*June 2026*

# SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

## Introduction

B&R Huckvale Ltd is committed to keeping the children we work with safe. This policy and procedure ensures any allegations, reports or suspicions of abuse are handled appropriately. It applies to all employees, contractors and volunteers (referred to hereafter as 'staff') working for B&R Huckvale Ltd, who will be made aware of this policy and of the reporting procedure.

## Training

B&R Huckvale Ltd is committed to ensuring that all staff undertake training to gain a basic awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse. Key members of staff, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead, will have access to higher levels of safeguarding training, to be refreshed annually for legislative updates, with formal certification updated every three years.

## Recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse

Abuse and neglect in children and adults can take many forms. Abuse in children includes:

- **Physical abuse**
  Hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or otherwise causing physical harm, including fabricating or inducing illness
- **Emotional abuse**
  Persistent emotional maltreatment causing severe, adverse effects on emotional development
- **Sexual abuse**
  Forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, including online exploitation
- **Neglect**
  Persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical, emotional, and/or psychological needs
- **Child-on-child abuse**
  Abuse by children on other children (including bullying, sexual violence, and harassment) which will never be tolerated or treated as "banter"
- **Online exploitation**
  Digital abuse, cyberbullying, financial sextortion, and exposure to harmful content or AI-generated explicit material
- **Contextual Safeguarding Threats**
  Criminal exploitation (eg County Lines), radicalisation, trafficking, modern slavery, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and honour-based abuse

Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly, by individuals in positions of trust, relatives, peers, or strangers.

## Designated named person for safeguarding

B&R Huckvale Ltd has appointed **Rachel Huckvale** as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). The DSL is responsible for leading safeguarding in the organisation.

The roles and responsibilities of the DSL are to:

- ensure all staff are aware of the correct reporting pathways;
- ensure concerns are acted upon, clearly recorded, and referred to the local authority via statutory pathways where necessary;
- follow up referrals and act as the main point of contact for the Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH);
- reinforce strict data protection compliance in line with B&R Huckvale Ltd's UK GDPR Data Protection and Privacy Policy.

## Responding to reports, allegations or suspicions of abuse

B&R Huckvale Ltd recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions. If a child discloses abuse, the following procedure applies.

1. **Listen actively**
   Let them speak freely. Do not investigate, cross-examine, or ask leading or probing questions. Only ask open-ended questions if necessary to clarify (eg "Can you tell me what happened?")
2. **Reassure them**
   Tell them they have done the right thing. Do not promise to keep it a secret. Explicitly explain that you must pass this information to the DSL to help keep them safe.
3. **Record immediately**
   Write down exactly what was said in the safeguarding log as soon as possible, using the child's exact words where possible. Do not add personal assumptions or opinions.
4. **Notify the DSL**
   Report the matter to the DSL (Rachel Huckvale) immediately.

The DSL will evaluate the log and take action using the **Oxfordshire Multi-Agency Toolkit**:

- For emerging/early help concerns, discuss with the **Oxfordshire Locality Community & Support Service (LCSS)**.
- For immediate safeguarding or urgent safety concerns, refer directly to the **Oxfordshire County Council Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**.

## Responding to abuse when witnessed in person

If a member of staff witnesses abuse directly, the priority actions are:

1. Call an ambulance immediately if emergency medical care is needed.
2. Keep yourself and others safe from immediate harm.

3. Call the police if a crime is in progress, and preserve evidence.
4. Inform the DSL and record the event in the safeguarding log immediately.

## Responding to allegations made against a member of staff

If an allegation is made that suggests a colleague, contractor, or volunteer has harmed a child, committed a criminal offence against a child, or behaved in a way indicating they are unsuitable to work with children the following procedure must apply.

1. **Standard route**
   The information must immediately be reported to the DSL.
2. **DSL Exception Route**
   If the allegation concerns the DSL (Rachel Huckvale), the staff member must bypass internal management and report directly to the Oxfordshire Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the police.

The DSL (or reporting staff member in an exception case) will contact the LADO within 24 hours at **lado.safeguardingchildren@oxfordshire.gov.uk**.

## Recording and managing confidential information

B&R Huckvale Ltd is committed to maintaining confidentiality. Safeguarding logs are classified as highly sensitive data under the UK GDPR and will be kept in a separate, encrypted digital directory or lockable storage separate from standard staff/client files. Information sharing will strictly follow the statutory *Seven Golden Rules of Information Sharing* for safeguarding purposes.

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## Key safeguarding contact information

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| **Oxfordshire MASH** | 0345 050 7666 |
| **LADO** | 01865 810603 |
| **Out-of-Hours Emergency Duty Team** | 0800 833 408 |