



Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation Network **(OIFN) Complaints Handling Policy &** **Procedure.**

All documents updated on the 27th of March
2025

Education/training on

The Advancement of Health or Saving Lives.

Disability and inclusion.

The Prevention or Relief of Poverty.

Proper bone care in children and adults with OI and related bone issues.

Who the charity helps:

Children/Young People.

Elderly/old People.

People With Disabilities...

Other Charities or Voluntary Bodies.

Purpose:

This policy sets out the Charity's approach to receiving and dealing with complaints, how to make a complaint, what you can expect from the Charity when you do so, and how to escalate a complaint if you are unhappy with the outcome.

Our Approach:

We are sorry if you're unhappy with anything related to our charity. Whilst we are committed to operating to the highest standards, we recognise that there may be times when you feel that we do not achieve the level of service or that the behaviours of our staff, trustees or those acting on our behalf are not the standard you expect. If you have a complaint, please let us know so that we can try to help. You should contact the trustees directly by email if you wish to make a complaint about the charity; kindly email the charity at info@oifn.org

We take all complaints seriously and will contact you as soon as possible once you've told us your concern. This policy reflects our commitment to ensuring that we have effective and transparent procedures for fair and efficient complaint handling.

Please be assured that making a complaint will not affect your chances of partnering with the Charity in the future or the level of service you receive from us. We will keep all complaints confidential to the extent possible, subject to the need to disclose information necessarily as part of any investigation, as required by statutory authorities such as the Charity Commission and/or because of legal or regulatory obligations placed on us. If you make a complaint, we will treat you respectfully and expect you to treat our staff the same way.



What is a complaint

Complaints can range from dissatisfaction to an allegation concerning the Charity.

Complaints about handling personal data should be made per the Charity's Data Privacy Notice and raised with a Charity Trustee.

If you have a concern or issue you do not consider amounts to a complaint, as defined above, we still want to hear from you. Please discuss the matter informally with any member of the Charity's staff as soon as possible.

This policy also applies to complaints from the charity's staff/volunteers (such as bullying or harassment), which will be dealt with by the Disciplinary and Grievance Policies and the Whistleblowing Policy.

In addition to reporting any serious complaints to the Charity:

If your complaint relates to actual or suspected criminal activity or raises a serious safeguarding concern that threatens a person's life or well-being, please report this to the police. If it relates to actual or suspected fraudulent activity, it can be reported to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk/reportfraud or called 0300 123 2040.

How to get in touch

If you would like to make a complaint, email is the best way to do this. You can contact us at: info@oifn.org

Alternatively, you can phone 07868547673 or 07832152390, and your message will be passed on to the appropriate person to handle it.

What to cover

To help us investigate your complaint effectively, please state the facts clearly and in as much detail as possible. Please tell us:

- a. what happened.
- b. when it happened.
- c. who you dealt with.
- d. why do you consider this to be a complaint and
- e., what would you like us to do to address your complaint?

We will only disclose information internally or to our external advisors to the extent necessary to investigate your complaint effectively.



What we will do

We take complaints seriously, and all complaints will be investigated. We will take action in response to any failures identified by the complaint or investigation, if applicable. We aim to respond to your complaint within 20 Business working days of receiving it:

If a complaint requires investigation, we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint and set out who will be dealing with it and their contact details (the “Complaint Lead”).

The Complaint Lead will investigate your complaint competently, diligently, and as impartially as possible. They may need to speak to you further to gather additional information to assess your complaint. They will consider the subject matter of the complaint, whether it should be upheld, and, if so, what remedial action or redress the Charity may consider appropriate.

The Complaint Lead will usually advise you of their findings and the Charity’s conclusion within 30 days of the acknowledgement of receipt of your complaint.

Suppose we cannot give a definitive response within that timeframe because an investigation has not been completed. In that case, we will send a progress report indicating when a full reply will be given.

If you are unhappy with our response, please let us know immediately. Your complaint will be escalated to the Charity’s Chair, who will review it and let you know the outcome within 30 days. The decision taken at this stage is final. If you remain dissatisfied with our response, please refer to the Charity Commission’s guidance publication ‘CC47 Complaints About Charities’ to see if they will investigate your complaint further (www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.asp) or contact them at www.charitycommission.gov.uk or in writing at to Charity Commission, PO Box 1227, Liverpool, L69 3UG



SAFEGUARDING, EQUALITY DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STANDARDS/Policy

OIFN's trustees, members, and associates will protect the charity's integrity and reputation by ensuring that their personal and professional behaviour aligns with the highest standards and values; they will treat everyone equally, with respect and dignity; they will be mindful of local laws and

customs when working abroad; they will ensure that their actions do not bring the charity into disrepute or negatively affect its work. While acknowledging that local laws and traditions vary greatly from one country to the next, OIFN supports projects in several impoverished nations; hence this Code of Conduct is based on UK and UN norms. OIFN expects its trustees, members, and associates to follow local legislation wherever they operate, and if this Code of Conduct is stricter, it will apply. Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation Network (OIFN) is committed to resolving complaints appropriately, fairly, and promptly and treating everyone they work with equally without prejudice. OIFN is dedicated to promoting fairness, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace, ensuring equal opportunities for all employees, and preventing discrimination irrespective of their background, culture and beliefs.

We welcome feedback, as it helps us improve our work.

