



LAVERSTOCK & FORD PARISH COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Purpose/Principles	The purpose of this policy is to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, who come into contact with representatives of the Parish Council and to facilitate the best possible professional practice from the Council, its staff, contractors and volunteers.
Scope	Employees, Councillors, Members of the public, suppliers, contractors
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Relevant Documents	<i>Safeguarding Guidance for Councillors & Staff</i>

Contents

2. POLICY STATEMENT	5
2.1 Policy Aims	5
2.2 Objectives The objectives are:-	6
3. EMPLOYMENT ISSUES 3.1 Recruitment and Selection of Staff/ Volunteers	6
3.2 Allegations against Employees/ Councillor/ Volunteers	7
3.3 Reporting of Concerns	7
4. GOOD PRACTICE	8
4.1 You should:-	8
4.2 You should never:-	8
5. SAFEGUARDING	9
5.1 DEFINITIONS	9
6. PROMOTING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, the Parish Council will:	10
7. USE OF FACILITIES BY GROUPS FOR USE WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULTS	11
8. SAFE WORKING PRACTICE	11
9. PHOTOGRAPHY / FILM (see also communications policy)	12
We will seek to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by:	13
10. EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOUR	14
11. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF, COUNCILLORS AND VOLUNTEERS	14
12. WHISTLEBLOWING All 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 LADO or Safeguarding Team	15
13. RADICALISATION	15
14. WHAT SHOULD BE A CAUSE FOR CONCERN	15
15. Reporting Disclosure	16
16. USEFUL SAFEGUARDING CONTACT DETAILS	17
WILTSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD (WSCB)	18
https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/getting-help/asking-adult-help/#Writesomeonealetter	18
	2

Adopted February 2023 Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

Safeguarding Policy

REVIEW OF THIS POLICY	18
DECLARATION	18
LAVERSTOCK & FORD PARISH COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING POLICY	19
Councillor, employee or volunteer declaration	19

1. SUMMARY

As an organisation that occasionally works with children, young people and vulnerable adults and that attends public events, Laverstock & Ford Parish Council councillors, staff, and volunteers have both a moral and a legal obligation to ensure the highest possible standard of care for those children and vulnerable adults who use our services. Children, young people and vulnerable adults may be abused regardless of their age, racial origin, social class, gender, culture, religious belief, disability or sexual identity. Most abuse is committed by those who are known to the child, young person or vulnerable adult and who are trusted by them. This can be from within or outside the family.

Laverstock & Ford Parish Council is committed to providing safe activities for young people and to this end, this Policy Document has been compiled. External Contractors, working on behalf of the Council, will be asked to adopt a suitable Child Protection Policy and/or Safeguarding Policy if their work brings them into contact with children and young people, or vulnerable adults.

For the purpose of this policy “a child” means anyone under the age of 18. This policy does not apply to employees of the council who are under the age of 18. Such employees are covered by Government employment policies and legislation.

A “young person” means any child between the ages of 12 and 21. A “vulnerable adult” is defined as an adult at risk of abuse or neglect, who has needs for care and support, who is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect and as a result of their care needs - is unable to protect themselves.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The Council is committed to ensuring that children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Council.

We will endeavour to achieve this by:-

- Ensuring that our staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supervised.
- Ensuring that our councillors, staff and volunteers, that work directly with children, undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service check, where permitted by law.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with partner organisations, councillors, employees, volunteers, parents and carers.

Decisions on which employees/volunteers will be DBS checked will be taken by the Parish Clerk, in compliance with relevant legislation. Decisions on which councillors will be DBS checked will be taken by the Parish Clerk in consultation with the councillor and the council Chair.

2.1 Policy Aims

This Child Protection Policy is provided as part of an induction package to all councillors and those employed by Laverstock & Ford Parish Council, whether paid or unpaid, who will have direct contact with children. The aims are:-

- To create a healthy and safe environment at all activities.
- To ensure children are listened to, and kept safe from harm
- To support and encourage parents to voice their opinions regarding the welfare of their children and to raise their awareness of the importance of asking questions about the clubs and activities which they send their children to.

- To ensure councillors, staff and volunteers, who work with children, are well informed, supported and enabled to provide the best possible practice.

2.2 Objectives

The objectives are:-

- To raise the level of awareness of councillors, staff and volunteers about child abuse and its various forms.
- To raise the level of awareness of councillors, staff and volunteers about what children are entitled to be protected from.
- To ensure that all councillors, staff and volunteers are able to recognise signs which could signify the abuse of a child or young person.
- To promote the general welfare, health and full development of children during all activities.
- To develop effective procedures in recording and responding to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse.

3. EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

3.1 Recruitment and Selection of Staff/ Volunteers

All applicants who will work with children in the course of their job will be asked to complete a disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service to ensure that there are no irregularities in their background which may give cause for concern. All new employees, whether paid or unpaid, will be provided with the Safeguarding Policy and asked to sign to confirm that they will abide by it.

Application forms are designed to ascertain as much information as possible, such as, but not limited to:-

- Past career, relevant interests, any gaps in employment and reasons for leaving, educational, national governing body, First aid qualifications and child protection training.
- At least one reference is taken up, and where relevant followed up by letter or telephone. References taken up will ascertain the person's suitability to work with children.
- It is made clear that all information remains confidential. Personal identification will be confirmed by reference to a passport, driving licence, birth or marriage certificate, National Insurance number or utility bill.

3.2 Allegations against Employees/ Councillor/ Volunteers

If a child, parent or guardian makes allegations to the Parish Council against any person working for or acting on behalf of the Parish Council it will be recorded by the Parish Clerk. On receipt of the complaint the Parish Clerk will contact Wiltshire County Social Services and/or the Police (if appropriate), to appraise them of the situation.

The Parish Clerk should inform the person against whom the complaint has been made as soon as possible. If the allegation appears to be a case where to do so might prejudice a criminal investigation, this will require consultation with the Police to ascertain the appropriate procedure.

The Course of action to be taken in relation to any allegation will be decided by the nature of such an allegation, and if it is of a criminal nature, upon the advice of the Police. In the event that the allegation is made against the Parish Clerk, the above procedures will be dealt with by the Chair of the Parish Council.

3.3 Reporting of Concerns

Those working on Parish Council activities have a duty to ensure that any suspicion, incident, allegation or other manifestation relating to child protection is reported to the Parish Clerk. The Parish Clerk will take appropriate action and report to the Police and/or Social Services, if it is deemed to be the necessary course of action.

4. GOOD PRACTICE

It is possible to reduce situations where abuse may occur. The following are more specific examples of care which should be taken when working with children:-

4.1 You should:-

- Always be publicly open when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Avoid any situations where you and an individual are completely unobserved (encourage an open environment).
- Where possible, children should not be left unattended, however this will depend on age and circumstances.
- In a sports situation, where possible, parents should take on the responsibility for their children in the changing rooms. If groups have to be supervised in the changing rooms, ensure that you work in pairs, and do not enter changing rooms of the opposite sex, when supervising children.
- Where there are mixed groups, supervision, where possible, there should be by a male **and** female member of staff/ volunteer/ councillor.
- You must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally.

4.2 You should never:-

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games.
- Share a bedroom with a child.
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate contact.
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun.
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

- Do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves.
- Enter the changing rooms of the opposite sex when supervising children, young people and vulnerable adults, unless in an emergency (always try to have another adult accompany you wherever possible). *Failure to follow these guidelines may well result in formal action under the Council's disciplinary procedures.*

Everyone should be aware that it is **not good practice to:-**

- Spend any time alone with children, young people and vulnerable adults away from others. When talking to children on your own ensure you can be seen by others.
- Take children alone on car journeys, however short.
- Take children to your home where they will be alone with you.

If exceptionally any of these situations are expected to occur, plans on how to ensure the child is safe and sound must be made and recorded with your manager/ Parish Clerk/ Chair and enacted with the knowledge of the parents.

5. SAFEGUARDING

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. This policy promotes good practice in safeguarding for Councillors during the course of their duties where they may be in contact with vulnerable adults, children and young people, and parish council staff. The Parish Council will review it annually.

5.1 DEFINITIONS

1.1 The term child is used to refer to anyone under the age of 18.

1.2 The term vulnerable adult, or adult at risk is used to refer to anyone aged 18 or over who is, or maybe, unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation, or maybe in need of community care services.

