

SAFEGUARDING POLICY - CHILD & VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION

Cringleford Parish Council

Policy statement

Cringleford Parish Council has a duty of care to safeguard from harm all children and vulnerable adults visiting Cringleford Parish Council's premises or using its facilities.

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 Disclosure and Barring Service checks as necessary.
- Ensure the safety and protection of all children and vulnerable adults through adherence to this policy.

Definitions

Child: "Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday". Children Act 1989.

Adults at Risk: An individual who "Have needs for care and support, is experiencing, or at risk of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse or neglect". Care Act 2014.

Policy aims

The aim of this policy is to promote good practice:

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

Key principles

The key principle of this policy is to ensure that children and vulnerable adults visiting the Council's premises or using its facilities can be protected by staff setting standards of best practice. 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 visitors with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young or vulnerable person first.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children and vulnerable adults

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- 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 and vulnerable adults 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
- Make sexually suggestive comments to anyone, 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 / vulnerable adult (parent / hirer) is informed:

- You accidentally hurt a child / vulnerable adult
- They seem distressed in any manner.
- A child /vulnerable adult 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.

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.

Responding to complaints and alleged or suspected incidents

The following guidelines should be used when an allegation is disclosed by a child / vulnerable adult 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, using the child's / adults exact words where possible.

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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 and vulnerable adults.
- 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 (Councillor Code of Conduct or staff Disciplinary Procedure).
- iv) Staff are not required to undertake safeguarding training, as the Parish Council does not organise events.