



Wraparound and Preschool Care

Aldermaston Oaks • Big Oaks • Little Oaks • Mini Oaks • Priory Oaks • Silchester Oaks

SAFEGUARDING

We have a commitment and a responsibility to protect all children in our care from harm, abuse and radicalisation. We will respond promptly and appropriately to all incidents or concerns regarding the safety of a child.

There is a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) available at all times in all settings while the Oaks is in session.

Our Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are:

- Playleaders/Deputy Playleaders/ Preschool Manager/ Deputy Manager
- Clubs Manager
- Director Group = Registered Person
- Operations and Risk Director = Nominated Individual

The DSLs have appropriate experience and training and are responsible for liaising with social services, Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership, Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP), Ofsted and/or the police in any matter regarding child or adult safeguarding.

All staff will have completed online 'Universal Safeguarding' and 'PREVENT' training during their induction. Playleaders, Managers and Deputy Playleaders will also have completed 'Leading in Safeguarding', 'Designated Safeguarding Lead refresher', training either online or face-to-face.

Enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) disclosures are obtained and regularly updated for all Oaks staff, students and eligible volunteers.

Details of DSLs and relevant safeguarding bodies are to be found in the Important Contacts document and Safeguarding flow diagrams for each setting.

Child abuse and neglect

Child abuse is any form of physical, emotional or sexual mistreatment or lack of care that leads to injury or harm. An individual may abuse or neglect a child directly, or by failing to protect them from harm. Some forms of child abuse and neglect are listed below.

- **Emotional abuse** is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve making the child feel that they are worthless, unloved, or inadequate. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.
- **Physical abuse** can involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may be also caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child.
- **Sexual abuse** involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This can involve physical contact, or non-contact activities such as showing children sexual activities or encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.
- **Neglect** is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs. It can involve a failure to provide adequate food, clothing and shelter, to protect a child from physical and emotional harm, to ensure adequate supervision or to allow access to medical treatment.

Signs of child abuse and neglect

Signs of possible abuse and neglect may include:

- significant changes in a child's behaviour
- deterioration in a child's general well-being
- unexplained bruising or marks
- changes in self-presentation or personal grooming
- comments made by a child which give cause for concern
- reasons to suspect neglect or abuse outside the setting, e.g. in the child's home, or that a girl may have been subjected to (or is at risk of) female genital mutilation, or that the child may have witnessed domestic abuse
- inappropriate behaviour displayed by a member of staff, or any other person. For example, inappropriate sexual comments, excessive one-to-one attention beyond the requirements of their role, or inappropriate sharing of images.

If abuse or neglect is suspected or disclosed

When a child makes a disclosure to a member of staff, that member of staff will:

- reassure the child that they are not to blame and are right to speak out
- listen to the child but not question them
- give reassurance that the staff member will take action
- record and report the incident as soon as possible

If abuse or neglect is suspected, these concerns should be discussed with the Manager/Playleader and/or Clubs Manager or Director Group, who will record and report the concern (see later section).

If a third-party expresses concern that a child is being abused or neglected, we will encourage them to contact the children's services team, Social Care and/or police directly. We will also explain that the Oaks is obliged to report it, having been informed, and the incident will be recorded and reported by us (see later section).

Child-on-child abuse, or child-on-staff abuse

Children are vulnerable to abuse by other children. Child-on-child abuse is taken seriously by staff and will be subject to the same child protection procedures as other forms of abuse. Staff are aware of the potential uses of information technology for bullying and abusive behaviour between young people. Staff will not dismiss abusive behaviour between young people as normal. The presence of one or more of the following in relationships between children should always trigger concern about the possibility of child-on-child abuse:

- Sexual activity (in primary school-aged children) of any kind, including sexting
- One of the children is significantly more dominant than the other (e.g. much older)
- One of the children is significantly more vulnerable than the other (e.g. in terms of disability, confidence, physical strength)
- There has been some use of threats, bribes or coercion to ensure compliance or secrecy.

