



GUIDING SEND FAMILIES

Special educational needs & disabilities

Supporting children, young people and families through advocacy, mentoring, SEND guidance and preparation for adulthood.

SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Business Name: Guiding SEND Families

Business Owner: Nicola Palfreyman

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Nicola Palfreyman

Business Structure: Sole Trader

Email: guiding-send-families@outlook.com

Policy Effective Date: 1 April 2026

Review Date: 1 April 2027

Version: 1.0

1. Policy Statement

Guiding SEND Families is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people, vulnerable adults, and families with whom we work.

We believe that every child, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, or background, has the right to be protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and harm.

As an organisation supporting children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), we recognise that some children and young people may be particularly vulnerable due to communication difficulties, dependence on adults, social isolation, or additional support needs.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Although Guiding SEND Families operates as a sole trader business, safeguarding remains central to all aspects of our work.

The welfare of the child is paramount.





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2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- **Protect children, young people, and adults at risk who access our services.**
- **Provide clear safeguarding procedures.**
- **Promote safe working practices.**
- **Ensure compliance with statutory safeguarding guidance.**
- **Support effective partnership working with safeguarding agencies.**
- **Establish procedures for reporting and responding to concerns.**

3. Scope

This policy applies to all activities undertaken by Guiding SEND Families including:

- **SEND advocacy**
- **EHCP support**
- **Family support and guidance**
- **School meetings**
- **Home visits**
- **Community-based meetings**
- **Online consultations**
- **Training and workshops**
- **Multi-agency meetings**

Where associates, contractors, or volunteers are engaged, they will be expected to comply with this policy.





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4. Legal Framework

This policy is informed by:

- **Children Act 1989**
- **Children Act 2004**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children**
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)**
- **Care Act 2014**
- **Children and Families Act 2014**
- **Equality Act 2010**
- **Human Rights Act 1998**
- **Data Protection Act 2018**
- **UK GDPR**
- **Domestic Abuse Act 2021**
- **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015**
- **Sexual Offences Act 2003**
- **Mental Capacity Act 2005**

5. Definition of Safeguarding

Safeguarding means:

- **Protecting children from maltreatment.**
- **Preventing impairment of children's health and development.**
- **Ensuring children grow up in safe and effective care.**
- **Taking action to enable children to have the best outcomes.**
- **Protecting vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect.**

6. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Guiding SEND Families is:





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Nicola Palfreyman

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The DSL is responsible for:

- **Receiving safeguarding concerns.**
- **Maintaining safeguarding records.**
- **Making referrals to statutory agencies.**
- **Liaising with Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Police, schools, and health professionals.**
- **Monitoring safeguarding compliance.**
- **Keeping safeguarding training up to date.**
- **Reviewing safeguarding procedures annually.**

If concerns relate directly to the DSL, advice should be sought from Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, the Police, or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), as appropriate.

7. Safeguarding Responsibilities

Guiding SEND Families will:

- **Remain vigilant to safeguarding concerns.**
- **Act promptly where concerns arise.**
- **Record concerns accurately.**
- **Share information appropriately.**
- **Work collaboratively with relevant agencies.**
- **Maintain professional boundaries at all times.**





8. Types of Abuse

Physical Abuse

Physical harm caused through actions such as hitting, shaking, burning, poisoning, or inappropriate restraint.

Emotional Abuse

Persistent emotional maltreatment including intimidation, humiliation, rejection, threats, bullying, or exposure to domestic abuse.

Sexual Abuse

Including sexual assault, grooming, exploitation, online abuse, inappropriate touching, and exposure to sexual content.

Neglect

Persistent failure to meet a child's physical, emotional, educational, or medical needs.

Financial Abuse

Particularly relevant to adults at risk.

Discriminatory Abuse

Abuse based on disability, race, religion, gender, sexuality, or other protected characteristics.





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Organisational Abuse

Poor care practices within services or organisations.

9. Safeguarding Children with SEND

Guiding SEND Families recognises that children with SEND may:

- **Experience barriers to communication.**
- **Have increased dependence on adults.**
- **Be more vulnerable to exploitation or abuse.**
- **Be less likely to disclose concerns.**
- **Experience social isolation.**

Staff and professionals must not assume that behavioural indicators, injuries, emotional responses, or disclosures are solely attributable to a child's disability.

