



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy & Procedure

Policy reviewed: September 2026

Next review: September 2027

Policy owners / Safeguarding Leads: Joanne Caputo and Francesca Garsed-Brand

1. Our Commitment to Safeguarding

At Rising Kites Limited, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every child and young person who uses our services, and to protecting adults at risk who may come into contact with our service.

We recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. We are committed to creating a culture in which children and adults feel safe, respected, listened to and able to raise concerns.

The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount. We will act promptly and appropriately whenever we have a concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child or adult at risk.

We recognise that abuse and neglect can occur in any family, community or setting and that children and adults may be particularly vulnerable because of disability, communication difficulties, additional needs, isolation or other circumstances.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to:

- Joanne Caputo and Francesca Garsed-Brand;
- Employees, students and other individuals working on behalf of Rising Kites;
- practitioners working from or providing services through Rising Kites where the safeguarding responsibilities of Rising Kites apply.

The policy covers children and young people under the age of 18 and adults who meet the definition of an **adult at risk**.

It aims to:

- protect children and adults at risk from abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- provide clear guidance on recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns;
- ensure that concerns are reported promptly to the appropriate safeguarding authority;
- ensure that information is shared appropriately and securely;
- ensure that staff receive appropriate safeguarding training;
- provide clear procedures for concerns or allegations relating to adults working with children.

3. Legislative and Guidance Framework

Rising Kites operates in accordance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Equality Act 2010
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026**, where relevant to our work with schools and education settings
- current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) guidance and eligibility requirements
- relevant Oxfordshire safeguarding procedures and local multi-agency arrangements.

We will keep this policy under review to reflect changes to legislation and statutory guidance.

4. Definitions

Child

A child is anyone under the age of 18.

Adult at Risk

For safeguarding purposes, an adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who:

- has needs for care and support, whether or not those needs are being met;
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- because of those care and support needs, is unable to protect themselves from the risk or experience of abuse or neglect.

This is the terminology used within the Care Act safeguarding framework.

5. Types of Abuse and Harm

Safeguarding concerns may take many forms. These include, but are not limited to:

Children

- physical abuse;
- emotional or psychological abuse;
- sexual abuse;
- neglect;
- domestic abuse and the impact of domestic abuse on children;
- child sexual exploitation;
- criminal exploitation and county lines;
- child trafficking and modern slavery;
- harmful sexual behaviour and child-on-child abuse;
- online abuse and exploitation;
- bullying, including cyberbullying;
- coercive or controlling behaviour;
- female genital mutilation (FGM);
- forced marriage and honour-based abuse;
- radicalisation and extremism;
- serious violence;
- abuse or neglect arising from additional vulnerabilities or disability.

Children may experience more than one form of harm at the same time. We will consider the child's individual circumstances and the possibility of multiple or hidden forms of abuse.

Adults at Risk

Concerns may include:

- physical abuse;
- sexual abuse;
- psychological or emotional abuse;
- financial or material abuse;
- neglect and acts of omission;
- discriminatory abuse;
- domestic abuse;
- organisational or institutional abuse;
- modern slavery;
- self-neglect.

6. Safeguarding Principles

Rising Kites will:

- put the welfare and best interests of children first;
- listen to children and take their views, wishes and feelings seriously;
- promote a culture of openness in which concerns can be raised without fear;
- take all safeguarding concerns seriously;
- respond proportionately and without unnecessary delay;
- share information appropriately where this is necessary to safeguard a child or adult;
- maintain accurate, factual and confidential safeguarding records;
- work cooperatively with parents, carers, schools and other professionals where appropriate;
- work with statutory safeguarding agencies when a concern requires referral;
- ensure staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

Safeguarding concerns should **never be ignored or assumed to be someone else's responsibility**.

7. Safeguarding Leads

Safeguarding Leads:

Joanne Caputo
Francesca Garsed-Brand

Both Safeguarding Leads are responsible for:

- maintaining up-to-date safeguarding knowledge;
- ensuring that safeguarding concerns are responded to appropriately;
- making or facilitating referrals to the appropriate safeguarding agencies;
- maintaining secure safeguarding records;
- ensuring that safeguarding information is shared appropriately;
- ensuring that staff and practitioners understand their safeguarding responsibilities;
- keeping this policy under review;
- maintaining awareness of relevant local safeguarding procedures;
- ensuring appropriate safeguarding training is undertaken.

Where possible, concerns should be discussed with a Safeguarding Lead. However, **staff must not delay taking action where a child or adult is at immediate risk**, and they may contact the relevant safeguarding authority directly if necessary.

8. Safeguarding Training

Joanne Caputo and Francesca Garsed-Brand have both undertaken **updated safeguarding training during summer 2026**.

Safeguarding training will be refreshed at appropriate intervals and in accordance with the requirements of the organisations, professional bodies or settings with which Rising Kites works.

Safeguarding Leads will also undertake relevant updates when legislation, statutory guidance or local safeguarding procedures change.

All staff and practitioners working with children through Rising Kites will receive appropriate safeguarding information and training for their role.

Safeguarding is an ongoing responsibility and staff are expected to remain alert to safeguarding concerns between formal training updates.

9. Safer Recruitment and DBS Checks

Rising Kites is committed to safer recruitment.

Where a role is eligible, appropriate DBS checks will be undertaken before an individual begins work with children or adults at risk. The level of DBS check will be determined according to the duties and legal eligibility of the role.

We will follow current DBS guidance when determining whether an **Enhanced DBS** and/or **Children's Barred List** or **Adults' Barred List** check is appropriate.

From **1 September 2026**, changes to the definition of regulated activity with children mean that the previous supervision exemption no longer applies in the same way. Rising Kites will therefore review DBS eligibility whenever a person's role or duties change and ensure that the appropriate level of check is obtained.