If child-on-child abuse is suspected or disclosed, we will follow the same procedures as set out above for responding to child abuse.

If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with or abusive physical gestures towards a member of staff or volunteer, this will be recorded and reported to the DSL.

Extremism and radicalisation

All childcare settings have a legal duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and being drawn into extremism. There are many reasons why a child might be vulnerable to radicalisation, e.g.:

- feeling alienated or alone
- seeking a sense of identity or individuality
- suffering from mental health issues such as depression
- desire for adventure or wanting to be part of a larger cause
- associating with others who hold extremist beliefs

Signs that a child might be at risk of radicalisation include:

- changes in behaviour, for example becoming withdrawn or aggressive
- claiming that terrorist attacks and violence are justified
- viewing violent extremist material online
- possessing or sharing violent extremist material
- exhibiting extreme intolerance of faiths, cultures and races other than their own

If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk of becoming radicalised, they will record and report this to the DSL (see later section).

Mental Health

Mental Health is part of Safeguarding. Mental health needs can be an indicator of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation, or that a child is at risk. If a staff member is concerned that a child is suffering with mental health, they will report this immediately to a DSL and record their observations.

Staff should also take into account the impact of any safeguarding incidents on themselves, and find appropriate confidential support, such as via our Employee Assistance Programme.

Domestic Abuse

This reflects the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, which specifies that children who witness domestic abuse are victims in their own right. Domestic abuse can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional. It can happen through technology too, for example image-based abuse, or using technology to harass, monitor or control the victim, or control their accounts. Challenging family circumstances, including growing up with domestic abuse, can make a child more vulnerable. If a member of staff suspects that a child is at risk, and is exposed to domestic abuse, they will record and report this to the DSL immediately.

Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also known as female circumcision or cutting. Changes in a girl's demeanour, behaviours, questions regarding FGM or frequent and prolonged visits to the toilet are signs of concern to be recorded and reported (see later section).

Recording and Reporting a concern/Taking Action

All information about a disclosure, suspected abuse, neglect, FGM or radicalisation concern should be recorded on a logging concerns form as soon as possible after the event. This must be reported on the same day or at the very latest (and only with good reason for the delay) the day after.

The record should include:

- date of the disclosure, or the incident, or the observation causing concern
- identifier as appropriate for confidentiality (e.g. initials/name, date of birth) of the individual(s) involved
- a factual report of what happened including the individual's own words in the case of a disclosure or conversation taking place
- details of any witnesses to the conversation
- the name, signature and job title of the person completing the record
- date and time at which the record was made

The written-up logging concerns form should be shared with the Manager, Playleader or Clubs Manager, who should respond sensitively and appropriately including informing a member of the Director Group of the incident as soon as possible by phone, text or email.

If for any reason, it is not appropriate to record the allegation on a logging concerns form, as above, a phone call or text or email should be made to the Clubs Manager/member of the Director Group which is then followed up with a full written record of the incident on a logging concerns form the same day, or at the very latest the next day.

The Managers, Playleader/Deputy Playleader DSL will inform the Clubs Manager who will decide on the appropriate course of action. The DSL will follow up all referrals to Social Care in writing within 48 hours. If a member of staff thinks that the incident has not been dealt with properly, they should contact Social Care directly. For all safeguarding concerns including abuse and radicalisation the DSL will contact one of the following local authority contacts and follow their guidance.

- Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (BWSCP) Tel. 01635 503090, Out of hours Tel 01344 351999, www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk,
- Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP), Tel 01329 225379, Out of hours Tel 0300 555 1373, www.hampshirescp.org.uk
- For more serious concerns the DSL will contact the Police on the non-emergency number (101), or the anti-terrorist hotline on 0800 789 32

Additionally, where there is concern about involvement of an adult who works with children, the DSL will contact:

- Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator.
 - West Berks LADO: 01635 503153
 - Hampshire LADO: 01962 876364
- For immediate and urgent concerns and emergency situations the DSL will contact the Police using 999.
- **NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children)**
24 Hour Helpline: 0808 800 5000 (FREE)
Childline 0800 11 11 (FREE)

Allegations of abuse by staff

As a matter of routine practice at all of our settings, every effort will be made to avoid or minimise time when members of staff or volunteers are left alone with a child/children. Staff members should remain in each other's line of sight wherever possible. If the staff and children are spread across a large physical area, staff should approach those who are out of sight and adjust their position such that they are mutually visible.