The voice of the child will always be sought using communication methods appropriate to their needs.

10. Child-on-Child Abuse

Child-on-child abuse may include:

- **Bullying**
- **Cyberbullying**
- **Sexual harassment**
- **Sexual violence**
- **Emotional abuse**
- **Physical abuse**

All reports will be taken seriously and acted upon appropriately





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11. Online Safety

Guiding SEND Families recognises risks associated with online activity, including:

- **Cyberbullying**
- **Online grooming**
- **Sextortion**
- **Radicalisation**
- **Exposure to harmful content**
- **Online exploitation**

Secure communication methods will be used whenever possible.

12. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

The organisation recognises the risks associated with:

- **Child Sexual Exploitation**
- **Child Criminal Exploitation**
- **County Lines activity**
- **Modern slavery**
- **Human trafficking**

Concerns will be reported immediately through safeguarding procedures.

13. Domestic Abuse

Exposure to domestic abuse can significantly impact children and vulnerable adults.





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Any concerns regarding domestic abuse will be treated as safeguarding concerns and acted upon appropriately.

14. Mental Health and Self-Harm

Mental health concerns can indicate that an individual is experiencing abuse, neglect, trauma, or exploitation.

Concerns relating to:

- **Self-harm**
- **Suicidal thoughts**
- **Significant emotional distress**
- **Serious mental health deterioration**

will be managed in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

15. Prevent and Radicalisation

Guiding SEND Families recognises its safeguarding responsibilities regarding extremism and radicalisation.

Concerns will be reported immediately and referred through appropriate safeguarding pathways.

16. Safeguarding Adults at Risk

Guiding SEND Families works with parents, carers, and adults who may require safeguarding support.

The organisation will follow the principles of the Care Act 2014 and local safeguarding procedures.





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17. Safer Recruitment

Where associates, contractors, or volunteers are engaged, appropriate checks may include:

- **Identity verification**
- **Reference checks**
- **DBS checks where required**
- **Verification of qualifications**

Individuals will only undertake activities appropriate to their role and level of vetting.

18. Professional Boundaries

Guiding SEND Families will maintain professional boundaries at all times.

This includes:

- **Avoiding favouritism.**
- **Not forming personal relationships with service users.**
- **Not using personal social media accounts for service delivery.**
- **Maintaining confidentiality.**
- **Acting professionally at all times.**

19. Lone Working and Home Visits

Policy Statement

Guiding SEND Families recognises that services are often delivered in family homes, educational settings, community venues, and online. Appropriate measures will be taken to safeguard both service users and the business owner during lone working activities.





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Risk Assessment

Consideration will be given to:

- **The purpose of the visit.**
- **Known risks.**
- **Previous concerns.**
- **Suitability of the environment.**
- **Existing safeguarding information.**

Home Visits

When conducting home visits:

- **Appointments will normally be arranged in advance.**
- **Professional boundaries will be maintained.**
- **Accurate records will be kept.**
- **Visits will be terminated if circumstances become unsafe.**

Lone Working Arrangements

Reasonable precautions include:

- **Maintaining an appointment diary.**
- **Keeping a mobile phone available.**
- **Sharing schedules with a trusted emergency contact where appropriate.**
- **Avoiding unnecessary risks.**

Online Meetings

Where services are delivered online:

- **Appropriate platforms will be used.**
- **Professional standards will be maintained.**





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- **Safeguarding concerns will be managed in accordance with this policy.**

Transporting Children and Young People

As part of mentoring, community-based activities, accessing public spaces, educational visits, work experience opportunities, and preparation for adulthood activities, children and young people may occasionally be transported by Guiding SEND Families in a personal vehicle.

Any transportation provided will be discussed and agreed with parents, carers, or the young person (where appropriate) in advance.

The vehicle used will be roadworthy, appropriately insured, taxed, and maintained in accordance with legal requirements. Business motor insurance is in place to cover the transportation of children and young people as part of service delivery.

Appropriate safety measures, including the use of seat belts and any required child restraints, will be followed at all times.

