

## **Drayton Parish Council**

### **Children and Young People's Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance**

*(This document should be provided to anyone who has any responsibility for organised activities involving children or vulnerable people for which the Council has any responsibility, including its own staff)*

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This Policy will inform you what abuse is, what signs to look out for, what actions to take and what will happen next. Read it now and then keep it somewhere safe, this may just be the tool that helps you to save a child's life.

Every child has the right not to be abused. As an adult working with children, or meeting children in the course of their work, has a responsibility for safety.

This Policy is designed to ensure that you are equipped with the knowledge and information to enable you to follow the Parish Council's Children Safeguarding responsibilities.

It is not our job to establish whether or not abuse is taking place. However, it is our responsibility to report any concerns we have over the welfare of children or young people. This duty extends to the identification of abuse, poor practice by internal members/staff of the Council, as well as allegations brought to the attention of the Council by a member of the public/community.

It is important to be aware that the Parish Council has both a moral and legal obligation to ensure the duty of care for children. We are committed to ensuring that all children are protected and kept safe from harm whilst engaged in services organised or activities provided by the Council.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 recognises the need to vet all individuals who want to work or volunteer with vulnerable people, which includes all groups of vulnerable people including those who are young or elderly.

The Parish Council will require any member of staff who is likely to come into contact with children or vulnerable people during the course of their work to be DBS checked; this will also apply to anyone appointed by the Council to work with children on a voluntary basis.

#### **1.1 Policy Statement**

The Parish Council accepts the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures, to provide a duty of care for children, safeguard their well being and protect them from abuse when they are engaged in services organised or provided by the Council. We aim to do this by:

- Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children.

- Raising the awareness of the duty of care responsibilities relating to children throughout the Council.
- Promoting and implementing appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children to protect them from harm.
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Recruiting, training, supporting and supervising staff, elected members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children from abuse, and minimise risk to themselves.
- Responding to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children in line with this Policy and Procedures as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Requiring staff, elected members and volunteers to adopt and abide by the Council's Children's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Reviewing and evaluating this Policy and Procedures document on a regular basis.

### 1.2 Principles and Definitions of Vulnerability

This policy and these procedures are based on the following principles:

- The welfare of children is the primary concern.
- All children irrespective of their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/ or sexual orientation have the right to protection from abuse.
- It is everyone's responsibility to report any concerns about abuse.
- All incidents of alleged poor practice, misconduct and abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All personal data will be processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **2.0 Allegations against an external member of the community**

This Policy and its procedures inform all staff, elected members and volunteers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected child abuse, i.e. response actions.

Council staff may come across cases of suspected abuse either through direct contact with children, for example, running an activity or maintaining a playground. It is not your

responsibility to decide whether or not a child has been abused. It is however your responsibility to report your concerns.

Your primary concern is to ensure that any relevant information is passed to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (in the case of Drayton Parish Council, this is the Clerk) who will then determine any action or referral necessary to the relevant authority e.g. police or social care services without delay.

## 2.1 Responding to Disclosure

Abused children are more likely to disclose details of abuse to someone they trust and with whom they feel safe. By listening and taking seriously what the child is saying you are already helping the situation. The following points are a guide to help you respond appropriately.

Actions to be taken by the person being disclosed to:-

- React calmly so as not to frighten them
- Take what the person says seriously, recognising the difficulties inherent in interpreting what is being said by a person who has a speech impairment or differences in language.
- Avoid asking direct questions other than those seeking to clarify your understanding of what the person has said. They may be subsequently formally interviewed by the police or social care services and they should not have to repeat their account on several occasions.
- Inappropriate and excessive questioning at an early stage may also impede the conduct of a subsequent criminal investigation.
- Reassure the child or vulnerable adult but do not make promises of confidentiality which will not be feasible in the light of subsequent developments.
- Explain to them that you will have to share your concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer who has the authority to act.
- Tell them they were not to blame and that they were right to tell.
- Record in writing on the Children Incident Reporting Form (See Appendix 1) all the details that you are aware of and what was said using the child's own words, immediately.

The person receiving the disclosure should not:

- Dismiss the concern

- Panic
- Allow their shock or distaste to show
- Probe for more information than is comfortably offered - do not overpressure for a response.
- Speculate or make assumptions
- Make negative comments about the alleged abuser
- Make promises or agree to keep secrets
- Should not suggest any action/s or consequences that may be undertaken in response to the disclosure

## 2.2 Responding to Suspicions

All suspicions, concerns and disclosures have to be reported immediately to the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer.

The Designated Child Safeguarding Officer has the responsibility to:

- Ensure that arrangements are made to identify staff that require training in child protection issues.
- Ensure that Report forms and copies of the policy and procedures are available
- Receive information from staff, volunteers and children who have concerns, and record them, using appropriate forms and procedures identified.
- Represent the Council on formal investigations into allegations of abuse led by Social Care Services.
- Receive the appropriate training.

In the absence of the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer queries should be forwarded to the chairman of the Council.

Where a matter appears urgent and the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer is not available delay should be avoided. At such times contact should be made with Norfolk County Council Social Care Services.

The responsible Designated Child Safeguarding Officer will:-

- Ensure that the procedures are followed appropriately in consultation with Social Care services.

