

Safeguarding Policy

Adopted at Full Council meeting on 21st December 2020

Minute reference 178/20/21

Introduction

Everyone acting on behalf of Charlton Kings Parish Council (the Council) has a duty to safeguard children, young people, and vulnerable adults. This policy outlines practices that will promote the safety of children, young people, and vulnerable adults while on the Council's premises, or properties, or working on Council's business in any location.

Definitions

Children and young people are defined as anyone under the age of 18 years. A vulnerable adult is anyone over 18 who is unable to care for themselves, unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation, or who may need community care services.

To whom this policy applies

This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of Charlton Kings Parish Council, whether as a member of staff, a councillor, or in a voluntary or commissioned capacity. It also applies to users of the Council's facilities and services. Any adult who has regular, unsupervised, contact with children, young people, or vulnerable adults during the course of their duties must undergo appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

Promoting a safe environment

In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people, and vulnerable adults, the Council will promote a safeguarding culture in its premises, and in all activities it is engaged in. To achieve this, the Council will:

- provide safe facilities and undertake regular safety assessments
- ensure that all those working, under the Council's authority, with children and vulnerable adults are made aware of this policy
- make this policy available to users of the Council's facilities and services who are in contact with children, young people, and vulnerable adults
- ensure that photos or videos of individuals are not taken without written permission from parents or carers
- recognise that it is not responsible for deciding whether abuse is taking place. If concerns of abuse are raised, these will be passed on to the appropriate authorities.

What should be a cause for concern

- any behaviour, action, or inaction, that would be likely to be considered as being harmful to the physical and/or emotional development of a child, young person, or vulnerable adult.
- in the circumstances in which those working with the authority of the Council may operate, harm falls into three main categories:
 - physical harm
 - emotional harm
 - sexual abuse

These are not necessarily the only harmful behaviours that must be guarded against and if in any doubt, guidance from qualified social care practitioners must immediately be sought.

Allegations against staff and volunteers

Those acting on behalf of the Council should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position alone with a child or a vulnerable adult. All interactions must be conducted in view of at least one other, unrelated adult. If an allegation of inappropriate behaviour is made, the person receiving the allegation must immediately inform the Clerk to the Council (unless the allegation is made against the Clerk, in which case they must inform the Chair of Council) and make a written record that sets out the basic facts. The report will be shared with the Chair of the Parish Council and held confidentially.

This policy is not intended to be, and is not, a procedural guidance on all aspects of working with children, young people, and vulnerable adults. It represents guidance to those working with these groups while on the Council's business, and an instruction that they must fulfil their duty of care.

Professional advice may be obtained from Gloucestershire County Council through:

- social care professionals at the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) www.gscb.org.uk.
- the adult help desk: 01452 426868 (8.00am to 5pm Monday to Friday) or out of hours, the Emergency Duty Team: 01452 614194
- or email socialcare.enq@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Review

This policy will be held under continuous review, to ensure that it remains fit for purpose should Council's direct engagement with children, young people, and vulnerable adults increase at any point. It will be formally reviewed annually and revised as necessary.