



WENDOVER PARISH COUNCIL

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CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Introduction

The Parish Council believes that children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to be safe in the services provided for them and the activities they choose to participate in.

The Parish Council believes all children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to live their lives to the fullest potential, to be protected, to have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy any activity and to be treated with dignity and respect.

The Parish Council believes that all children, young people and vulnerable adults irrespective of their age, class, religion, culture, disability, gender, ethnicity or sexual preference have the right to protection.

Child/Young People and Vulnerable Adults Protection Statement

This Parish Council endeavours that all children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm as much as possible whilst engaged in services organised and provided by the Parish Council. This Parish Council will also safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults who use the Parish Council's services or who attend activities within its venues, by endeavouring to protect them from abuse.

This Parish Council recognises its responsibilities under the terms of the Children Act 2004, and The Care Act 2014 and other relevant legislation to make arrangements for ensuring that its functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The policy affects every elected member, staff member, volunteer and anyone working on behalf of and/or representing the Parish Council.

Definitions

- The term children or young person is used to refer to anyone under the age of 18

years.

- The term parent is used as a generic term to represent anyone with legal parental responsibility.
- A vulnerable adult is a person “who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or maybe unable to take care of himself or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Aims of the Policy

Wendover Parish Council accepts the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures, provide a duty of care for children, young people and vulnerable adults, safeguard their wellbeing and protect them when they are engaged in services organised and provided by the Parish Council or when they come into contact with Parish Council staff, those on work experience, elected members and volunteers.

The Parish Council aims to do this by:

- Raising an awareness throughout the Parish Council and beyond of the statutory “duty of care” relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults and actively encourage good practice amongst all staff, elected members and volunteers.
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all its services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Listening to children, young people and vulnerable adults minimising dangers and working closely with other agencies.
- Recruiting, training, supervising and supporting staff, elected members and volunteers who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse, and themselves against false allegations. Staff and volunteers who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults will be subject to the appropriate level Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- Responding to any allegations appropriately and implementing the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Requiring staff, elected members and volunteers to adopt and abide by this policy and guidelines.

Use of Contractors

This Council and its staff, elected members and volunteers should take care that contractors doing work on behalf of the Council are monitored appropriately. Any contractor or sub-

contractor, engaged by the Council in areas where workers are likely to come into contact with children and young people, should have a similarly robust Child Protection Policy/Care Policy, or failing this, must comply with the terms of this policy. Contractors will be monitored by the Officer of the Parish Council responsible for the contract.

Procedures

These procedures inform staff, elected members and volunteers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected child, young adult or vulnerable adults abuse.

Responding To Concerns and Allegations:-

- It is important that all staff, elected members and volunteers are aware that the first person that has concerns or encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. It is not the place of any Officer of the Parish Council to investigate allegations. However, staff, elected members and volunteers do have a duty of care to the child, young person or vulnerable adult which means they must report any suspicions they may have.
- It is the duty of any member, or council employee or volunteer to report any concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult being subject to abuse, receive a disclosure or are aware of Members, or colleagues behaving in an inappropriate manor. All reports should be treated as confidential and with respect to the person raising the concern regardless of the outcome.

In general there are 3 situations that staff, elected members and volunteers may need to respond to a concern or case of alleged or suspected abuse:

1. Responding to a child, young person or vulnerable adult disclosing abuse, i.e. they make an allegation of abuse.
2. Responding to allegations or concerns about a member of staff, elected member or volunteer from your own observation or due to a complaint.
3. Responding to allegations or concerns about any other person, i.e. parent, carer, other service user.

In the event of an incident record in writing all the details that you are aware of and what was said using the child, young person's, vulnerable adults own words, immediately. In your record you should include the following:

- The date and time
- The child, young person's or vulnerable adults name, address and date of birth
- The nature of the allegation

- Your observations – a description of the child, young person’s or vulnerable adults behaviour, physical and emotional state and any visible injuries.
- Exactly what the child, young person or vulnerable adult said and what you said. Record the child, young person’s account of what has happened as closely as possible.
- Sign and date what you have recorded.

Do not ask questions, other than the child, young person’s or vulnerable adults name, address and date of birth.

Reassure the child, young person or vulnerable adult that they have done the right thing in telling you.

Contact local Social Services or the Police without delay and follow their guidance.

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only this is usually Social Services or the Police. It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed, as any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child, young person or vulnerable adult, their family, those who are the subject of allegations and any child, young person or vulnerable adult protection investigations that may follow.

Informing the parents/carer of a child, young person or vulnerable adult of concerns you may have should be dealt with by Social Services. You must not inform parents/carers if they are the subject of the allegation.

Any individual against whom an allegation has been made has the right to be notified about the cause for concern. This should be done by Social Services and the Police. It is important that the timing of this does not prejudice the investigation; therefore, confidentiality is of the utmost importance.

Recorded information should be handed over to Social Services or the Police and any copies stored in a secure place with limited access in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure). If enquiries arise from the public or any branch of the media, it is vital that all staff, elected members and volunteers are briefed to not make any comments regarding the situation.

Photography

Staff, elected members and volunteers should be vigilant at all times regarding people using cameras or videos within Parish Council services and at events or activities which involve children, young people and vulnerable adults. Consent must be sought from parents/carers when cameras and other image recorders are used to picture children, young people and vulnerable adults.

- Do not allow unsupervised access to children, young people or vulnerable adults or one to one photographic sessions.
- Do not allow photographic sessions outside the activities or services, or at a child's, young person's or vulnerable adults home.
- The child, young person or vulnerable adult should be happy with having their picture taken.
- Parents/Carers must be informed that photographs of their child, young person or vulnerable adult may be taken during Parish Council services, activities or events, and signed parental/carers consent needs to be obtained agreeing to this. This must include information about how and where these photographs will be used.
- The names of children, young people or vulnerable adults should not be used in photographs or video footage, unless with the express permission of the child or young person's parent or carer.

Sources of Information / Support

Bucks CC for Children

T: 0845 4600001

T: 01296 383962

Adult Safeguarding Team

T: 01296 383204

T: 0800 137915

Document History		
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