



Safeguarding Policy

INTRODUCTION

Belper Town Council is committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe while they are engaged in any activity associated with the Council.

POLICY

The Council seeks to implement this Policy by ensuring that:

- Disclosure & Barring checks are undertaken for Councillors and/or staff whose work brings them into contact with children/vulnerable adults;
- any third parties working with children/vulnerable adults on behalf of the Council have their own effective policies and procedures in place;
- there are procedures in place that can be used if there are any concerns or complaints;
- information about concerns is shared with appropriate agencies on a need to know basis and involving parents as appropriate;
- it provides effective support and training for Councillors and staff where appropriate.

AIMS

These procedures, and the following good practice guidelines, seek to ensure that all Councillors and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities when working with children/vulnerable adults. The aims of these procedures are to ensure that Councillors and staff:

- recognise the signs of abuse and what appropriate course of action should be taken in the circumstances;
- understand the potential risk to themselves and ensure that good practice is adhered to at all times;
- recognise the signs of improper behaviour and report to the Clerk or Chair at the earliest opportunity.

SCOPE

The Policy applies to all Councillors and Staff, specifically persons who have contact with children and/or vulnerable adults in the course of Council business.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy:

- a child is anyone under the age of 18 years;



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- a vulnerable adult is anyone over the age of 18 years who, by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, is unable to take care of, or protect, themselves against significant harm or exploitation:
- the term 'parent' is used throughout as a generic term to represent parents, guardians, carers and persons with responsibility for both children and vulnerable adults.

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

The Council's activities do not generally require the direct supervision of children/vulnerable adults, however, Councillors and/or staff who have contact with children/vulnerable adults must abide by the following guidelines. These are specific examples of the care which should be taken:

Councillors and staff must:

- be identifiable, ie Council branded clothing or name badges;
- treat children and people with dignity and respect;
- provide an example for good conduct that others can follow;
- challenge unacceptable behaviour, ie bullying, and report allegations/suspensions of abuse;
- ensure that there is more than one adult present during activities with children/vulnerable adults or at least be within sight or hearing of others;
- respect the right of children and vulnerable adults to personal privacy;
- ensure that children/vulnerable adults feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviours they do not like;
- remember that someone else might misinterpret certain actions, such as physical contact, no matter how well intentioned;
- recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with children or vulnerable adults;
- be aware of, and vigilant to, what may be signs of abuse which can include unexplained or untreated injuries and medical problems, emotional upset, agitation, signs of fear or anxiety around some/all people, lack of interest in personal hygiene and/or unsuitable clothing for the conditions or environment;
- ensure that any welfare concerns are reported to the appropriate statutory agency;
- contact the relevant union or professional association if the subject of concerns, allegations or suspicions.

Councillors and staff must not:

- have inappropriate or unwarranted physical or verbal contact with children/vulnerable adults;
- be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour or make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children/vulnerable adults;
- jump to conclusions without checking facts;
- either exaggerate or trivialise any abuse issues;



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- show favouritism to any individual;
- believe 'it could never happen to me';
- take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another, more prudent approach;
- actively seek out abuse or abusers;
- pass on their personal details;
- communicate or have contact outside the work situation;
- accept, or receive, gifts.

PROCEDURES

Alongside good practice, all Councillors and Staff will be responsible for ensuring that:

- everyone working for, or on behalf of, the Council is made aware of this Policy, safeguarding expectations and good practice such as Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Partnership - <https://www.ddscp.org.uk/staff-and-volunteers/policies-and-procedures/>
- all facilities, services and activities offered by the Council are designed and maintained to limit risks to children/vulnerable adults and that regular safety assessments are carried out;
- risk assessments and briefings are carried out before any Council-led activity, event or service takes place;
- there is a nominated individual responsible for safeguarding who is DBS checked where appropriate;
- only those who have a satisfactory DBS check have contact with children/vulnerable adults in the course of their duties;
- any organisation approaching the Council for funding, where contact with children/vulnerable adults is part of their service, shall be required to show proof of their own appropriate Safeguarding Policy;
- all contractors, community or other organisations provide their Safeguarding Policy where they are working directly for the Council or providing activities/services forwards a Council-led activity or service, and where they are deemed to be working in any area where children/vulnerable adults may be at risk;
- attendees at events are aware that parents are responsible for the safety of their children/vulnerable adults and that the latter need to be accompanied and supervised by a parent at all times;
- photographs, audio recordings, videos or any other kind of media are only reproduced with the express permission of the parent and that captions which could be used identify individuals are not used. A Council Photography Warning Sign should be displayed at all events where photography and/or filming may take place;
- where relevant, the location of a dedicated safe place for lost children is provided and overseen by DBS-checked person who can in public view with the child at all times, wherever possible in the company of a second independent adult;



- as the Council does not directly provide care or supervision services to children/vulnerable adults, all persons using its facilities and services do so with the explicit consent and the necessary supervision of a parent.