DBS checks form one part of safer recruitment and do not replace appropriate references, identity checks, consideration of employment history, professional qualifications and other suitability checks where relevant.

10. Professional Boundaries and Safe Working

All practitioners working with children through Rising Kites are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

This includes:

- treating children with dignity and respect;
- avoiding unnecessary physical contact;
- avoiding inappropriate or private communication with children;
- using appropriate professional communication channels;
- maintaining appropriate confidentiality;
- avoiding situations in which professional boundaries could be compromised;
- following any safeguarding requirements of the school or organisation where a service is being delivered.

Where a child is receiving support in a one-to-one setting, practitioners should ensure that arrangements are appropriately safe and transparent.

11. Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

If a member of staff becomes concerned about a child or adult at risk, they should:

Step 1 – Consider immediate safety

If there is an immediate risk of serious harm, take reasonable steps to ensure the person's immediate safety and contact the emergency services on **999** where necessary.

Step 2 – Listen and respond appropriately

If a child or adult discloses abuse:

- remain calm;
- listen carefully;
- allow them to speak;
- take what they say seriously;
- avoid leading questions;
- do not promise confidentiality;
- explain that you may need to share information with people who can help keep them safe;
- do not investigate the allegation yourself.

Step 3 – Record

Make a factual written record as soon as possible.

The record should include, where known:

- the date and time;
- what was observed or disclosed;
- the words used by the child or adult, where possible;
- relevant contextual information;
- what action was taken;
- who was informed and when.

Records should distinguish clearly between **fact, observation and professional opinion**.

Step 4 – Report

Report the concern to a Safeguarding Lead without unnecessary delay.

A member of staff should **not wait for certainty** before reporting a concern.

Step 5 – Refer where necessary

The Safeguarding Lead will determine the appropriate next step, which may include:

- contacting the child's school or other relevant professional;
- contacting Oxfordshire safeguarding services;
- contacting the police;
- contacting adult safeguarding services;
- seeking advice from the appropriate safeguarding authority.

Where the concern involves immediate danger or a serious offence, the police or emergency services should be contacted without delay.

12. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Safeguarding information will be treated sensitively and stored securely.

However, confidentiality is **not absolute**. Information may need to be shared without consent where this is necessary and proportionate to protect a child or adult from harm.

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with current data protection and safeguarding guidance.

Staff should not promise a child, young person, parent or adult that information will remain completely confidential if there is a safeguarding concern.

The welfare and safety of the child or adult will take priority when decisions about information sharing are made.

13. Safeguarding Concerns About a Member of Staff or Practitioner

Any concern or allegation that a person working with children may have:

- harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- committed a criminal offence against or relating to a child;
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm;
- behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children,

must be taken seriously and referred through the appropriate safeguarding process.

Where the concern relates to a practitioner or member of staff other than a Safeguarding Lead

The concern should be reported immediately to Joanne Caputo and/or Francesca Garsed-Brand.

The Safeguarding Lead will seek advice from the **Oxfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)** and/or other relevant safeguarding agencies as appropriate.

Rising Kites will not conduct its own investigation where doing so could interfere with a statutory investigation.

Where the concern relates to Joanne Caputo or Francesca Garsed-Brand

The person raising the concern should **not report the matter only to the person who is the subject of the allegation.**

Instead, advice should be sought directly from the Oxfordshire LADO and/or the appropriate safeguarding authority.

The LADO should be informed where an allegation concerns a person who works with children and meets the relevant threshold.

14. LADO – Allegations Against People Working With Children

Oxfordshire's LADO process applies to people working with children in paid or unpaid roles, not only local authority employees.

The LADO should be contacted where an allegation indicates that a person working with children may have:

- harmed a child or may have harmed a child;
- committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm;
- behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Oxfordshire LADO:

Email: lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Current Oxfordshire LADO procedures and referral information will be checked when a referral is required.

15. Local Safeguarding Contacts

Immediate danger

Police / Emergency Services: 999

Oxfordshire Social and Health Care Emergency Duty Team

0800 833 408

For urgent social care and safeguarding matters outside normal working hours.

Oxfordshire Adult Safeguarding

Where there is a concern that an adult at risk is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect, Rising Kites will follow Oxfordshire County Council's current adult safeguarding referral procedure.

Child Safeguarding

For concerns about a child, Rising Kites will follow the current Oxfordshire safeguarding children referral arrangements and seek advice or make a referral to the appropriate children's safeguarding service where required.

LADO

lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk

NSPCC Helpline

0808 800 5000

The NSPCC may provide advice to adults who are concerned about the safety or wellbeing of a child.

16. Whistleblowing and Raising Concerns

Rising Kites encourages staff and practitioners to raise safeguarding concerns openly.

No person should be disadvantaged for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

If a member of staff believes that a safeguarding concern has not been appropriately addressed internally, they should escalate the concern to the relevant local safeguarding authority, LADO, police or other appropriate statutory agency.

17. Safeguarding Records

Safeguarding records will be:

- factual and contemporaneous wherever possible;
- stored securely;
- kept separately from general educational records where appropriate;
- shared only with those who need the information to safeguard the individual;
- retained in accordance with Rising Kites' data protection and record-retention arrangements.

Records should document decisions and actions taken, including the reasons for significant decisions where appropriate.

18. Review of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed **at least annually**, and sooner if there are:

- changes to safeguarding legislation or statutory guidance;
- changes to local safeguarding procedures;
- significant safeguarding incidents;
- changes to the structure or services provided by Rising Kites;
- changes to DBS requirements.

The next scheduled review is **September 2027**.

Rising Kites Limited

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