

Freelance Induction Pack

Your guide to becoming a fully-fledged Owl!



2023/24



Welcome to The Owl Centre!

We're thrilled to have you as part of our ever-growing team!

Whether you are joining us as an employee or a freelancer, you'll be contributing to a truly meaningful mission – helping people from all walks of life to access the support they and their family need.

This document has been created to help you navigate your first days, weeks and months at The Owl Centre whilst you're getting to grips with our tools, systems, policies and ways of working.

We're dedicated to ensuring each person is proud and happy to be an Owl! We do this by celebrating the uniqueness and strengths each individual brings to our centre – we recognise that every person has their own preferences and needs and will work with you to agree on any adjustments or strategies that can ensure success for you as an individual and The Owl Centre as a whole.

You can find out more about our ethos in this document along with some other brilliant resources to help you settle in.

We're so grateful to have you here and look forward to seeing what you achieve!

Best Wishes,

Nic



Nicola Lathey

Founder of The Owl Centre

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Top Tip

Click on one of the topics and it'll send you to the relevant page!



The History of The Owl Centre



The Owl Centre was founded in Oxford in 2011 by Nicola Lathey, a top Speech and Language Therapist and author of the Small Talk series of speech-boosting books.

Since then, we've grown!
With a fantastic team of freelancers, agency staff and employees, we now offer a large variety of services across the UK!



Each individual in our team contributes towards our mission – to provide the best independent assessment and therapy services possible for children and adults.

Our Charity

The Owl Centre is also a registered charity! We provide help to those in need, offering support and guidance on best practices across the globe since 2012. In this time, we have collaborated with a number of international charities across Vietnam, India and Sri Lanka.



One of our first initiatives included spending two weeks in Vietnam, running training programmes for local SEN teachers. This enhanced their understanding of children with Autism and gave them strategies and tools to support local children and their families.

Owl Leadership



Hugh Copping

Chief Executive Officer



Nicola Lathey

Founder & Director



John Clark

Chief Financial Officer



Rhodri Lathey

Director



Lydia Ebsworth

Director & Head of Service (Therapies)



Jen Wilson

Director & Head of Service (ASD)



Andrew Ryder

Head of Service (ADHD)

Owl Leadership



Charlotte Forsyth

Head of Business Development



Dan Clarke

Head of Development



Kate Harris

Head of People



Nicola Ranicar

Head of Operations



Jo Luxton

Head of Finance



Nicola Read

Head of Compliance



Rhydian Cole

Head of Marketing



Ben Copping

Head of Engineering



Working at The Owl Centre

Owl Ethos & Values

Our guiding ethos underpins everything we do at The Owl Centre.

As a collective, we are:



Professional, but not impersonal

We treat all colleagues, client, patients and stakeholders with respect. We are easy to reach and easy to approach, at all levels.



Friendly and genuine

We operate with transparency and kindness in all we do and we are opposed to marketing fictions. With us, what you see is what you get (and much more!).



Ambitious but humble

We know our roots and what we are built on. We will do everything within our means to arrive at the best possible outcome for all.



Eminently reasonable

We treat others as we like to be treated and champion flexibility in our approach to account for individual situations and individuality.



Responsive

We will respond to you quickly, often immediately! We pride ourselves on responding to enquiries as quickly as possible, providing access to support promptly.

Owl Policies

Our policies outline key guidelines which are to be followed by all members of The Owl Centre.

As a new starter, you will be required to review all policies relevant to your role and confirm you have understood and agree to these.

All policies are accessible via the Nest (our internal IT system) and notifications are issued if any policies are amended.

Mandatory Training

All members of The Owl Centre are required to complete statutory and mandatory training which is appropriate to their role.

For clinicians, no clinical work can begin before this training is completed.

Regular audits are completed to ensure all required training has been completed to the required standard.

Safeguarding

As part of mandatory training, everyone will complete a basic level of Safeguarding training.

Clinicians are required to complete higher levels of mandatory training in addition to attending a facilitated Safeguarding training session as part of their induction.

Safeguarding Procedures

We are all responsible when it comes to safeguarding, so it is important to familiarise yourself with The Owl Centre's policies and procedures.

Everyone must complete mandatory training, which includes safeguarding training. In addition, clinical staff will undergo an initial Safeguarding training session run by our Safeguarding Team.

Reports should be submitted via The Nest and the clinician is responsible for actioning any next steps regarding the case they have reported.

What needs reporting?

- Safeguarding
- Data Breach
- Complaint
- Near Miss
- Accident / Injury
- Misconduct
- Medical

How do I know if I should report?

Anything that you are concerned about should be reported, even if something "doesn't feel right".

It is better to report a concern and it not need further action, than to not report it in the first place.

Emergencies

If you feel a patient/client is at immediate risk, call 999 (or ask a member of the Safeguarding Team to call on your behalf if you are in a session with the patient).

Out of Hours

You will be provided with a list of Out of Hours contacts, in addition to calling 999 for cases of immediate risk. Don't forget to report any incidents in the usual way afterwards.

Looking After Yourself

After a Safeguarding Incident

We understand that reporting a safeguarding concern or having to contact 999 in case of immediate risk can be difficult and upsetting to experience.

If you feel you need support, we encourage all staff to speak to their Line Manager (Clinical Lead for clinicians) to debrief. On occasion, you may wish to speak to someone else, in which case, please send an email to safeguarding@theowltherapycentre.co.uk.

We are here for you

Your Mental Health is our Priority

It's crucial that all members of The Owl Centre look after their mental health and we are committed to fostering a community in which this is possible.

We don't pretend to have all the answers, but regardless of what you're struggling with, there are a number of expert services available for you to access at any time.

