

Child Protection Policy

Olveston Out of School Club believes that children have the right to be completely secure from both the fear and reality of abuse, and we are committed to protecting all the children in our care from harm.

Olveston Out of School Club has a member of staff as the named Child Protection Officer. This Officer has suitable experience, training and expertise, and will be responsible for liaising with social services, the Local Safe Guarding Board and Ofsted in any child protection matter. Olveston Out of School Club's Child Protection procedures comply with all relevant legislation and other guidance or advice from the *Local Safe Guarding Board (LSGB*)*. Olveston Out of School Club is committed to reviewing its Child Protection Policy and procedures at regular intervals.

**LSGB brings together representatives of each of the main agencies and professionals responsible for helping to protect children from abuse and neglect in a given area. The LSGB is a multi-agency forum set up to agree how the different services and professional groups should co-operate to safeguard children in that area, and for making sure that arrangements work effectively to bring about good outcomes for children.*

Recognising Child Abuse

Child abuse manifests itself in a variety of different ways, some overt and others much less so. All staff will have regular child protection training and will be vigilant to signs and evidence of physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect.

Staff Support and Training

Olveston Out of School Club is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of child protection through the provision of support and training to staff. Therefore, Olveston Out of School Club will ensure that:

- All staff, students and volunteers are carefully recruited, have verified references and have full and up to date Criminal Record Bureau checks.
- All staff and volunteers are given a copy of the Child Protection Policy during their induction, and have its implications explained to them.
- All staff and volunteers receive regular training and supervision in child protection issues and are provided with any relevant information and guidance.
- All staff are provided with supervision and management support commensurate with their responsibilities in relation to child protection, and their requirement to maintain caring and safe relationships with children.
- All staff are aware of the main indicators of child abuse.

- All staff are aware of their statutory requirements in respect of the disclosure or discovery of child abuse and the procedure for doing so. All students and volunteers are instructed to report the disclosure or discovery of abuse to the Manager.
- Olveston Out of School Club will take appropriate action in relation to the findings of any investigation into allegations of abuse, consistent with its duties to protect the safety of children and uphold fair processes for staff, students and volunteers.
- Any member of staff, a student or volunteer under investigation for the alleged abuse of a child, will be subject to the provisions of the Staff Disciplinary Policy.

Safe Caring

All staff understand Olveston Out of School Club's Child Protection Procedures and have had appropriate training and guidance in the principles of safe caring. To this end:

- Every effort will be made to avoid or minimise time when members of staff are left alone with a child. If staff are alone with a child, the door of the room should be kept open and another member of staff should be informed. Students or volunteers are not left alone with children.
- If a child makes inappropriate physical contact with a member of staff, students or volunteer, this will be recorded fully in the Incident Record Book.
- Staff will not carry out a personal task for children that they can do for themselves.
- Staff will be mindful of how and where they touch children, given their age and emotional understanding. Unnecessary or potentially inappropriate physical contact will be avoided at all times.
- All allegations made by a child against a member of staff will be fully recorded, including any actions taken, in the Incident Record Book. In the event of there being a witness to an incident, they should sign the records to confirm this.

Dealing With Allegations

Olveston Out of School Club is committed to ensuring that it meets its responsibilities in respect of child protection by treating any allegation seriously and sensitively. Olveston Out of School Club will not carry out any investigation itself into a suspected child abuse incident. On discovering an allegation of abuse, the Child Protection Officer will immediately refer the case to the local statutory child protection agencies.

Further to this, the following principles will govern any suspected or reported case of abuse:

- Where actual or suspected abuse comes to the attention of staff, they will report this to the Child Protection Officer at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Staff are encouraged and supported to trust their professional judgment and if they suspect abuse has, or is taking place, to report this.
- Full written records of all reported incidents will be produced and maintained. Information recorded will include full details of the alleged incident; details of all the parties involved; any evidence or explanations offered by interested parties; relevant dates, times and locations and any supporting information or evidence from members of staff. Olveston Out of School Club will demonstrate great care in distinguishing between fact and opinion when recording suspected incidents of child abuse.
- The Child Protection Officer will be responsible for ensuring that written records are dated, signed and kept confidentially.
- If an allegation of abuse is made against the Child Protection Officer, the Registered Person (Club Managers) will be informed as soon as possible. They will then assume responsibility for the situation or delegate this role to a senior member of staff.
- Staff will ensure that all concerns and allegations are treated with sensitivity and confidentiality.
- Any children involved in alleged incidents will be comforted and reassured.

In circumstances where a child makes an allegation or a disclosure, the member of staff concerned will:

- 1 Listen fully to all the child has to say.
- 2 Make no observable judgement.
- 3 Ask open questions that encourage the child to speak in their own words.
- 4 Ensure the child is safe, comfortable and not left alone.
- 5 Make no promises that cannot be kept; such as promising not to tell anybody what they are being told.

Staff will be made aware of the Department of Health's booklet 'What to do if You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused?' (2003), and it's recent guidance on 'Protecting Children from Harm'.

Referring Allegations to Child Protection Agencies

If the Child Protection Officer has reasonable grounds for believing that a child has been – or is in grave danger of being – subject to abuse, the following procedure will be activated:

- Contact will be made, at the earliest possible opportunity, with the local social services department.
- The Child Protection Officer will communicate as much information about the allegation and related incidents as is consistent with advice given by social services and the police.
- At all times, the safety, protection and interests of children concerned will take precedence. The committee and staff will work with and support parents/carers as far as they are legally able.
- Olveston Out of School Club will assist the social services and the police, as far as it is able, during any investigation of abuse or neglect. This will include disclosing written and verbal information and evidence.
- Ofsted will be informed of any allegations of abuse against a member of staff, student or volunteer, or any abuse that is alleged to have taken place on the premises or during a visit or outing.

October 2006