

Safeguarding Children, Young people and Vulnerable Adults Policy

THE POLICY

The aim of the policy is to ensure that all members of staff, volunteers and any contractors know what is required to protect and keep children and vulnerable adults safe from harm as a result of any contact they have with WMPC.

Children and vulnerable adults in society have the right to have fun and be safe in the activities that they participate in or are chosen for them by parents, carers or guardians.

WMPC provide staff, volunteers and hirers of our Community Hall (BACH) as well as children and young people and their families, with the overarching principles that guide our approach to child protection. This policy will help to maintain a safe and positive environment for children and adults.

Definitions

- Children and young people: anyone under the age of 18
- Vulnerable adult: someone who is over the age of 18 who is in need of care services for reasons of illness, disability or mental health. Someone who may be unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

West Monkton Parish Council will review this policy in May of this year or in the event of any safeguarding incident occurring which means we need to review our procedures.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults in England.

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

The Parish Council will ensure that volunteers who provide activities for and supervise activities for children and young people will have a DBS check. This will be at the request of the Parish Council who will fund the check.

A volunteer who has a DBS check from another organisation will be allowed to declare and use that check providing that proof is given of its existence and that it is no more than 3 years since it was carried out. The Parish Council can then require another DBS check.

Organisations or bodies who hire the hall to provide activities for children, young people and vulnerable adults will be expected to carry out their own DBS checks for their staff and volunteers and when hiring they will sign an agreement confirming that this has been carried out.

Objectives of the Policy

- To ensure where possible all facilities and activities offered by West Monkton Parish Council are designed and maintained to limit risk to children and vulnerable adults.
- To promote the general wellbeing, health and development of children by being aware of safeguarding concerns and being able to respond appropriately as a local government organisation.
- To develop procedures in recording and responding to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse or neglect.
- Endeavour to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from harm by using as appropriate the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and a safer recruitment procedure for both employees and volunteers.
- As West Monkton Parish Council does not provide any care or supervision services for children or vulnerable adults it expects all children and vulnerable adults with care and support needs who attend events or use its facilities to do so with the necessary supervision and consent of parents, carers or guardians.
- To ensure that we give equal priority to keeping all children, young people and vulnerable adults safe regardless of their age, gender, disability, race, gender reassignment, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
- To take any concern by child, vulnerable adult, employee, contractor or volunteer seriously and manage it sensitively and appropriately in line with procedures written in this policy.

Use of photography, video, social media with children and vulnerable adults

Photograph's, audio recordings, videos or any kind of other media must not be used without the express permission of the parent/carer.

PROCEDURES

Types of abuse

Abuse covers any kind of harm resulting from physical, mental, sexual abuse including bullying and including neglect that leads to injury or harm. For vulnerable adults this also includes financial abuse.

- Neglect is where people fail to meet a child's or vulnerable person's basic physical / psychological needs and is likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development, e.g. failure to ensure that a child is protected from unnecessary risk of injury, or exposing them to undue cold.
- Physical Abuse is where physical pain or injury is caused, e.g. hitting, shaking, biting, etc.
- Sexual Abuse is where children or vulnerable adults knowingly or unknowingly take part in an activity that meets the sexual needs of the other person or persons involved. This includes inappropriate photography or videoing.

- Emotional / Mental Abuse is where there is persistent emotional ill treatment that causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's or vulnerable person's emotional status e.g. bullying (including cyber and text bullying), constant criticism and unrealistic pressure to perform.
- Financial abuse is the mistreatment of someone in terms of their money or assets, such as their property. Financial abuse often occurs alongside other forms of abuse. It can include money being stolen or misused, fraud or putting someone under pressure in regards to their money or property.
- It is important to recognise that disabled children may be particularly vulnerable to abuse and may have added difficulties in communicating what is happening Dependency on others for primary needs, eg feeding and clothing may make a person feel powerless to report abusive treatment.

RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS

If a person discloses abuse by someone else:

- Stay calm, take the allegation seriously
- Allow the person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said.
- DO NOT investigate the disclosure.
- Only ask questions for clarification. Do not ask leading questions.
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement. Reassure them that they did the right thing by talking to you.
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you MUST pass the information on, do not offer to keep secrets.
- Record the facts as you know them.
- Refer the allegation immediately and directly to the appropriate person who will be the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- All allegations must be referred, no matter how insignificant they seem to be, or when they occur.
- Try to ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.
- As soon as possible after the incident or disclosure write down notes, dates, times, facts, observations, and verbatim speech. Safeguarding Incident Form available from the Parish Council.
- Ensure the correct details are available, the young person's / vulnerable adult's name and address, and the name and address of their parent or guardian.
- The DSL will contact the relevant adult and children's Somerset County Council Safeguarding Team, if appropriate.
- The DSL will prepare a confidential file, record all notes, conversations and advice from Somerset Council Safeguarding Team. Confidentiality has to be maintained. Do not discuss the disclosure with anyone.
- The DSL will store this information in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection legislation.

- The DSL will follow the advice from Somerset Council Safeguarding Team; no other action unless advised to do so.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Members, staff, volunteers and contracted service providers must not discuss allegations of abuse, substantiated or not, with anyone other than in connection with the formal investigation. Where it is necessary to put in procedures to prevent continuing abuse the matter should be shared with the DSL so that appropriate risk assessments may be undertaken.

FIRST AID

The administration of first aid to children, young people and vulnerable adults can present risks. Under ordinary circumstances, a child or young person and vulnerable persons can be administered with first aid only if their parent or guardian expressly permits this course of action. When administering first aid, wherever possible, employees should ensure that another adult is present, or is aware of the action being taken.

Parents/carers should always be informed when first aid is administered. Child welfare is of paramount importance. In certain circumstances members, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers may undertake first aid as a last resort, notifying parents / carers as soon as possible, to minimise a child's or vulnerable adult's distress.

West Monkton Parish Council will have a register of trained First Aiders and ensure that training is up to date or ensure that trained First Aiders from a recognised association is present at events that may require such level of First Aid.

CONTACT DETAILS

Should you have a safeguarding concern please contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in the first instance on the number or email below. Should you be unable to get hold of the DSL, please contact the Deputy Safeguarding Lead. Safeguarding Incident Form available from the Parish Council.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Kate Welsh
07505 984006
community@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Amy Shepherd
07588 571775
clerk@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk

Somerset Council Safeguarding Team: 0300 123 2224 (Office Hours)

0300 123 23 27 (Out of Hours)

adults@somerset.gov.uk

childrens@somerset.gov.uk

In an emergency always contact the police by dialling 999

If it is not an emergency and you want to talk with the police, dial 101

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

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

This policy was last reviewed on: 14th May 2024

[Publications and Legislation used to inform this policy](#)

Children's Act 1989 Equality Act 2010 Children's and Families Act 2014

Keeping Children safe in Education 2014

Working together to Safeguard Children 2018

Keeping Children safe in out of school settings: code of practice

DfE 2020 Safeguarding Vulnerable groups Act 2006

- NSPCC
- Safeguarding and Child Protection for the Voluntary and Community sector
 - Safeguarding Standards and Guidance.