FIRST AID

- The administration of first aid to children, young people and vulnerable adults can present risks. Under ordinary circumstances, a child or young person and vulnerable persons can be administered with first aid only if their parent or guardian expressly permits this course of action.
- When administering first aid, wherever possible, another adult should be present and be aware of the action being taken. Parents should always be informed when first aid is administered.
- Welfare is of paramount importance. As a last resort first aid can be given to minimise distress notifying parents as soon as possible.
- All Council events will have trained first aiders from a recognised association present.

DBS CHECKS

Decisions on whether any person should be DBS checked will be made by the Council or the Chair after consultation with the Clerk following a risk assessment.

GUIDANCE: RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE

Councillors and staff must recognise the importance of carefully recording the details of an allegation or an incident of abuse or mistreatment, regardless of whether or not the concerns are later shared with a statutory agency. An accurate record should be made of:

- the date and time of the incident and/or disclosure;
- the parties who were involved;
- what was said and done by whom;
- the full name of the person reporting and to whom reported
- any action taken by the Council (where appropriate);
- reasons why there was no referral to a statutory agency (where appropriate).

When responding to a child/vulnerable adult making an allegation of abuse, it is important to stay calm, listen carefully and allow the person to continue at their own pace, reassuring them that they have done the right thing in speaking out. Judgements should never be made and questions should only be asked for clarification. At the earliest opportunity, it is important to explain that the information will need to be shared and not promise to keep secrets. The allegations should be reported to the Clerk or to the Chair at the earliest opportunity.

If there is a suspicion that a Councillor or member of staff may be abusing a child/vulnerable adult or not following the code of good practice then these suspicions should be recorded and reported to the Clerk or Chair at the earliest opportunity. If the matter relates to:



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- poor practice - then the disciplinary/capability procedures may be followed;
- abuse – the person concerned must be suspended pending the outcome of an internal investigation into the allegations and the matter referred to Social Services who may also involve the Police.

The Council will seek to balance protecting children/vulnerable adults from harm whilst protecting its Councillor and staff from the risk of unfounded allegations.

The Clerk will be responsible for dealing with all allegations and suspicions of abuse concerning a member in staff, in conjunction with any relevant authorities and agencies.

The Monitoring Officer at Amber Valley Borough Council will be responsible for dealing with all allegations and suspicions of abuse concerning Councillors, in conjunction with any relevant authorities and agencies.

Neither the Clerk or Monitoring Officer can decide if anyone has been abused – Social Services have the legal responsibility for this task.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The legal principle that the welfare of the child/vulnerable adult is paramount means that the consideration of confidentiality, which may apply to other situations within the Council, should not be allowed to override the right of the person to be protected from harm. However, where possible, every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for, and by all, concerned when an allegation is made and whilst it is being investigated.

RECRUITMENT, TRAINING & MONITORING

Any Councillor or member of staff who have contact with children/vulnerable adults during the course of their duties will be subject to a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check to ensure there are no irregularities in their background which may give cause for concern. This check will be carried out by the Clerk who will notify the Chair and keep appropriate records.

Training to raise awareness of protection issues will be provided where appropriate.

USEFUL CONTACTS

All concerns regarding immediate child protection should be made by telephone to:

Working Hours: **Starting Point**

Out of Hours: **Call Derbyshire**

Tel: 01629 533190

Tel: 01629 532600

Fax: 01629 533295

Fax: 01629 585669

Minicom: 01629 533240

Minicom: 01629 585400

Requests for support should be made to **Starting Point** online at:
www.derbyshire.gov.uk/starting-point



Belper Town Council

e-mail: starting.point@derbyshire.gov.uk

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

Godkin House | Park Road | Ripley | Derbyshire | DE5 3EF

Referral forms via e-mail to:

Professional.Allegations@derbyshire.gov.uk

Police

Emergency 999

Non-Emergency 101

NSPCC

National Helpline 0808 800 5000

Childline 0800 1111