

Oaker Wood Leisure Ltd
Child Protection Policy

Our Values, Principles and Beliefs

- All child abuse involves the abuse of Children's Rights
- All children have equal rights to protection from abuse and exploitation
- The situation of all children must be improved through promotion of their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This includes the right to freedom from abuse and exploitation
- Child abuse is never acceptable
- We have a commitment to protecting children with/for whom we work
- When we work through partners, they have a responsibility to meet minimum standards of protection for children in their programmes

What we will do

We will meet our commitment to protect children from abuse through the following means:

1. **Awareness:** we will ensure that all staff and others are aware of the problem of child abuse and the risks to children
2. **Prevention:** we will ensure, through awareness and good practice, that staff and others minimize the risks to children
3. **Reporting:** we will ensure that staff and others are clear what steps to take where concerns arise regarding the safety of children
4. **Responding:** we will ensure that action is taken to support and protect children where concerns arise regarding possible abuse

In order that the above standards of reporting and responding are met, members of Oaker Wood Leisure staff will also ensure that they

1. Take seriously any concerns raised
2. Take positive steps to ensure the protection of children who are the subject of any concerns
3. Support children, staff or other adults who raise concerns or who are the subject of concerns
4. Act appropriately and effectively in instigating or co-operating with any subsequent process of investigation
5. They are guided through the child protection process by the principle of 'best interests of the child'
6. Listen to and takes seriously the views and wishes of children
7. Work in partnership with parents/carers and/or other professionals to ensure the protection of children

Code of Conduct

All Oaker Wood staff must abide by this Code of Conduct

They must never

- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children
- Develop physical/sexual relationships with children
- Develop relationships with children which could in anyway be deemed exploitative or abusive
- Act in ways that may be abusive or may place a child at risk of abuse
- Use language, make suggestion, or offer advice, which is inappropriate, offensive, or abusive

Code of Conduct continued

- Behave physically in a manner which is inappropriate or sexually provocative
- Do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves
- Condone, or participate in, behaviour of/with children which is illegal, unsafe, or abusive
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment, or favour particular children to the exclusion of others
- This is not an exhaustive or exclusive list. The principle is that staff should avoid actions or behavior which may constitute poor practice or potentially abusive behavior

It is important for all staff and others in contact with children to

1. Be aware of situations which may present risks and manage these
2. Plan and organize the work and the workplace to minimize risks
3. As far as possible, be visible in working with children
4. Ensure that a culture of openness exists to enable any issues or concerns to be raised and discussed
5. Ensure that a sense of accountability exists between staff so that poor practice or potentially abusive behaviour does not go unchallenged
6. Talk to children about their contact with staff or others and encourage them to raise any concerns
7. Empower children – discuss with them their rights, what is acceptable and unacceptable and what they can do if there is a problem

How we will ensure our commitments above are met

- All Oaker Wood Leisure staff appointed will abide by the above code of conduct
- All staff and volunteers will have access to a copy of the Child Protection Policy
- Recruitment procedures will include checks on suitability for working with young people
- Induction will include briefing on Child Protection issues
- Systems will be established by every member to investigate possible abuse once reported and to deal with it
- Training, learning opportunities and support will be provided by Oaker Wood Leisure as appropriate to ensure commitments are met

A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989)