

KIRKLEVINGTON AND CASTLE LEAVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Safeguarding Policy

17TH March, 2025

SECTION 1: Introduction

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This policy promotes good practice in safeguarding for those within

Kirklevington and Castle Leavington Parish Council with a review of this policy annually.

1.1 Definitions

Children and young people: Anyone under the age of 18 years.

Vulnerable Adult:

Anyone over 18 who is:

Unable to care for themselves

Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation

Or may need community care services.

1.2 To whom this policy applies

This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of KIRKLEVINGTON AND CASTLE LEAVINGTON Parish Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity, for example contracted to do a piece of work.

1.3 Different types of abuse

Staff and volunteers should be aware of the different types of abuse (outlined below). Staff and volunteers should be concerned by any action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child or vulnerable adult. Abuse falls into four main categories and can include child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation:

Physical abuse (for example hitting, pushing, shaking, misusing medication).

Sexual abuse (for example rape, sexual assault).

Emotional or psychological abuse (for example threats of harm or abandonment humiliation, controlling, intimidation)

Neglectful abuse (for example ignoring medical or physical care needs)

Abuse can also be:

Mistreatment that violates a person's human and civil rights.

Treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering.

Domestic (for example controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation, forced marriage)

Self-neglectful (for example neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene or health)

Discriminatory (for example abuse based on race, sexuality or a person's disability)

Modern slavery (for example forced labour, debt bondage, sexual exploitation) organisational abuse.

SECTION 2: Promoting a safe environment

To promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, Kirklevington and Castle Levington Parish Council will appoint a Safeguarding Officer and his/her responsibilities will include:

Ensuring that before any Parish Council organised event which would include children or vulnerable persons, the Child Protection Officer briefs participants appropriately.

Ensuring that members are aware of the risk they may face in certain circumstances whilst carrying out their duties.

Ensuring that whilst Council members are unlikely to be involved with children during the performance of their duties, they are mindful of the risk they face.

Ensuring that before any volunteers or paid members of staff are recruited to work with children and vulnerable persons they are interviewed, and two references taken up.

Decisions on whether any person should be Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked will be made by the Council or the Chairman after consultation with the Clerk following a risk assessment.

All new Councillors are to be provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and are required to acknowledge they will abide by it and sign to confirm that they have read it.

Councillors will adhere to the 'List of Recommended Behaviour' namely:

A minimum of two adults present when supervising children.

Not to play physical contact games.

Adults to wear appropriate clothing at all times.

Ensure that accidents are recorded in an accident book.

Never do anything of a personal nature for a young person.

Keep records in an incident book of any allegations a young person may make to any committee member, volunteer or staff member. Incident book to be presented to every Full Parish Council meeting for inspection (if there have been any entries since the last Parish Council meeting).

If there is a child abuse incident it should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer who will be responsible for ensuring the matter is handled in accordance with Stockton Borough Council Safeguarding procedures and referred to the Council for further action as appropriate.

Facilities offered by the Parish Council have been inspected on a regular basis and at least annually by a representative of RoSPA or a similar organisation.

Display on notice boards the relevant safeguarding contacts for advice and help.

Sharing information about child protection and good practice with partner organisations, councillors, employees, volunteers, parents and carers.

Any organisation which may make contact with children or vulnerable adults shall be required to show proof of its own appropriate Safeguarding Policy before being allowed to participate in the use of any council owned facilities.

SECTION 3: Safe working practice

Never leave children, young people or vulnerable adults unattended with adults who have not been subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check when not accompanied by parents/family member/guardian or carers.

Ensure that all events organised by the Parish Council are advertised in such a way that ensures children and young people are accompanied by a parent/family member/guardian/carers.

In the event that children arrive at events unaccompanied ensure that contact be made with parent/family member/guardian/carers to bring to their attention the need for the child to be accompanied at all times at such events and for them to attend and collect.

Plan activities to involve more than one person being present or at least in sight or hearing of others. Alternatively, record, or inform others of their whereabouts and intended action.

Where possible, have male and female leaders working with a mixed group.