Aim:

This policy seeks to ensure that the Osteogenesis Imperfecta Foundation Network (OIFN) (the “charity” undertakes its responsibilities about the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults who are members of the charity, as well as people who act as volunteers and will respond to concerns appropriately. This policy establishes a framework for trustees, the management committee, staff and volunteers in their practices and clarifies the organisation’s expectations following legislation such as the Children Act 2004, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, Equality Act 2010, Mental Capacity Act 2005, UK care act 2014, Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (part 5) as applies to Prevent and Channel, and in practice and policy directed by the Government’s publication Every Child Matters – Change for Children.

OIFN works to:

Safeguard the welfare of the young people and vulnerable adults we work with by advocating and giving information to affecting OI persons, protecting them from neglect, physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse, as well as protection from harassment (including e-safety) or coercion into criminal activities including those associated with terrorism (radicalisation).

Support the creation of an environment where staff/volunteers, young people, and vulnerable adults are listened to and encouraged to talk about themselves, their lives, and any concerns they may have at the workplace. Value, listen to, and respect them to promote trust, acceptance, and openness.

Recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks, such as those included in the Disclosure and Barring Service, are made.

Reinforcing UK society’s rules and expectations of acceptable/appropriate behaviour/communication through positive role modelling, information, advice, and guidance as appropriate.



Sharing information about child protection and good practice with young people and vulnerable adults, parents, trustees, management committee members, staff and volunteers through knowledgeable and positive role modelling and training as appropriate.

Following correct procedures when sharing information about concerns with agencies that need to know and appropriately involving parents and young people.

Providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, and open communication.

OIFN recognises that working from a convenient and conducive environment is essential, but as at this moment we do not have a building or official office space, all trustees and volunteers are working from their homes, but the organisation will ensure that every trustee or volunteer working for the organisation is provided with comfortable equipment's to help carry out their duties conveniently and appropriately

OIFN recognises that children, young people, and vulnerable adults may suffer abuse in different ways:

Financial: A violation of an individual's rights relating to their financial affairs or assets.

OIFN recognises that some young people and vulnerable adults with additional needs and disabilities may require adult assistance with personal and/or intimate care:

The nature, circumstances and context of such contact should comply with professional codes of practice or guidance and/or be part of a formally agreed Intimate Care Plan, which is regularly reviewed (see Personal and Intimate Care Policy).

OIFN will respond to suspicions or allegations of abuse:

When a child, young person or vulnerable adult does disclose abuse, this needs to be taken very seriously. Any disclosure must be dealt with appropriately, both for the well-being of the young person and also to ensure that your actions do not jeopardise any legal action against the abuser (see Dealing with Disclosures of Abuse Guidelines).

Following any low-risk disclosure or initial concern of abuse:

Staff/volunteers will support and guide the young person and ensure their safety.

Staff/volunteers will record concerns on the 'Safeguarding Concern' form and pass the completed form to Jeni Green (Designated Safeguarding Lead) to inform her of any potential problems.

Jeni Green (Designated Safeguarding Lead) will update staff/volunteers on the outcome of concerns raised.

Following any disclosure or concern for a young person or vulnerable adult in immediate danger, the Youth Support Worker in Charge (Designated Safeguarding Lead) will contact Louise Adeleke and Juliet Makhapila. OIFN will maintain records and respect confidentiality at all times:

Staff or volunteers will inform Juliet Makhapila or Louise Adeleke (Designated Safeguarding Lead) of any issues for concern and pass her a written record of any incidents or disclosures, which will be



kept securely. If, due to the nature of the incident, it is not appropriate to involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead, staff, volunteers, young people, and vulnerable adults, they can inform Serena Burgess (Deputy Safeguarding Lead) directly.

OIFN acknowledges that the welfare of the individual/volunteers is paramount. Therefore, Privacy and confidentiality will be respected where possible. Still, if doing this leaves a vulnerable person at risk of harm, the young person's or vulnerable adult's safety will always come first.

Appendix

Disclosures of Abuse – Guidelines

Young people and vulnerable adults with disabilities are particularly vulnerable, so all staff and volunteers must be observant and pay special attention to the above criteria to promote the welfare of everyone. When a young person or vulnerable adult does disclose abuse, it needs to be taken very seriously. Any disclosure must be dealt with appropriately, both for the well-being of the young person or vulnerable adult and to ensure that your actions do not jeopardise any legal action against the abuser.

Many basic rules should be followed to ensure the safe handling of any disclosure of abuse from a volunteer: immediately report and seek help from the Safeguarding Officer.

Write down accurately what has happened. Sign and date your notes. Keep all notes in a secure place for an indefinite period.

Seek help if you need support by speaking to another teammate; therefore, signposting be made for further professional support.

Things not to do

Do not attempt to deal with the situation yourself.

Do not formally interview the young person or vulnerable adult:

Never ask leading questions.

Never push for information or make assumptions.

All relevant facts should be obtained when clarification is needed.

Do not make assumptions, offer alternative explanations, or diminish the seriousness of the behaviour or alleged incidents.

Do not keep the information to yourself or promise confidentiality.

Do not take any action that might undermine any future investigation or disciplinary procedure, such as interviewing the alleged victim or potential witnesses or informing the alleged perpetrator, parents, or carers.

Do not permit personal doubt to prevent you from reporting the allegation to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.