1.3 'Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children' is defined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Undertaking that role to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.
- Prevent the radicalisation of children from minority groups and be aware of this as a risk to their wellbeing

6. PROMOTING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, the Parish Council will:

- Provide safe facilities and do regular safety assessments.
- Ensure that employees, councillors and leaders of activities in / on parish facilities, are aware of the safeguarding expectations.
- Ensure that the policy for users of parish facilities includes a requirement that they are safe to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. (eg any adults who have regular contact with them)
- Unsupervised contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults: any adult who has unsupervised contact during the course of their parish council duties should undergo appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service checks.
- Ensure that attendees at functions, eg a Community Fun Day, are aware that parents are responsible for their children's safety and the location of a dedicated safe place for lost children is clear.
- Display on notice boards the relevant safeguarding contacts for advice and help.

7. USE OF FACILITIES BY GROUPS FOR USE WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULTS

(eg clubs / organisations regularly using the Parish Council Community Assets) The Parish Council will require the leaders to:

- Have public liability insurance.
- Have a suitable safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adult policy and/or agree to work to the Parish Council's policy and relevant guidance.
- Ensure leaders make their members aware of the Parish Council Policy and ensure that it is followed whilst using parish facilities.
- Ensure leaders have valid enhanced DBS checks as appropriate and know where the first aid box is.
- Carry out risk assessments for individual activities.

8. SAFE WORKING PRACTICE

Where their work brings them into contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, all service providers for Parish Council projects and services should have a safeguarding policy in place. Users of Parish Facilities must follow the safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adult's policy and procedures at all times. For example they should:

- Never leave children, young people or vulnerable adults unattended with adults who are not their parent, guardian or recognised carer, or whom 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 no photos or videos of individuals are taken unless written permission has been obtained from parents/carers.
- Ensure they have access to a first aid kit and telephone and know fire procedures. Ensure that where a child, young person or vulnerable adult needs assistance with toilet trips and when first aid is required, that this is carried out in pairs or in the latter case, that it is carried out where they can be seen.
- When working outside, ensure activities, breaks and clothing are suitable for the weather conditions and that shelter is available where possible.

9. PHOTOGRAPHY / FILM (see also communications policy)

Sharing photographs and films of our activities can help us celebrate the successes and achievements of our children and young people, provide a record of our activities and raise awareness of our activities as a Parish Council.

The welfare of the children and young people taking part in our activities is paramount. Children, their parents and carers have a right to decide whether their images are taken and how these may be used, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Consent to take images of children, young people and vulnerable adults is only meaningful when children, their parents and carers understand how the images will be used and stored, and are fully aware of the potential risks

associated with the use and distribution of these images. There are potential risks associated with sharing images of children online.

It is not against the law to film or photograph anyone in a Public Space (as opposed to laws and regulations imposed when on private land) but Councillors, members of staff, volunteers and contracted service providers should be vigilant at all times regarding people using cameras or videos within the Council's facilities and at events which involve children, young people and vulnerable adults and ensure that they are not using equipment inappropriately, such as 'upskirting'. Any suspicious activity should be reported to the facility manager, event organiser or safeguarding officer.

We will seek to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe by:

- always asking for consent (written consent where appropriate) from a child and their parents or carers before taking and using a child's image
- always explaining what images will be used for, how they will be stored and what potential risks are associated with sharing images of children
- making it clear that if a child or their family withdraw consent for an image to be shared, it may not be possible to delete images that have already been shared or published

Photography and/or filming for personal use

- When children themselves, parents, carers or spectators are taking photographs or filming at our events and the images are for personal use, we will publish guidance about image sharing in the event programmes and/or announce details of our photography policy before the start of the event. This includes:
- reminding parents, carers and children that they need to give consent for [name of group/organisation] to take and use their images
- asking that photos taken during an event are not shared on social media unless permission is gained from children, their parents and carers before sharing photographs and videos that include them
- recommending that people check the privacy settings of their social media account to understand who else will be able to view any images they share

- reminding children, parents and carers who they can talk to if they have any concerns about images being shared.

10. EXPECTATIONS OF BEHAVIOUR

All users of Parish Facilities should:

- Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction with users should be appropriate and professional.
- Treat each other with respect and show consideration for other groups using the facilities.
- Refrain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism and bullying and in addition to report any instances of such behaviour to group leaders, parish councillors, the parish clerk or parents and carers, as appropriate.

11. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF, COUNCILLORS 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 in relation to a safeguarding issue is made against a member of staff or volunteer, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Clerk (or the Chair of the Parish Council if the allegation concerns the Clerk).
- The Parish Council will follow the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board procedures for managing allegations against staff/volunteers on the Wiltshire SCB website. No attempt should be made to investigate or take action before consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). See contact details on page 16.

