

Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Statement of Commitment

Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council is fully committed to safeguarding the welfare of all young people who come into contact with its services, by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm and neglect.

This contact may be through either: -

- Staff/volunteers working in organisations that operate within an existing child protection policy e.g. affiliated groups and service users or Local Authorities services.
- Staff / volunteers working in organisations that don't have the framework of a child protection policy.
- Parish Council staff/volunteers/councillors working with young people or working where young people are using council services.
- Young people directly contacting the Parish Council.

In all cases the welfare of the young person is paramount.

Aims of the policy:

- To ensure that all staff/volunteers see it as part of their duty of care to be alert to signs of abuse
- To ensure that staff and volunteers working directly with young people are carefully selected and trained in Child Protection procedures
- To ensure that all children and young people work in safe environments with people they can trust
- To ensure that all risks that children and young people encounter are carefully assessed, and all necessary steps taken to minimise and manage them
- To ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken where there's concern of a child's or young person's well being may be threatened
- To ensure that parents, children and young people know how to voice concerns about anything they may not be happy with

Means of delivering the aims:

- i. To implement clear staff and volunteer selection and recruitment procedures, which include, in all circumstances, an appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check if considered necessary.
- ii. To provide all staff and volunteers with this policy and agree to abide by the procedures.
- iii. All members of staff and volunteers will report any concerns to the Parish Clerk or the Chairman of the council if this member of staff is not available.
- iv. All members of staff and volunteers will follow child protection procedures.
- v. All confidential information will be kept separate by the Parish Clerk.
- vi. Staff and volunteers will attend relevant training as required.

Recruitment

All prospective staff or volunteers must:

- Provide Confirmation of identity, a passport or a new style driving licence and second form

- which should be something with their address on it, perhaps a utility bill.
- Undergo an interview.

Code of Conduct Statement Including worker/young people ratios)

'''

Staff/Volunteers should not:

- Be alone with children and young people
- Unlock and lock up premises without another adult present
- Transport children or young people in a car or mini bus without another adult being present
- Take children or young people to their home unescorted
- Make inappropriate contact with children and young people
- Leave children and young people unattended
- Leave children and young people in the presence of adults who are not suitably trained
- Leave children and young people in the presence of adults not known to the member of staff/volunteer
- Leave children and young people in the presence of adults who have not had the relevant CRB checks
- Show favouritism to children and young people engaged with the organisation

Working Ratios

Department for Education & Skills guidance in relation to working ratios will be followed, as outlined below

- A ratio of 1:15 where the element of risk would be similar to the risks encountered in everyday life
- A ratio of 1:10 for (All day and residential events and trips)
- A ratio of 1:6 (children under the age of 10, or groups with special needs)
- A ratio of 1:5 for high risk activities

Training Provision

Child Protection training will help our staff to understand their role, its limits and boundaries as well as providing much needed information on how to identify the signs of child abuse and how to respond appropriately. Opportunities for staff to attend child protection training will be provided as appropriate.

Action

If a member of staff or a volunteer has concerns that abuse has taken place, or receives a disclosure from a child or young person, it is imperative that the correct action is taken as quickly as possible. Procedures for action follow:

If you are concerned that abuse has occurred:

- Discuss your concerns with the Parish Clerk.
- The Parish Clerk will offer advice regarding the next stage of the process. This will be either contacting Social Services immediately, or logging concerns through the common referral system. This will be determined by the nature of the abuse, i.e. whether it is significant harm.
- Record any FACTS, which support the suspicion and contact the Police for advice.
- Ensure that the appropriate information is filed confidentially, in a marked envelope, in a locked filing cabinet at the main office of the organisation.

REMEMBER - 'The protection of the young person is paramount' If you are not able to follow these procedures due to not being able to contact the Parish Clerk it is essential that you seek advice from Social Services immediately. Remember you can check out any issues or concerns, with the Emergency Duty Team at Social Services without giving personal details. E.g. 'If this situation was to happen what should I do?'

If a child or young person is about to make a disclosure:

- Explain clearly 'CONFIDENTIALITY'. You, the worker have a responsibility to notify the appropriate 'Designated Person' or Social Services in the event of a disclosure. Never promise that the information will remain a secret.
- Allow the child or young person to speak, never interrupt. Even if you have an idea about the content of the sentence, never put words, or finish the sentence for the child or young person. However difficult this maybe, the information needs to come direct from the child or young person, in the eyes of the law.
- Never question the child or young person or attempt to investigate.
- Try to alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, remain non-judgmental, offer support Most importantly LISTEN.

What should you do after a disclosure?

- All information relating to an incident of child abuse is strictly confidential. It should only be discussed with: -
 - Designated Person
 - Social Services
 - The Police

- **Make notes**

These should include information about the details disclosed, together with a note of your own actions. Ensure that the appropriate information is filed confidentially, in a marked envelope, in a locked filing cabinet at the main office of the parish council.

- **Seek supervision, support from the Designated Person –**

Abuse can be one of the most difficult and distressing areas of working with children and young people. Do not underestimate how it may make you feel.

Who else can I contact for advice?

Childline	24 hour young person's helpline	0800 1111
NSPCC	24 hour child protection helpline	0808 800 5000 help@nspcc.org.uk
Police	The Family Unit	Huntingdon 01480 456111

Adopted at meeting of Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council held on 5th June 2007.

Last Reviewed 4th February 2025

Signed.....

Miss J Bowd

Parish Clerk