

ST CLEMENT PARISH COUNCIL

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

- This policy was adopted on: 28 March 2018
- Review date: March 2019
- The Safeguarding lead is: Parish Clerk

Purpose of Policy:

To provide a framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults. The policy aims to ensure that:

- All children, young people and adults are safe and protected from harm;
- Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable children, young people and adults to feel safe and adopt safe practices; and
- Everyone (including councillors, council staff and volunteers) are aware of the expected behaviours and the council's legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults.

Policy Statement

The policy develops procedures and good practice within the council to ensure that each person can demonstrate that there is an understanding of the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The council deplores the sexual exploitation of children and will not tolerate failure at any level to prevent harm, support victims and bring offenders to justice.

This policy has been developed in line with government legislation, publications and guidance.

The council takes seriously its responsibility under the current legislation to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults and to work together with other agencies to ensure that there are adequate arrangements within the council to identify and support those who are suffering harm. Where someone is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action will be taken to protect that person.

The Council has a responsibility to make sure that it has an effective safeguarding policy and procedures in place and monitors that the council complies with them. The council has appointed a Safeguarding Lead who has responsibility for dealing with all safeguarding issues.

The council recognises that for this policy to be effective, it is essential that everyone working for the council has an understanding of what safeguarding is, knows that 'safeguarding is everyone's responsibility', knows how to access safeguarding information, knows of any possible contribution that they may be required to make to safeguard children, young people and adults and how to access further advice, support or services.

Individual responsibilities

The council recognises that safeguarding is not just about protecting children, young people and adults from harm. It also relates to health and safety, meeting the needs of children, young people and adults with medical conditions, providing first aid, visits organised or sponsored by the council, internet or e-safety, appropriate arrangements to ensure security, taking into account the local context.

Additionally, we recognise that safeguarding can involve a range of potential issues such as bullying, including cyberbullying by text message, on social networking sites and so on, peer on peer and prejudice-based bullying, racist and homophobic or transphobic abuse, sexting, substance misuse, issues which may be specific to a local area or population, for example, gang activity and youth violence and other particular issues affecting children, including domestic violence, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, extremist behaviour and radicalisation, forced marriage and modern slavery.

Everyone associated with the council maintains an attitude of 'it can happen here' and are aware of the signs and indicators of abuse.

Everyone has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Our recruitment policy and procedure and induction process includes information on our arrangements and systems for safeguarding, behaviour policy, code of conduct and details of the Safeguarding Lead.

Everyone is provided with opportunities to receive appropriate training, which is regularly update, in order to develop their understanding of the signs and indicators of abuse and of the council's safeguarding procedures.

Everyone knows how to respond to someone who discloses abuse, or for whom they have a concern, and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse.

All residents are made aware of our council's responsibilities with regard to safeguarding through publication of the safeguarding policy.

When services are delivered by a third party or agency, we will follow the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service and check that the person presenting themselves is the same person on whom appropriate checks have been made. We will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with and in the presence of children at any time. Community users organising events for children, young people and vulnerable adults are aware of and understand the need for compliance with the council's safeguarding procedures.

Our council operates safer recruitment practices including making sure that:

- statutory duties to undertake required checks on staff who work with children are complied with in line with the Disclosure and Barring Service requirements for Regulated Activity: the Child Care Act 2006 and Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009.
- statutory guidance relating to volunteers is followed
- recruitment panel members are properly trained

Should we dismiss or remove someone because they have harmed a child or pose a risk of harm to a child or would have done so had they not left, we will report this to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and any appropriate professional or regulatory body.

Our safeguarding policies and procedures will be reviewed and updated annually.

If a child or young person or adult makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or another child or young person, we will:

- stay calm and listen carefully
- reassure the person that s/he has done the right thing in telling you
- not investigate or ask leading questions
- let the person know that s/he will need to tell the Safeguarding Lead
- not promise to keep what they have been told a secret
- inform the Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible; and
- make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident which will be signed and dated.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults. A key factor identified in many serious case reviews (SCRs) has been a failure by practitioners to record information, to share it, to understand its significance and then take appropriate action.

- We recognise that all matters relating to protection are confidential
- we will disclose personal information about a child, young person or adult on a need to know basis only
- everyone is aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, young persons or adults.
- Everyone is aware that they cannot promise to keep secrets which might compromise the safety or well-being of a child, young person or adult or that of another; an
- we will always undertake to share our concerns with the Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU), unless to do so could put the child, young person or adult at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation, If in doubt, we will consult with the MARU.

Managing allegations against individuals who work for us.

We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against someone who works for our council or volunteers that are working with or may come into contact with children, young people or adults. They can be made by children or adults or other concerned adults.

Everyone in our council and volunteers have been made aware of the process to be followed if such an allegation is made.

In such circumstances we will:

- Report the matter to the MARU
- consider the safeguarding arrangements of the child, young person or adult to ensure they are not in contact with the alleged abuser
- consider the rights of the individual concerned for a fair and equal process of investigation
- ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedure is followed, including whether suspending that person from work or volunteering for us until the outcome of any investigation is deemed necessary.
- Advise the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and any other appropriate regulatory and professional body where the individual has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of the allegations founded, or would have been if they have resigned.

Whistle-blowing

We recognise that a child, young person or adult cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where we fail to do so.

Everyone is advised of our Whistle-blowing Policy and of how it can be implemented. Everyone is aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude and actions of colleagues where these are inappropriate or unsuitable. If necessary, concerns will be raised with the delegated whistle-blowing representative, who is the Chair of the council.

Supporting Staff and volunteers

- Everyone will be advised on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour – such matters form part of our staff and volunteer induction and they have access to support and guidance when required or requested.
- We recognise that staff and volunteers working in our organisation who have become involved in the case of a child who has suffered harm, or appears likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting.
- We support this by providing an opportunity for them to discuss their anxieties with the Safeguarding Lead or another person and/or a trade union representative as appropriate.
- Our Safeguarding Lead and/or anyone working for the Council has access to support and appropriate workshops, courses or meetings as organised or recommended by the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Safeguarding Children Board (CioSSCB), Safeguarding Standards Unit (SSU) or Local Authority (LA).

Prevention

We recognise that we can play a significant part in the prevention of harm to children, young persons or vulnerable adults by providing them with effective lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. Our council will support children, young persons or adults by:

- Establishing and maintaining an ethos, understood by everyone, which enables children, young people or adults to feel secure and encourages them to talk, knowing that they will be listened to.
- Promoting a caring, safe and positive environment ensuring that all children, young people or adults know that there is someone in our council whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Listening and working together with all other support services and those agencies involved in the safeguarding of children and adults.
- Recognising that children, young people or adults come from a variety of different cultural backgrounds, we have developed policies to ensure that we embrace diversity in religion and faith, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation.
- We will include our Safeguarding Policy in our governance documents/website. We are able to arrange for our policy to be made available to parents whose first language is not English, on

request.

Training

- Everyone has been provided with and signed to say that they have read and understood our Safeguarding Policy.
- Everyone will have access to appropriate safeguarding training which is regularly updated in line with local and national guidance/legislation. We will also, as part of our induction, issue information in relation to our Safeguarding Policy and any other policy and information related to safeguarding and promoting our Safeguarding Policy to all newly appointed individuals.

Policy Review

We are responsible for ensuring the annual review of this policy and any additional local policies we have agreed that are relevant to safeguarding.

Meeting your communication needs

We want to ensure that your needs are met. If you would like this information on audio tape, in Braille, large print or any other format or interpreted into a language other than English, please contact the Parish Clerk.