



## **Open Arms In Shelford and Stapleford (OASISS)**

### **Good Practice Guidelines for Working with Children, Teenagers and Vulnerable Adults**

You can reduce situations for the abuse of children, teenagers and vulnerable adults whilst protecting OASISS volunteers by promoting good practice.

1. As far as possible, avoid one-to-one situations with children or vulnerable adults. Make sure there is a colleague within ear shot. Try to have a man and women at each mixed-age activity.
2. OASISS leaders and volunteers should not use alcohol when working with children, teenagers, or vulnerable adults.
3. Socially acceptable physical contact in a public place is quite proper and appropriate where it can be readily seen by others and is not hidden away. Physical contact should be:
  - Minimal
  - Intended to meet the needs of the receiver rather than the giver
  - Understood and welcomed by the receiver
  - Open to the scrutiny of others.

It is important to respect each individual's sense of personal space. It is equally important not to be paranoid about responding to someone who is clearly in need of physical contact e.g., when injured or distressed. Use cautious common sense, keep contact minimal, and create an ethos of shared scrutiny and support.

Do not

- Engage in rough, physical, or sexually provocative games including horseplay
- Share a room with a child, teenager, or vulnerable adult
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form
- Allow the use of inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to even in fun
- Let made allegations go unrecorded, or not acted upon
- Do things of a personal nature that the child, teenager, or vulnerable adult can do for themselves
- Have a child, teenager, or vulnerable adult stay at your home unsupervised
- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with a child, teenager, or vulnerable adult away from others
- Take photographs or videos of children, teenagers, or vulnerable adults without obtaining the guardians consent in writing

- Take children, teenagers, or vulnerable adults alone in a car on journeys, however short

4. With vulnerable adults, if there is a carer or keyworker, establish a line of communications with them. Record those who have responsibility for the vulnerable adult and who can give advice where necessary.

5. The ratio of adults to children must be sufficient to ensure safety and comply with the requirements of current Government policy and legislation. These requirements are particularly relevant to work with children under the age of eight. The current OFSTED recommended adult-to-child ratios are as given below. These are the minimum requirements, and one should consider carefully whether more adults are needed.

- For 0 to 2 years – one adult to every three children (1:3)
- For 2 to 3 years – one adult for every four children (1:4)
- For 3 to 8 years – one adult to every eight children (1:8)
- For over 8s – one for the first 8, then one for every additional 10 children
- There should always be more than one adult for any group and at least one should be female.