

## CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

---

The purpose of this Child Protection policy is to ensure, at all times, the maximum protection from any kind of harm for all young people involved in any way with OXFORDSHIRE YOUTH. For the purposes of this policy, OXFORDSHIRE YOUTH has defined harm as:

- Abandonment
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Racial abuse
- Sexual abuse or sexual exploitation
- Exposure to drug/alcohol misuse

### Sexual Abuse

Please remember that in relation to young people under the age of 13, consent is irrelevant. The law says 'a child under the age of 13 does not, under any circumstances, have the legal capacity to consent to any form of sexual activity'.

**The Police must be informed immediately of any sexual activity involving a child under 13.**

### Responsibilities

All employees have a duty to ensure that any suspected incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to child protection is reported using the reporting procedures detailed in this policy.

OXFORDSHIRE YOUTH frequently takes photographs of young people participating in activities and events. At all times written permission from parents will be obtained before any photographic material is used in the public domain.

### Reporting Procedures

Any suspicion, allegation or disclosure must be reported immediately (as soon as practicably possible on the day of the occurrence) to your **Line Manager**. Disclosure or evidence for concern may occur in a number of ways, including a comment made by a child, physical evidence such as bruising, a change in behaviour or inappropriate behaviour or knowledge.

The **Line Manager** must record the concern, with the employee, using the Incident Reporting Form. **The Line Manager is responsible** for informing the Chief Executive or the Deputy Chief Executive immediately and ensuring that a copy of the Incident Report is taken (NOT POSTED) to Head Office. This form must be kept strictly confidential and stored securely following the Data Protection Procedures.

For cases where the incident is managed by a partner agency, for example, on a school site, it is still a requirement for Oxfordshire Youth staff to complete a form and ensure that they indicate which staff member at the partner agency is leading on the process. Oxfordshire Youth staff should remain informed by the partner agency of any actions taken or further consequences.

## **Confidentiality**

OXFORDSHIRE YOUTH operates under a policy of confidentiality; however, under no circumstances will any individual in the employ of OXFORDSHIRE YOUTH keep confidential any information that raises concerns about safety and welfare of a child or young person.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child that they will keep secrets.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and young people

The unauthorised disclosure to another party of information deemed to be confidential and gained in the course of your work with OXFORDSHIRE YOUTH will be treated as gross misconduct within the terms of our disciplinary procedure. This includes contacting or passing information to the press without the express permission of the Chief Executive.

## **Confidentiality Statement**

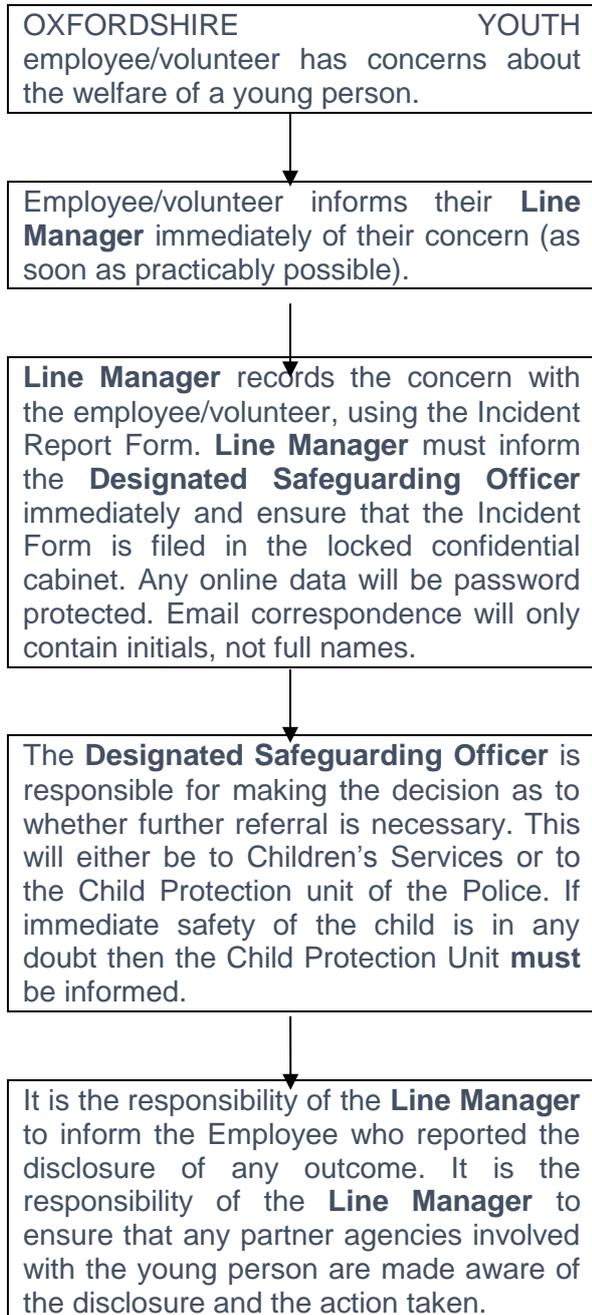
The confidentiality statement should be communicated to young people at the beginning of a project, at times when covering particularly sensitive content, if a young person approached you wanting to make a disclosure and posted in messages to young people when communicating online.