12. WHISTLEBLOWING All 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 LADO or Safeguarding Team

13. RADICALISATION

“Extremism” is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas. Terrorist groups very often draw on extremist ideas developed by extremist organisations.

Laverstock & Ford Parish Council recognises the risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults from radicalisation and its responsibility to be aware that schools and childcare providers are expected to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. This means being able to demonstrate both a general understanding of the risks affecting children and young people in the area and a specific understanding of how to identify individual children who may be at risk of radicalisation and what to do to support them.

14. 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 or vulnerable adult. Abuse falls into four main categories and can include child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Neglect

15. Reporting Disclosure

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult tells you they are being abused, the NSPCC recommend the following steps

1. **Listen carefully to what they're saying** Be patient and focus on what you're being told. Try not to express your own views and feelings. If you appear shocked or as if you don't believe them it could make them stop talking and take back what they've said.
2. **Give them the tools to talk** If they're struggling to talk to you, show them [Childline's letter builder tool](#). It uses simple prompts to help them share what's happening and how they're feeling.
3. **Let them know they've done the right thing by telling you** Reassurance can make a big impact. If they've kept the abuse a secret it can have a big impact knowing they've shared what's happened.
4. **Tell them it's not their fault** Abuse is never a child's fault. It's important they hear, and know, this.
5. **Say you'll take them seriously** They may have kept the abuse secret because they were scared they wouldn't be believed. Make sure they know they can trust you and you'll listen and support them.
6. **Don't confront the alleged abuser** Confronting the alleged abuser could make the situation worse for the child, young person or vulnerable adult.
7. **Explain what you'll do next** For younger children, explain you're going to speak to someone who will be able to help. For older children, explain you'll need to report the abuse to someone who can help.
8. **Report what you have been told as soon as possible** [Report](#) as soon after you've been told about the abuse so the details are fresh in your mind and action can be taken quickly. It can be helpful to take notes as soon after you've spoken to the child, young person or vulnerable adult. Try to keep these as accurate as possible.

All staff and volunteers coming in to contact with children need to have an awareness of safeguarding. Free introductory online training or more specific face to face safeguarding training can be booked at: www.wiltshirescb.org.uk

All agencies working with children are recommended to follow the multi-agency procedures at: www.wiltshirescb.org.uk

16. USEFUL SAFEGUARDING CONTACT DETAILS

CONTACT EMAIL		TELEPHONE
<p>Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) To report a concern of abuse or neglect call the MASH team.</p>	<p>mash@wiltshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>Integrated Front Door (IFD)</p> <p>0300 4560 108</p> <p><i>Mon-Thus – 8:45am to 5pm</i> <i>Fri – 8:45am - 4pm</i></p> <p>Out of Hours</p> <p>0300 456 0100</p>
<p>Designated Officer for Allegations (DOFA) To report an allegation against a person in a position of trust.</p>	<p>dofaservice@wiltshire.gov.uk</p>	<p>0300 456 0108</p>
<p>Laverstock & Ford Parish Council Clerk To report NON-URGENT concerns about a councillors conduct.</p>	<p>parish-clerk@laverstock-ford.co.uk</p>	<p>N/A</p>

WILTSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD (WSCB)

For general safeguarding issues and training please contact the WSCB team.

CONTACT EMAIL		TELEPHONE
Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board	LSCB@wiltshire.gov.uk	01225 718 093

See Also NSPCC: Safeguarding and Protecting: <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/getting-help/asking-adult-help/#Writesomeonealetter>

REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

The Parish Council are to review this policy, its effectiveness and its implementation bi-annually. It will ensure that employees and statutory authorities are consulted as when appropriate.

DECLARATION

Laverstock & Ford Parish Council is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm.

As a councillor, employee or volunteer of the Council it is therefore important that you have taken the time to thoroughly read the Safeguarding Policy. By being made aware of the policy, it is our intention to ensure that all councillors, employees and volunteers are pro-active in providing a safe environment for the young people in their care. Any disciplinary measures

required as a result of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with normal disciplinary procedures.

You should sign and date the attached form and return it to the Parish Clerk once you have read the policy.

LAVERSTOCK & FORD PARISH COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Councillor, employee or volunteer declaration

I have read and fully understood the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and hereby declare that I will carry out my role in line with policy statements and procedures contained therein.

Signed

NAME IN CAPITALS

Date

ADOPTED: Feb 20 2023

NEXT REVIEW DUE: February 2025