HELLINGLY PARISH COUNCIL

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Adopted xxxxxx 2023

**Policy Statement**

In the interests of child protection and the welfare and protection of vulnerable adults, Hellingly Parish Council is committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Parish Council.

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is everyone’s responsibility.

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

**Definitions**

Children and young people:

* Anyone under the age of 18 years

Vulnerable Adult:

Anyone over 18 who is:

* Unable to care for themselves
* Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
* Or may be in need of community care services

**Policy Objective:**

* To ensure that where possible all events and activities organised by or on behalf of the Parish Council are designed and maintained to reduce the risk to children and vulnerable adults.
* To promote the general welfare, health and development of children by being aware of child protection issues and to be able to respond where appropriate as a local government organisation.
* To develop procedures in recording and responding to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse and neglect.

As the Parish Council does not directly provide care or supervision services to children and vulnerable adults, it expects all children and vulnerable adults using its facilities to do so with the consent and the necessary supervision of a parent, carer or other responsible adult.

**Aims**

The aim of this policy document is to guide members of Hellingly Parish Council should any child protection issue or any issues with vulnerable adults arise during their work.

It also applies to any individual hiring, leasing or using the Parish Council facilities for the purpose of delivering any service to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

**Responsibilities & Procedures**

Tracy Dean, Deputy Clerk is the Parish Council’s appointed Safeguarding Officer and her responsibilities will include ensuring:

* that before any Parish Council organised event with children or vulnerable persons, all staff and volunteers are correctly briefed.
* that members are aware of the risk they may face in certain circumstances whilst carrying out their duties.
* that whilst Council members are unlikely to be involved with children during the performance of their duties they are mindful of the risk they face.
* decisions on whether any person should be DBS checked will be made by the Council or the Chair after consultation with the Deputy Clerk following a risk assessment.
* all councillors are provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy
* All Staff and Councillors will adhere to the ‘List of Recommended Behaviour’ namely:

1. A minimum of two adults present when supervising children.
2. Not to play physical contact games.
3. Adults to wear appropriate clothing at all times.
4. Ensure that accidents are recorded in an accident book.
5. Never do anything of a personal nature for a young person.

* records are kept of any incidents or allegations a person may make to any member of staff, Councillor or volunteer.
* cases of suspected abuse or allegations are referred to the Deputy Clerk who will be responsible for ensuring the matter is handled in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.
* that facilities that are the responsibility of the Parish Council have been inspected on a regular basis and at least annually by a representative of RoSPA or a similar organisation.
* information is shared about child protection and good practice with partner organisations, councillors, employees, volunteers, parents and carers.

Any organisation which may make contact with children or vulnerable adults shall be required to show proof of its own appropriate Safeguarding Policy before being allowed to participate in the use of any council owned facilities.

**Expectations of behaviour**

All users of Parish Council facilities, organisers of parish events and volunteers should:

* Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction is appropriate and professional.
* Treat each other with respect and show consideration for other groups using the Parish Council facilities.
* Refrain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism, homophobia, and bullying and in addition, report any instances of such behaviour to the Chair of the Parish Council, Parish Clerk or parents/carers, as appropriate.

**Safe working practice**

All users of Parish Facilities must follow the policy and procedures at all times. For example they should:

* Never leave children, young people or vulnerable adults unattended with adults who have not been subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
* Plan activities to involve more than one person being present or at least in sight or hearing of others. Alternatively, record, or inform others of their whereabouts and intended action.
* Where possible, have male and female leaders working with a mixed group.
* Ensure registers are complete and attendees are marked in and signed out (under 8’s must be collected by a parent/carer).
* Ensure that photos or videos of individuals are not taken without written permission from their parents/carers.
* Ensure they have access to a first aid kit and telephone and know fire procedures.
* When working outside, ensure activities, breaks and clothing are suitable for the weather conditions and that shelter is available where possible.

**Allegations against staff and volunteers**

All staff and volunteers should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or vulnerable adult.

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Deputy Clerk who will inform the Chair of the Parish Council.

The Parish council should follow the East Sussex County Council Safeguarding Adults and Children procedures for managing allegations against staff/volunteers. Contact details in the footnote below[[1]](#footnote-1). No attempt should be made to investigate or take action before consultation with the County Council.

**Whistleblowing**

All members of the Council, staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice will be sought from the County Council Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or Safeguarding Team as to how to handle such allegations[[2]](#footnote-2).

Attention is again drawn to the East Sussex County Council guidelines which will be followed to ensure that all activities are suitably supervised, and how concerns maybe reported.

*The Parish Council must not make a judgement on whether the allegations have merit for further investigation, this decision must be for the LADO team.*

**What should be a cause for concern**

Staff and volunteers should be concerned by any action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child. Abuse falls into four main categories and can include child sexual exploitation. The categories are as follows:

1. Physical Abuse

2. Emotional Abuse

3. Sexual Abuse

4. Neglect

5. Financial Abuse/Manipulation

The Parish Council are committed to ensuring the safety of all users of our services and facilities and take our responsibilities seriously.

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| **Adopted** | **Next Review** |
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1. <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/children-families/key-policies/safeguarding>

   <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/social-care/worried/report> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/children-families/professional-resources/allegations/referrals/form-lado-referral> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)