“Information you give to us will be respected by all staff and we won’t tell anyone outside of Oxfordshire Youth without your permission.

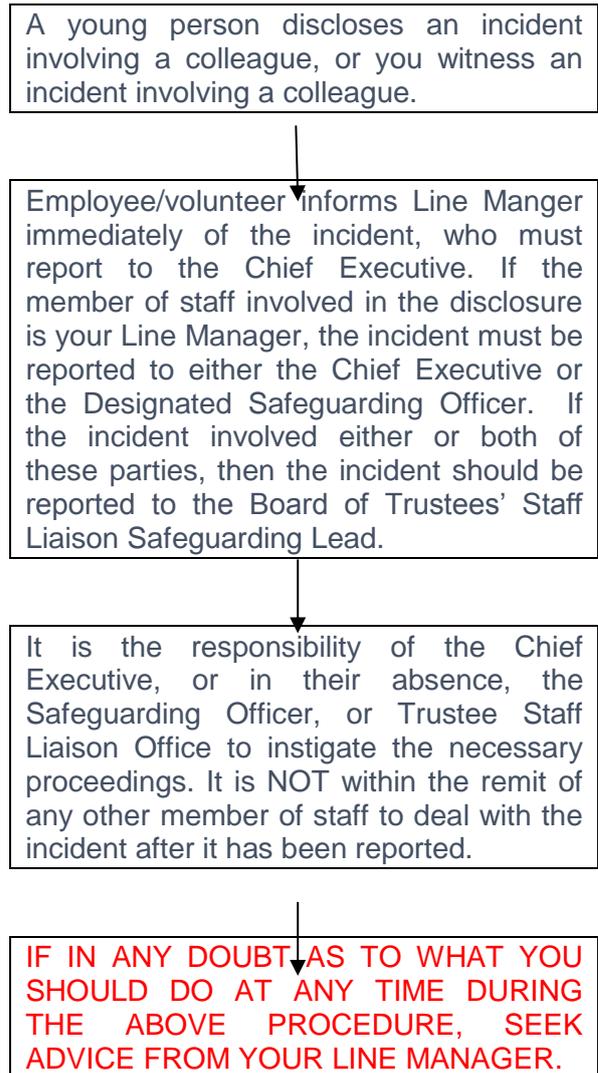
However, because your well-being and safety are important to us, it may sometimes be necessary to tell someone else if we believe there is a risk of harm or danger to you or any other child, young person or vulnerable adult, or if a crime has or will be committed. Where possible, we will keep you informed of what’s happening.

Please ask a member of staff if you want to know more.”

## PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH SUSPICIONS, ALLEGATIONS OR DISCLOSURE OF CHILD ABUSE



## PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AGAINST A MEMBER OF STAFF



## GUIDANCE NOTES ON DEALING WITH DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