Ensure that photos or videos of individuals are not taken without written permission from parents/family member/guardian/ carers.

Ensure they have access to a first aid kit and telephone and understand fire procedures including emergency exits.

Ensure that where a child, young person or vulnerable adult needs assistance with toilet trips this is carried out by parents/family member/guardian/carers and when first aid is required, that this is carried out by two adults where they can be clearly seen.

3.1 Expectations of behaviour

All users of Parish Council facilities should:

Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction with users are appropriate and professional.

Treat each other with respect and show consideration for other groups using the facilities.

Refrain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism and bullying and in addition to report any instances of such behaviour to group leaders, parish councillors, the parish clerk or parents and carers, as appropriate.

SECTION 4: Allegations against staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or vulnerable adult. It is advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Parish Clerk.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Parish Clerk the recipient of the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of the Parish Council.

4.1 Persons to be notified

No attempt should be made to investigate or act before consultation with Stockton Borough Council Safeguarding Team.

The Parish Council must inform the Stockton Borough Council Safeguarding Team (SBCST) within one working day when an allegation is made and prior to any further investigation taking place.

The SBCST will advise the Council whether informing the parents of the child/ren involved will impede the disciplinary or investigative processes. Acting on this advice, if it is agreed that the information can be fully or partially shared, the Parish Council should inform the parent/s. In some circumstances, however, the parent/s may need to be told straight away (e.g. if a child is injured and requires medical treatment).

The parent/s and the child, if sufficiently mature, should be helped to understand the processes involved and be kept informed about the progress of the case and of the outcome where there is no criminal prosecution. This will include the outcome of any disciplinary process, but not the deliberations of, or the information used in, a hearing.

The Council should seek advice from the respective SBCST, the Police and Children's Social Care about how much information should be disclosed to the accused person.

Subject to restrictions on the information that can be shared, particularly if there is a Police investigation, the Council should, as soon as possible, inform the accused person about the nature

of the allegation, how enquiries will be conducted and the possible outcome (e.g. disciplinary action, and dismissal or referral to the DBS or regulatory body).

If it is concluded that the Police and / or Children's Social Care need to be involved in further inquiries, informing the accused should not happen prior to a Strategy Discussion or until the decision is made at a Strategy Meeting.

The accused member of staff should:

Be treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved;

Be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary or related process;

If suspended, be kept up to date about events in the workplace;

Offered support from the Parish Council or the relevant body taking any action forward.

4.2 Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. Apart from keeping the child, parents and accused person (where this would not place the child at further risk or compromise evidence) up to date with progress of the case, information should be restricted to those who have a need to know to protect children, facilitate enquiries, manage related disciplinary or suitability processes.

4.3 Support

The Council, together with the respective Social Care department and / or Police, where they are involved, should consider the impact on the child/adult concerned and provide support as appropriate.

As soon as possible after an allegation has been received, the accused member of staff should be advised to contact their union or professional association.

4.4 Whistleblowing

All staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice will be sought from the SBC Safeguarding Team.

4.5 Safeguarding training

All staff and volunteers coming in to contact with children need to have an awareness of safeguarding.

SECTION 5: Declaration

The Parish Council is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of children and vulnerable adults by protecting them from physical, sexual, emotional harm and neglect.

All members of The Parish Council should read the Safeguarding Policy. Having read the Policy they should be proactive in providing a safe environment for children and vulnerable people who are involved in Parish Council activities.

4.6 Safeguarding Contact Details

Safeguarding Officer – Kirklevington and Castle Leavington Parish Council

BECKY ROGERSON

If you witness abuse or neglect it is your duty to report it as soon as possible using the contact details below. In an emergency call 999. To report a crime call 101.

Stockton Local Authority:

Safeguarding children telephone; 01642 130080 or out of hours 01642 524552

e-mail HSSCP@hartlepool.gov.uk

Safeguarding adults telephone; 01642 527764 or out of hours 01642 524552

e-mail FirstContactAdults@stockton.gov.uk

NSPCC and Childline:

Help for children under 18 0800 1111

Adults concerned about a child 0808 800 5000