Where transport forms part of an agreed programme of support, relevant risk assessments and consent procedures will be completed as appropriate.

20. Low-Level Concerns

Low-level concerns regarding professional conduct should be recorded and addressed appropriately.

Examples include:





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- **Boundary concerns**
 - **Unprofessional conduct**
 - **Inappropriate communication**
-

21. Responding to Safeguarding Concerns

If a safeguarding concern arises:

- 1. Listen carefully.**
- 2. Remain calm.**
- 3. Reassure the individual.**
- 4. Do not promise confidentiality.**
- 5. Record information accurately.**
- 6. Report concerns immediately.**
- 7. Refer concerns where appropriate.**

Individuals must never investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

22. Immediate Risk

If a child or adult is at immediate risk of harm:

- **Contact Emergency Services on 999.**
- **Take reasonable steps to ensure safety.**
- **Record actions taken.**
- **Make appropriate referrals.**

23. Recording Concerns

Records should:





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- **Be factual.**
- **Be dated and timed.**
- **Include observations and disclosures.**
- **Clearly distinguish fact from opinion.**
- **Be stored securely.**

24. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information will be shared lawfully and proportionately in accordance with:

- **Working Together to Safeguard Children**
- **UK GDPR**
- **Data Protection Act 2018**

Information may be shared without consent where there is a safeguarding concern.

25. Allegations Against Professionals

Concerns that a professional working with children may have:

- **Harmed a child.**
- **Potentially harmed a child.**
- **Committed a criminal offence against a child.**
- **Behaved in a way indicating unsuitability to work with children.**

Should be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).





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26. Whistleblowing

Any concerns regarding unsafe practice, misconduct, or safeguarding failures should be reported to the appropriate safeguarding authority.

Individuals raising concerns in good faith should not suffer detriment.

27. Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP)

Guiding SEND Families will work in accordance with the procedures and guidance issued by the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (OSCP).

The organisation will:

- **Follow local safeguarding procedures.**
- **Use local threshold guidance.**
- **Participate in multi-agency working where appropriate.**
- **Support Early Help interventions.**
- **Learn from safeguarding practice reviews.**

28. Early Help

Guiding SEND Families supports early intervention.

Where concerns do not meet statutory thresholds, appropriate signposting, support, and referrals to Early Help services may be undertaken.





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29. Training

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will maintain up-to-date safeguarding knowledge through regular training and continuing professional development.

Training areas include:

- **Child protection**
- **SEND safeguarding**
- **Prevent**
- **Online safety**
- **Domestic abuse**
- **Child exploitation**
- **Information sharing**

30. Quality Assurance and Monitoring

This policy will be monitored through:

- **Annual review.**
- **Safeguarding case reflection.**
- **Updates to legislation and guidance.**
- **OSCP updates and recommendations.**

31. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

- **Annually.**
- **Following significant safeguarding incidents.**
- **Following legislative changes.**
- **Following updates to local safeguarding procedures.**





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Next Review Date: 1 April 2027

APPENDIX A – SAFEGUARDING CONTACTS

Emergency Services

Emergency: 999

Police Non-Emergency: 101

Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Telephone: 0345 050 7666

Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team:

Telephone: 0800 833 408

Adult Social Care

Telephone: 0345 050 7666

Out of Hours:

0800 833 408





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Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The Oxfordshire LADO should be contacted where concerns arise regarding adults working with children.

Current contact details should be checked via Oxfordshire County Council before making a referral.

NSPCC Helpline

Telephone: 0808 800 5000

Email: help@nspcc.org.uk

Childline

Telephone: 0800 1111

Available 24 hours a day.

Domestic Abuse Helpline

Telephone: 0808 2000 247

Available 24 hours a day.

NHS Mental Health Crisis Support

Telephone: 111





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APPENDIX B – DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD DETAILS

Nicola Palfreyman
Owner and Designated Safeguarding Lead
Guiding SEND Families

Email: guiding-send-families@outlook.com

Primary Contact Method: Email

To protect personal privacy and security, the business owner's residential address is not published within this policy.

POLICY APPROVAL

Approved by:

Nicola Palfreyman
Owner and Designated Safeguarding Lead
Guiding SEND Families

Date Approved: 1 April 2026

Signature:

