Multi-agency contacts**

Oxford County Council Children Young People and Families

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board

www.oscb.org.uk

Schools Safeguarding Team

Barry Armstrong LADO

01865 815956

Service Manager, Attendance and Welfare

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An anonymous consultation service is offered for advice about a safeguarding incident prior to a full referral.

Early Years and Families Local Assessment Teams for Referrals

Abingdon Assessment Team	01865 897983
Banbury Assessment Team	01865 816670
Oxford City Assessment Team	01865 323048
Emergency out of hours including for EYFS	0800 833408
Customer Services unit / Information Line	01865 816018

Other useful Contacts

Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit	01865 335200
Women's Aid: refuge applications	01865 336080
OSCB Training courses	01865 815843
NSPCC Child Protection Helpline	0800 800 5000
Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre	01865 726295
Asian Child Protection Helpline	0800 096 7719
National Association for People Abused in Childhood (NAPAC)	0800 085 3330
Stop it now!	0808 1000 900
Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)	www.thinkuknow.co.uk
Oxfordshire County Council	www.oxfordshire.gov.uk
Primary Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (PCAMHS)- consultation service	01865 425130

Olwen Curry
Ellie Stacey
Aug 2011

review Aug 2012