- The designated officers will follow the policy to ensure;
- The appropriate agencies are informed
- Information is recorded and stored appropriately
- Staff involved are supported as required.

### 2.3 Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned in the safeguarding of children. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only.

Where there is any possibility that a criminal act may have been committed care should be taken not to take any action that may jeopardize any subsequent criminal investigation. This includes contacting the alleged perpetrator. Advice should first be sought from the Police and/or Social Care Services without delay.

It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed, as any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child or their family and any child protection investigations that may follow.

Where a staff member is approached regarding an allegation, issues of confidentiality should be clarified early in the discussion, and the person informed that the member of staff will at the very least, have to disclose the conversation to the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer depending on the severity of the information may be disclosed to Social Care Services or the Police.

### 2.4 Child Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form

You need to fill in an Incident Report Form for all concerns, allegations and suspicions relating to the safeguarding of children. This needs to be done as soon as practicable to ensure all the facts are recorded. Copies of the Incident Report Form are available from the Parish Council Office. Use the same form for all disclosures and allegations and suspicions. Do not worry if all the boxes do not apply to your situation, it is purely to help you to remember as much relevant information as possible. It is the responsibility of the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer to take a lead on suspicions and report them to Social Care Services and or the Police to take the appropriate course of action, if appropriate.

### 2.5 Sharing Concerns with Parents, Carers or Partners

Whilst delivering our services to children there is a commitment to work in partnership with parents/carers and share concerns about their child or vulnerable adult. Therefore, in most circumstances it would be important for the Designated Child safeguarding Officer to talk to parents or carers to clarify any concerns (but not the alleged abuser). For example if a child seems withdrawn, there may be a reasonable explanation, which a parent can provide. In most cases this decision will be taken and followed up by Social Care Services as the professional body on protection issues.

### 2.6 When it is Inappropriate to Share Concerns with Parents, Carers or Partners

There are circumstances when children can be placed at greater risk by sharing concerns with their parents/carers e.g. where the parent/carer is the one who may be responsible for the abuse.

When there are ongoing concerns regarding a parent or carer in relation to the alleged abuse of a child the parent or carer should not be contacted about the allegation of abuse. Social Care Services and/or the Police will do this at an appropriate time.

### **3.0 Allegations against an internal employee/member of the Council**

It is important that any concerns for the welfare of the child or vulnerable adult arising from abuse or harassment by an employee/member of the Council should be reported immediately to a Designated Child Safeguarding Officer and an incident report form completed. (In the case of an allegation being made about a Designated Child Safeguarding Officer this should be reported to the Chairman of the Council for further action)

There may be circumstances where allegations are about poor practice rather than abuse, but this should always be communicated to the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer for guidance and appropriate action.

Where an allegation is made against an elected member this should be referred to the Designated Child Safeguarding Officer who will refer the allegation to the proper authorities, and will also then engage the Broadland District Council Officer who has responsibility to address Member code of conduct related issues.

#### **3.1 Support for the Reporter of the Alleged Abuse**

Strong feelings may be generated by the discovery that an employee or a member of the Council may be abusing a child. This can raise concerns among other employees or members and create difficulties in reporting such matters. We will fully support and protect all staff/members who, in good faith (without malicious intent), report his or her concern about a colleague's practice or the possibility that a child may be being abused.

**A copy of this policy should be given to every organisation booking one of the Council's facilities making it clear that abiding by this policy is a condition of acceptance of the booking**

## Incident Reporting Form

Your name:	Name of organisation:
Your role::	
Contact information (you): Address: Postcode: Telephone numbers: Email address:	
Child's name:	Child's date of birth:
Child's ethnic origin: Please state	Does child have a disability: Please state
Child's gender: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
Parent's / carer's name(s):	
Contact information (parents/carers): Address: Postcode: Telephone numbers: Email address:	
Have parent's / carer's been notify of this incident? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  If YES please provide details of what was said/action agreed:	
Are you reporting your own concerns or responding to concerns raised by someone else: <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to my own concerns <input type="checkbox"/> Responding to concerns raised by someone else	
If responding to concerns raised by someone else: <i>Please provide further information below</i>	
Name:	
Position within the sport or relationship to the child:	
Telephone numbers:	
Email address:	
Date and times of incident:	
Details of the incident or concerns: <i>Include other relevant information, such as description of any injuries and whether you are recording this incident as fact, opinion or hearsay.</i>	
Child's account of the incident:	



Please provide any witness accounts of the incident:
<p>Please provide details of any witnesses to the incident:</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Position within the club or relationship to the child:</p> <p>Date of birth (if child):</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>Postcode:</p> <p>Telephone number:</p> <p>Email address:</p>
<p>Please provide details of any person involved in this incident or alleged to have caused the incident / injury:</p> <p>Name:</p> <p>Position within the club or relationship to the child:</p> <p>Date of birth (if child):</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>Postcode:</p> <p>Telephone number:</p> <p>Email address:</p>
Please provide details of action taken to date:
<p>Has the incident been reported to any external agencies?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
If YES please provide further details:
<p>Name of organisation / agency:</p> <p>Contact person:</p> <p>Telephone numbers:</p> <p>Email address:</p> <p>Agreed action or advice given:</p>
Your Signature:
Print Name:
Date:

**Contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer, Clerk to Drayton Parish Council, in line with the incident reporting procedures**