

# **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

## **Cringleford Parish Council**

### **Policy statement**

Cringleford Parish Council has a duty of care to safeguard from harm all children visiting Cringleford Parish Council's premises or using its facilities. All children have a right to protection.

This Policy will apply to councillors, its employees, its contractors and hirers.

Cringleford Parish Council will:

- Follow the appropriate guidelines to select appropriate staff/volunteers and to carry out DBS checks as necessary. Cringleford Parish Council does not organise classes or events with children and so staff are not required to have safeguarding training.
- Ensure the safety and protection of all children through adherence this policy.

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

### **Policy aims**

The aim of the Cringleford Parish Council Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection;
- Allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.

### **Key principles**

The key principle of this policy is to ensure that children visiting the Council's premises or using its facilities can be protected by setting standards of best practice by staff. This will also ensure that Council staff and volunteers are protected and do not place themselves in a vulnerable position.

All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour, including:

- Always working in an open environment
- Treating all young people with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children
- Keeping a record in the accident book of any injury that you are made aware of, along with the details of any treatment given.

### **Practices to be avoided**

Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others except in emergencies. For example, a child sustains an injury and you are the only person in the immediate area.

### **Practices never to be sanctioned**

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching

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- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Take any actions that could be considered “grooming” in any way.

### **Incidents that must be reported / recorded**

If any of the following occur you should report this immediately to a colleague and record the incident. You should also ensure the responsible person for the child (parent / hirer) are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a child.
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

Staff/volunteers are not trained to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred.

### **The sale, purchase and consumption of alcohol involving under 18s**

Cringleford Parish Council no longer runs a bar or sells alcohol in any form. Hirers who bring alcohol into the building are required to initial the alcohol section of the booking terms and conditions to confirm that they have read them and will obey the law in regard to the supply of alcohol to minors.

If the member of staff on duty witnesses under age drinking and the person involved is unable to supply proof of age, the event will immediately be closed with no refund given

### **Reducing the risk of drug activity**

The Parish Council has a zero-tolerance policy to ensure that hirers and staff are aware that action will be taken if illegal drug activity is discovered.

The Parish Council will consider the following steps in relation to drugs awareness:

- Provide well-lit area and good lighting in dark corners or corridors
- Ensure all tables and customer areas are visible to staff where practical
- Have well-lit and monitored car parking areas and outside seating areas
- Create, communicate and enforce a strict zero tolerance policy towards illegal drugs
- Be vigilant and watch out for gangs or groups of people acting in a strange manner
- Check premises frequently, particularly toilet areas.
- Police advice will be sought immediately any drug activity is suspected.

If the member of staff on duty witnesses drug-taking during an event, the event will immediately be closed with no refund given.

### **Hirers**

Hire contracts state:

**Safeguarding:** Any persons under 18 that attend your class or event should be properly supervised by the hirer or a responsible adult e.g. parent. The Willow Centre staff accept no responsibility for the supervision of minors. All hirers are recommended to have their own relevant policies in relation to safeguarding.

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## **Responding to complaints and alleged or suspected incidents**

The following guidelines should be used when an allegation is disclosed by a young person to a member of Council staff and/or volunteer:

**i) Listen and reassure**

- Maintain confidentiality but do not make promises you cannot keep, and explain that the information will have to be passed on and what action you will be taking in this regard.
- Keep questions to a minimum.
- Contact the Police.

**ii) Recording information**

The Clerk will keep a confidential note of the report.

**iii) Informing the appropriate authorities**

If abuse has been disclosed to you or you suspect that it is happening you must inform a member of staff or the police as soon as possible.

**Important points to note:**

- i) For the purposes of this document the term 'Council staff' encompasses both staff working within the Council and also those who represent the Council in relation to any event involving contact with children.
- ii) It is not the Council staff member and/or volunteer's responsibility to determine if abuse is occurring but to report their concerns.
- iii) If an allegation of abuse is made against a member of Council staff or a volunteer these will be fully investigated in accordance with the appropriate procedures.
- iv) Staff are not required to undertake safeguarding training, as the parish council does not organise events.