

Laverstock & Ford Parish Council



Laverstock & Ford Parish Council

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Purpose :	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, and others conducting business on behalf of Laverstock & Ford Parish Council
Date adopted:	
Minute Ref:	
Previous:	20.02.2023
Next Review :	November 2027
Policy Owners:	Communications & Public Engagement Working Group
Supersedes :	LFPC Safeguarding Policy 2023

Policy Statement

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, emotional harm, neglect including cyber bullying, sexting and peer on peer abuse.

All members of Laverstock & Ford Parish Council should read the Safeguarding Policy. Having read the Policy they should be proactive in providing a safe environment for children and vulnerable people who are involved in Parish Council activities.

Safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is **everyone's** responsibility. Decisions on which employees and volunteers will be checked via the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) will be taken by the Parish Clerk, in compliance with the 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. All Councillors are to be provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and are required to acknowledge and sign to confirm they will abide by it. All new Councillors will also be required to sign.

Policy Objective:

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To ensure that, where possible, all facilities and activities offered by 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

This policy document aims to guide members of Laverstock & Ford Parish Council should any child protection issue or any issues with vulnerable adults arise during their work.

Responsibilities & Procedures

The Parish Clerk will be the appointed Safeguarding Officer from within the Council and his/her responsibilities will include:

- a. Ensuring that before any Parish Council organised event with children or vulnerable persons, the Designated Safeguarding Lead briefs participants appropriately.
- b. Ensuring that members are aware of the risk they may face in certain circumstances whilst carrying out their duties.
- c. Ensuring 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.
- d. Ensuring that before any volunteers or paid members of staff are recruited to work with children and vulnerable persons they are interviewed and two references taken up.

Decisions on which employees and volunteers will be checked via the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) will be taken by the Parish Clerk, in compliance with the 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, (following a risk assessment).

All Councillors are to be provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and are required to acknowledge and sign to confirm they will abide by it. All new Councillors will also be required to sign.

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Councillors will adhere to the following 'Code of Behaviour', namely:

- 1) A minimum of two adults present when supervising children or vulnerable adults.
- 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, or vulnerable adult.
- 6) Keep records of any incidents or allegations a person may make to any committee member or volunteer.
- 7) Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will be responsible for ensuring the matter is handled following the Local Authority Safeguarding MASH procedures (see page 5).
- 8) Facilities offered by the Parish Council have been inspected on a regular basis and at least annually by a representative of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) or a similar organisation.
- 9) Sharing information about child protection and good practice with partner organisations, councillors, employees, volunteers, parents and carers.
- 10) In the event of a contractor, working directly for the Parish Council, being deemed to be working in any area where children or vulnerable adults may be at risk, then that contractor will be asked to provide their Safeguarding Policy
- 11) 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.

CODE OF BEHAVIOUR SUMMARY

- Do put this Code into practice at all times
- Do treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Do set an example you would wish others to follow
- Do treat all people equally
- Listen to the child/Young Person (Y/P) and repeat their words if necessary
- DO NOT question, prompt or lead
- Reassure and support the child/YP
- DO NOT pass judgement on what you are being told
- AFFIRM that the child/YP has done the right thing
- DO not delay in passing on the information
- Record everything as soon as possible whilst it is fresh in your mind
- Do ensure more than one other adult is present at all times when dealing with a young person or vulnerable adult. Do not make promises. Safeguard yourself

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- Do advise young people or vulnerable adults who they can talk to, if asked, about any concerns they may have.
- Do make everyone aware of the Parish Council's child and vulnerable adult protection procedures, as outlined in this policy: young people, vulnerable adults, parents and other volunteers
- Do remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- Do not just rely on your good name, or status to protect you

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 the [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, and vulnerable adults explain that 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 as possible after you've been told about the abuse so the details are fresh in your mind, enabling action to 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 (see below and page 5.)

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

Useful safeguarding contact details

MASH - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub email: mash@wiltshire.gov.uk
To report a concern of abuse or neglect call the MASH team.

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Mon -Thurs – 8:45am to 5pm. Fri – 8:45am - 4pm Call [0300 456 0108](tel:03004560108)

Out of Hours: Call [0300 456 0100](tel:03004560100)

Designated Officer for Allegations (DOFA)

To report an allegation against a person in a position of trust

dofaservice@wiltshire.gov.uk Call 0300 456 0108

Laverstock & Ford Parish Council Parish Clerk

To report NON-URGENT concerns about a councillors conduct or non-compliance of safeguarding policy

Parish Clerk parish-clerk@laverstockford-pc.gov.uk Mobile (not manned 24/7) Call 07771 802839

Declaration

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All members of Laverstock & Ford Parish Council should read the Safeguarding Policy. Having read the Policy they should be proactive in providing a safe environment for children and vulnerable people who are involved in Parish Council activities.

This Policy will be reviewed bi-annually

-- POLICY ENDS --

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Cllr's Signature to acknowledge Policy: