



## **Oblong Child Safeguarding Policy**

### **Context**

At Oblong Woodhouse Community Centre, we recognise that safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility.

We recognise that children and young people are less able to speak up for themselves than adults, and that children and young people can be put at risk through neglect, abuse, coercion, domestic abuse, and online abuse.

Through Oblong's work, staff and volunteers may encounter directly or indirectly, situations where children may be vulnerable or at risk, and all Oblong staff and volunteers need to be equipped to know what to do when encountering these situations.

For the purposes of this policy, 'child' is defined as any child or young person under the age of 18.

### **What we mean by abuse or neglect**

There are four main categories of abuse that may affect children. These include mental, emotional, sexual, or physical abuse. Children and young people can also be at risk of coercion, exploitation, online abuse and grooming.

'Children are now recognised victims of domestic abuse. Being exposed to domestic abuse has serious consequences for children and young people; and it can affect how they feel, think and behave in harmful ways.' (NSPCC Guidance)

### **Training and safeguarding leads**

The centre will have named safeguarding leads, whose photo and contact details will be displayed prominently in the centre. The centre's Designated Safeguarding Leads are Jess Fishenden and Nick Lalvani, who can be contacted on [safeguardingteam@oblongleeds.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingteam@oblongleeds.org.uk) or on 0113 2459610.

The centre's Designated Safeguarding Leads are responsible for creating a culture that promotes safeguarding, for listening to reported safeguarding concerns, and for ensuring safeguarding concerns are recorded safely and accurately. The DSLs are also responsible for reporting concerns and allegations to Social Care, when appropriate.

All staff at Oblong will have a DBS check relevant to their type of work at the centre, and be trained in safeguarding, and in writing risk assessments, to an appropriate level.

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### **Day-to-day working with children and young people**

The centre doesn't regularly work with under 16s, although occasionally we may run events where children and young people may attend group activities without a parent. Where these sessions are run by an Oblong member of staff, Oblong staff will be responsible for ensuring a safeguarding risk assessment is in place and for ensuring the event is safely staffed.

Children and young people under 16 attending the centre at a non-Oblong event should be accompanied by a parent, guardian or carer, who must supervise them at all times. If an unaccompanied child or young person under 16 is on our premises or at any of our off-site services, Oblong staff have a duty of care to locate an appropriate adult to take care of the child as soon as possible. If no parent or guardian can be found, inform the police.

If you are concerned about an adult's behaviour and you know they have children in their care, please inform a Safeguarding Lead, or one of the Safer Spaces

leads. Safeguarding leads can be contacted on [safeguardingteam@oblong.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingteam@oblong.org.uk) or phone 0113 2459610 and ask for Nick or Jess.

## **Safeguarding for volunteer-led groups using the centre**

At any time, the Centre may be in use by a number of different groups and individuals from the local community.

Groups working with children or young people should have their own risk assessments in place to keep children and young people safe.

At a minimum, any volunteer working with children should have an enhanced DBS check. These cost the same as a basic DBS check for volunteers, £18. You can apply for these at <https://dbscheckonline.org.uk/>

If a volunteer or group member has a safeguarding concern, they should contact one of the centre Safeguarding Leads. Photos and contact details for the centre Safeguarding Leads are on posters throughout the centre. You can also contact Safeguarding Leads confidentially through the email address [safeguardingteam@oblong.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingteam@oblong.org.uk)

You can phone Leeds Safeguarding Partnership for advice on 0113 2224403 during working hours Monday to Friday. If a child is at immediate risk, you can call 999.

## **Safeguarding at Community events**

Any activities within Oblong Woodhouse Community Centre will have a risk assessment completed and shared as appropriate to the level of risk. Contact details of the Safeguarding Leads will be displayed throughout the centre.

## **What to do if you are concerned for the safety of a child**

If you suspect that a child or young person is being, or is at risk of being, harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, you must report this to Oblong's Safeguarding Lead immediately. Safeguarding leads are Jess Fishenden and Nick Lalvani, who can be contacted by emailing [safeguardingteam@oblongleeds.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingteam@oblongleeds.org.uk).

Staff or volunteers working with children, young people and families should follow these steps in order:

1. If you believe a child is in immediate danger and at risk of harm call the police on 999.
2. If the child isn't in immediate danger and at risk of harm or you're not sure, take these steps:
  - Discuss your concerns with parents(s) or the young person. If appropriate, ask them who they think could support them, or the child, with the situation.
  - Discuss your concerns with the Safeguarding Lead. Photos and contact details for the centre's Safeguarding Leads are displayed in the centre.
  - Blank forms for safeguarding concerns and incidents are stored on the Oblong shared drive. When a safeguarding concern is reported, one of the Safeguarding Leads will support the person reporting a concern to fill this in with a factual account of what they've seen, heard, or witnessed.
  - The report should include: the name, age, gender and ethnicity of the child; contextual information about the child's life, for example if they have a disability; details of the concern; and the date and time of the incident or disclosure; who was involved or present at the time. The report should be factual and should record any words spoken as they were said.
  - The Safeguarding Lead will then make a decision as to what action, if any, to take next. This may include: sharing information with other agencies supporting the child/family, or reporting concerns to statutory services or the police.
  - The Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for ensuring written reports are made, and for recording details of action taken, and whether a referral to social care was made; and for recording the decision making process.
  - Oblong staff should record safeguarding concerns or incidents using a 'Cause for Concern' form, which they should save on their own Google Drive. These forms should then be printed and given to the Designated Safeguarding Lead to securely lock away in the Safeguarding and Incidents of Concern folder.

If you are still unsure or have serious concerns:

- Ring Leeds Safeguarding Partnership or Leeds Social Care for advice on 0113 2224403 Monday - Friday during working hours
- If a child is at immediate risk, you can call 999
- Gather initial information on the form available at [www.leedsscp.org.uk](http://www.leedsscp.org.uk) and report to the Leeds Safeguarding Hub

During office hours (9.00am - 5.00pm) call the Duty & Advice Team on 0113 376 0336 (option 3)

Out of office hours (evenings, weekends and bank holidays) call the Children's Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0113 376 0469

### **Concerns about a staff member or volunteer**

Anybody who has concerns about a member of Oblong Staff or volunteer towards a child or young person should contact the Safeguarding Leads, Nick Lalvani or Jess Fishenden on [safeguardingteam@oblongleeds.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingteam@oblongleeds.org.uk).

They will assess the situation and then either inform the LADO (local authority designated officer) or contact them for advice. The LADO can be contacted on 0113 378 9687 or [LADO@Leeds.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@Leeds.gov.uk)

A written report should be made as soon as possible after these concerns are made. The report should include: details of the individual reporting the concern; the name and job title of the staff member or volunteer who is the subject of the concern; and full details of the incident, and who was involved or present.

The DSL will be responsible for ensuring this report is made and safely stored, and for recording details of any immediate or agreed actions, and whether the LADO was involved.

**Ratified by Oblong's Board of Trustees  
At the Trustee Meeting on 16th August 2023  
Date of Next Review: August 2025**



## Safeguarding Leads



Jess Fishenden

Nick Lalvani

Contact: [safeguardingteam@oblong.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingteam@oblong.org.uk)

Phone numbers:

Child Social Care 0113 2224403

Adult Social Care 0113 2224401

Leeds Safeguarding Adults Unit 0113 224 3511

Make an adult safeguarding referral online at: <https://ascreferral.leeds.gov.uk/>