Support Service details on pages 14 – 17

Designated Mental Health First Aiders

For a confidential chat, please reach out to our Mental Health First Aiders who will listen with compassion and without judgement:

- Nicola Read (nicolaread@theowltherapycentre.co.uk)
- Kate Harris (kateharris@theowltherapycentre.co.uk)
- Harriet Hughes (harriethughes@theowltherapycentre.co.uk)
- Claire Veitch (claireveitch@theowltherapycentre.co.uk)



Speaking Up

We believe in encouraging a positive culture where people feel they can speak up and their voices will be heard. We understand that it isn't always easy to speak up, especially when raising serious issues.

At The Owl Centre, we have a designated Speaking Up Guardian that anyone can approach with any concerns or complaints about misconduct or unethical behaviour (including that of senior staff).

Speaking Up Guardians are there to:

- Listen to you and your concerns.
- Keep your report confidential.
- Take the necessary actions forward to ensure the issue is addressed on your behalf.
- Drive the revision or introduction of necessary policies or procedures to avoid reoccurrence of this issue in the future.
- Provide you with feedback on what actions have been taken following your report.

Speaking up helps us to continuously improve our practices, policies and procedures and ensures we act in compliance with the required industry regulations. We want The Owl Centre to exemplify the highest standards of patient safety and worker satisfaction.

Whether you feel something **has gone wrong** or something **might go wrong**, please reach out to our Speaking Up Guardian, Harriet, for support:

Harriet Hughes (harriethughes@theowltherapycentre.co.uk)



Additional Resources

Quick Links:

- [The Nest](#)
- [E-Learning Platform](#)

Top Tip

Click on one of the resources and it'll take you straight there!




Useful Contacts

Department	Email Address
Compliance	compliance@theowltherapycentre.co.uk
Finance	finance@theowltherapycentre.co.uk
People	people@theowltherapycentre.co.uk
IT	ITHelp@theowltherapycentre.co.uk
Office Manager	office@theowltherapycentre.co.uk
Recruitment	recruitment@theowltherapycentre.co.uk
Safeguarding	safeguarding@theowltherapycentre.co.uk
Speak Up Guardian	harriethughes@theowltherapycentre.co.uk
Mental Health First Aiders	nicolaread@theowltherapycentre.co.uk kateharris@theowltherapycentre.co.uk harriethughes@theowltherapycentre.co.uk claireveitch@theowltherapycentre.co.uk

The Owl Centre acknowledge the importance of mental health and recognise that mental health can fluctuate over time.

At times some people benefit from additional support.

If you are experiencing mental health difficulties which involves something more serious please contact

-  **If your life is at imminent risk, please call 999 for immediate help**
-  **Your GP**
-  **Your local A and E department**



SHOUT / www.giveusashout.org/get-help/

Shout is the UK's first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need immediate help.



MIND / www.mind.org.uk

Mind offers a wide range of services including counselling, guided wellbeing and online courses in subjects including anger management, sleep, preparing for therapy etc. They also offer wellbeing sessions such as yoga, arts and crafts and mindfulness.



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www.theowltherapycentre.co.uk

Help Lines



In a crisis you can seek support from:

SAMARITANS / www.giveusashout.org/get-help

Freephone 116 123

A new self-help app to keep track of how you're feeling and get recommendations for things you can do to cope and feel better and stay safe.

REFUGE / www.refuge.org.uk

Freephone 24-Hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline: **0808 2000 247**

MIND / www.mind.org.uk

Call **0300 123 393** or text **8643**

SANEline / www.sane.org.uk

Call **0300 304 7000**

CALM / www.thecalmzone.net

Call **0800 58 58 58**

If you need additional support, please consult your GP or attend A and E.



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Getting help and support for domestic violence.

You do not have to wait for an emergency situation to find help. If domestic abuse is happening to you, it's important to tell someone and remember you're not alone.

Women can call

NATIONAL DOMESTIC ABUSE HELPLINE / www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Freephone **0800 2000 247**

Call free at any time, day or night. The staff will offer confidential, non-judgemental information and support

Men can call

MEN'S ADVICE LINE / www.mensadviceline.org.uk

Freephone **0808 8010327**

Call Monday to Friday (10am to 8pm), or visit the webchat at Men's Advice Line every Wednesday (10am to 11.30am and 2.30pm to 4pm) for non-judgemental information and support

MANKIND

Call their helpline on **0182 3334 244** Monday to Friday (10am to 4pm)

If you identify as LGBT+

GALOP / www.galop.org.uk

Freephone **0800 999 5428**

Call for emotional and practical support for anyone LGBT+ who have experienced abuse and violence in the UK

KARMA NIRVANA / www.karmanirvana.org.uk

Freephone **0800 5999 247**

Call Monday to Friday (9am to 5pm) for forced marriage and honour crimes. You can also call 020 7008 0151 to speak to the GOV.UK Forced Marriage Unit



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EMERGENCY?

In any emergency,
call 999

You can also email for support.



It is important that you specify when and if it is safe to respond and to which email address:

Women can email

WOMENS AID / www.womensaid.org.uk

Email helpline@womensaid.org.uk

Staff will respond to your email within 5 working days

Men can email

MEN'S ADVICE LINE / www.mensadviceline.org.uk

Email info@mensadviceline.org.uk

Staff available Monday to Friday (9am - 5pm)

LGBT+ can email

GALOP / www.galop.org.uk

Email help@galop.org.uk

THE SURVIVOR'S HANDBOOK
from the charity Women's Aid is free and provides information for women on a wide range of issues, such as housing, money, helping your children, and your legal rights.

www.womensaid.org.uk



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Good luck!

(not that you'll need it!)

From all of us at

The Owl Centre