Staff will be mindful of how and where they touch children. Unnecessary physical contact will be minimised, and inappropriate physical contact will not be tolerated. Staff will never carry out a personal task for children that they can do themselves, particularly where this is intimate care.

If anyone makes an allegation of child abuse against a member of staff, this must be reported to the LADO:

- The allegation will be recorded on a Logging Concerns Form. Any witnesses to the incident should sign and date the entry to confirm it, and add any further details, if necessary.
- Allegations will be reported to the DSLs, Clubs Manager, Director Group.
- Any specific allegations regarding a staff member must be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and to Ofsted. The LADO will advise if other agencies (e.g. police) should be informed, and The Oaks will act upon their advice.
- Any telephone reports to the LADO will be followed up in writing within 48 hours.
- Following advice from the LADO, it may be necessary to suspend the member of staff pending full investigation of the allegation.
- If appropriate, The Oaks will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Promoting awareness among staff

The Oaks promotes awareness of child abuse and the risk of radicalisation through its staff training. We ensure that:

- the designated DSL has relevant experience and receives appropriate training in safeguarding and duties under programmes such as Prevent
- safer recruitment practices are followed for all new staff
- all staff read a copy of this Safeguarding policy, which is available at all settings, understand its contents and are vigilant to signs of abuse, neglect or radicalisation
- all staff are aware of their statutory duties with regard to the disclosure or discovery of child abuse, and concerns about radicalisation
- during their induction period, all staff are required to read the Safeguarding Policy and all staff receive basic safeguarding training
- safeguarding is regularly discussed at staff and Managers meetings (half termly)
- all staff receive basic Prevent training
- Supervision meetings with all staff
 - Team meeting: ideally held once a week
 - One-to-one meeting with each staff member: held once a month
 - Progress review: held termly
 - Appraisal: held once a year
- A copy of the following government guidance documents will be provided along with this policy at each setting. Each staff member is required to read and understand each document and to complete any subsequent assessments.
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018)
 - What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (2015)
 - The most UpToDate KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education)
 - Revised Prevent duty guidance to England and Wales 2021
 - Safeguarding children and Protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations for managers
 - After-school clubs community activities, and tuition- Safeguarding guidance for provider

- Internal reviews for each setting (annually around May), checklists for managers to complete (annually around October) and all staff safeguarding quizzes (annually around January) take place.

Use of mobile camera phones and cameras

Photographs will only be taken of children with their parents' permission. Only the allocated camera phone will be used to take photographs of children at the setting. Neither staff nor children nor visitors may use their mobile phones to take photographs or videos. Please see the Digital Devices and Photographs policy, and the Data Protection policies for more information.

Version History

Date:	Version:	Summary of Changes Made
02 Nov 2020	1.0	Issued
21 May 2021	1.1	Updates made to reflect the change of office management roles – from General Manager to a Clubs Manager and Office Manager
Jan 2022	1.2	Added DSLs first page
Feb 2022	1.3	Updated to include club phones having cameras
January 2023	1.4	Updated LSCB to BWSCP Added HSCP with contact details Added all statutory documents to read Peer on Peer Abuse changed to Child on Child Abuse
December 2023	1.5	Updated BWSCP, HSCP, and LADO contact details Updated statutory documents Added Supervision meetings Updated training and internal review cycle dates, in line with this year

See Related Policies:

Digital Devices and Photographs

Social Media and Messaging

Intimate Care

Safer Recruitment

Data Protection

Whistleblowing Policy