

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY**

Safeguarding is about protecting children, young people and adults from abuse, harm or neglect. Safeguarding is everybody's business. Everybody has the right to be safe no matter who they are or what their circumstances.

We are all responsible for the protection of children, young people and adults. We must ensure that we are doing all we can to protect the most vulnerable members of our society. This policy applies to all members of staff, all Councillors and the organisations who have a working relationship with the Parish Council, including volunteers.

Stratton St Margaret Parish Council has appointed a Safeguarding Lead who has responsibility for dealing with all safeguarding issues. The Safeguarding Lead is the Clerk who can be contacted through the Parish Council office.

### **The purpose of this policy is:**

To protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who comes into contact with the Council staff, services and facilities.

To provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and child protection

The Council believes that a child, young person or vulnerable adults should never experience abuse of any kind and have a responsibility to promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults and to keep them safe.

### **Purpose of this document:**

The purpose of this document is to outline the Council policy on responding to concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of children/young people aged under 18 years and vulnerable adults.

The policy seeks to promote effective multi-agency working in light of the Green Paper 'Every Child Matters', the Children and Families Act 2014 and Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) and other relevant legislation.

### **Legal Framework:**

- The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters)
- The Protection of Children Act
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act (2008)
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- United convention of the Rights of the Child
- Human Rights Act 1998

## **Definitions:**

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults wherever possible.

## **Safeguarding Policy**

All children, young people and vulnerable adults regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

Some children, young people and vulnerable adults are additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs and other issues.

When working in partnership with children, young people and vulnerable adults - their parents, carers and agencies are essential in promoting people's welfare

Definition of a child – a child is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child). Safeguarding also applies to unborn babies.

Definition of vulnerable adults – a vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or being exploited. This may include a person who

- Is elderly or frail
- Has a mental illness including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misuser
- Is homeless

## **Responsibilities:**

The Council does not investigate individual child protection cases or referrals. Stratton St Margaret Parish Council is not the statutory authority for the conduct of enquiries into specific child protection concerns; therefore all staff need to follow the procedures to ensure that all allegations or suspicions of abuse or significant harm to any child are reported to the relevant body and/or safeguarding lead without delay and within agreed protocols.

The Council will keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by:

1. Valuing, listening to and respecting them
2. Appointing a Designated Lead and a lead senior management member for safeguarding
3. Adopting child protection and safeguarding practices through procedures and a code of conduct for staff
4. Do DBS checks on staff where required
5. Providing effective management for staff through supervision, support, training and quality assurance measures
6. Recruit staff safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made

7. Recording and storing information professionally and securely and sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children, their families, staff and volunteers
8. Using our safeguarding procedures to share concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know and involving children, young people parent, families and carers appropriately. The Council must ensure that it is at the same time complying with GDPR Legislation, the GDPR Policy and Data Protection Officer can support this.
9. Ensuring that we have effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place
10. Ensuing that we provide a safe physical environment for our children, young people, staff and volunteers by applying health and safety measures in accordance with the law and regulatory guidance.
11. Taking security steps to control who comes into our settings and that no unauthorised person has unsupervised access to children/young people/vulnerable adults whilst on our premises

### **Exposure to Non-DBS Checked Adults:**

Some Council organised activities and events may expose children to adults who have not received the DBS check, i.e. one off activities provided at organised visits/trips. In these cases children must be reminded of the care to take and Council staff must ensure children are supervised by a parent, care person or guardian at all times.

### **Recording Safeguarding Concerns**

All staff who have a safeguarding concern should make full notes of their concern or discussions taken place. The notes should be factual and be signed and dated. Care must be taken to ensure they are accurate and not potentially damaging allegations about individuals. The history of incidents is particularly important in child abuse cases so this recording of incidents is essential.

Further guidance can be found by referring to the following sources –

- ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’, March 2015  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, July 2017
- ‘What To Do If You Are Worried A Child Is Being Abused’, March 2015  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>
- Information Sharing advice for practitioners, March 2015  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>
- The South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures  
<https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/>
- National Crime Agency - Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre [www.ceop.org.uk](http://www.ceop.org.uk)

- [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

- Dealing with Child Exploitation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-childsexual-exploitation--2>