

Horsted Keynes Parish Council

Safeguarding Policy

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1 Introduction

In the interests of child protection and the welfare and protection of vulnerable adults, Horsted Keynes Parish Council is committed to ensuring that children and young people under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults, over the age of 18, are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Parish Council. Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults are **everyone's** responsibility.

The 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 on land or premises for which the Parish Council holds responsibility (either in its own name or as Custodian Trustee or Managing Trustees). 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.

1.1 Policy Objectives

- 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 caring organisation.
- To develop procedures in recording and responding to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse and neglect.

2 Policy Statement

All suspicions regarding or allegations of abuse against a child or adult at risk of abuse or neglect will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately.

The Parish Clerk is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to whom suspicions or concerns should be reported. If the concern is about the Parish Clerk, then the concern should be reported to one of the Designated Councillors. The DSL has the responsibility for recording and reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the Local Authority Designated Officer¹ (LADO).

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or when changes occur in National Legislation or Procedures.

2.1 Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is the Parish Clerk. This person's responsibilities are to monitor, report and record actual or alleged incidents of abuse to the Local Authority Designated Officer or Police, and to raise any concerns with the Designated Councillors and to support the reporters.

Designated Councillors. These will generally be the Child Protection Officer and the Youth Council Liaison Member who have been trained in Safeguarding. They will act as a point of contact for the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Safeguarding statistics will be reported to Full Council annually but if a referral has been made that will be reported to the next Full Council meeting, but no case details will be given.

Facilities offered by the Parish Council (in its own name or as Custodian/Management Trustee for a Charity) have been inspected on a regular basis and at least annually by a representative of RoSPA or a similar organisation.

2.2 Safer Recruitment

The Parish Council ensures that all job descriptions contain reference to the Council Safeguarding Policy and where any employee, volunteers, or councillors, are expected to have unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk the appropriate DBS and barred lists checks will be undertaken.

All people who are involved in supervising children or vulnerable adults are required to have a 'clear' Enhanced DBS Check with Child and/or Adult Workforce (whichever is applicable; with or without Barring) Certificate which has been registered with the Update Service (i.e., is portable). This must be validated by the Clerk, who will, with the person's consent, check if anything has changed since the Certificate was printed – to be undertaken at least every six months, and the Clerk will keep a record of this.

The Update Service is free where the "volunteer" has been entered on the DBS application and paid for annually if not.

¹ West Sussex County Council LADO – 0330 222 6450 (9:00am to 5:00pm) OR 0330 222 26664 (5:00pm to 9:00am) OR lado@westsussex.gov.uk

Copies of criminal records check certificates should not be stored. Instead, a confidential record should be kept of:

- the date the check was completed, and its outcome.
- the level and type of check (standard/enhanced/barred list check and the relevant workforce).
- the reference number of the certificate.
- The date the certificate Update Service check was completed, and its outcome.

2.3 Supporting Policies/Procedures

- Youth Council Compliance Policy.
- Council Information and Data Protection Policy.
- Council Retention of Records Procedure.
- Council Document Retention & Schedule.
- Council Social Media Policy.
- Councillor Responsibilities as a Charity Trustee.

3 Promoting a safer environment

In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, the Parish Council will:

- Ensure all new Councillors are to be provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and are required to acknowledge they will abide by it.
- Ensure that before any Parish Council organised event with children or vulnerable persons, one of the Designated Councillors briefs participants appropriately.
- Ensure that Council members are aware of the risk they may face in certain circumstances whilst carrying out their duties.
- Ensure 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.
- Provide safe facilities and do regular safety assessments.
 - Ensure that employees, Councillors, and leaders of activities in the parish or in/on parish facilities, are aware of the safeguarding expectations.
 - Employees, Councillors, and volunteers who have unsupervised contact with children, young people, or vulnerable adults during the course of their duties MUST undergo appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") checks BEFORE commencement of such duties.
 - Display on Parish Council notice boards in the village & in the Village Hall the relevant safeguarding contacts for advice and help. A copy will also be made available on the Parish Council website.
 - Never leave children, young people, or vulnerable adults unattended with adults who have not been subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
 - Ensure registers are complete and attendees are marked in and signed out (under 8's must be collected by a parent/carer/family friend).

All users of Parish Council facilities, organisers of parish events and volunteers will adhere to the "List of Recommended Behaviour", namely:

- A minimum of two adults (not related) present when supervising children. Where possible, have male and female leaders (not related) working with a mixed group.
- Not to play physical contact games.
- Adults to always wear appropriate clothing.

- Ensure that accidents are recorded in the accident book.
- Never do anything of a personal nature for a young person.
- Keep records in an incident book of any allegations a young person may make to any committee member, employee, or volunteer.

3.1 Risk Assessments

Ensure that before any Parish Council organised event with children or vulnerable persons, details of the event must be given to the Clerk who will confirm whether the planned activities are covered by the Parish Council insurance.

A first aid and medical risk assessment must be carried out, in addition to the event risk assessment.

3.2 Adult to child ratios²

There is no specific guidance about supervision ratios for organisations that are not in the education or early years sectors.

The NSPCC have put together some best practice guidance to help the Parish Council work out how many adults are needed to supervise children safely.

The NSPCC recommend having at least two adults present when working with or supervising children and young people. They recommend the following adult to child ratios as the minimum numbers to help keep children safe:

- Age 9 to 12 years, one adult to eight children.
- Age 13 to 18, one adult to ten children.

3.3 First Aid Ratios

The NSPCC recommend that at least one adult is trained in first aid.

3.4 Travelling Ratios

When travelling with children and young people the recommended adult to child ratio can vary depending on:

- Never leave children, young people, or vulnerable adults unattended with adults who have not been subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- age of the children, their behaviours and needs.
- size of the vehicle that you are travelling in.

² [Recommended adult to child ratios for working with children | NSPCC Learning](#)

If you are travelling in a vehicle, it is recommended that there is one adult driving and one adult supervising the children. Larger groups and vehicles will require more adults to ensure adequate supervision.

3.5 Transport Protocol

A Duty of Care exists for any driver and anyone who assists in transporting a child or vulnerable adult, which requires adherence to a standard of care while performing any acts that could foreseeably harm others.

Avoid using private cars to transport children and young people, unless this involves parents or carers making private transport arrangements with each other. If this is the case, make it clear that this is a private arrangement and not something the Parish Council has set up.

If Councillors and/or friends/volunteers are making transport arrangements on behalf of the Parish Council, the following bullet points must be adhered to:

- The driver and anyone who assists must have a current criminal record check in place.
- A comprehensive risk assessment must have been completed for transport and travel for each journey.
- Contact your insurer to find out if you are covered by your regular insurance policy – this should include social, domestic and pleasure, and volunteering/business use.
- Parent/guardian/carer consent must have been obtained.

3.6 Consent and Information Sharing

Get written consent from parents or carers for their child being involved.

Seek consent from children and young people too. If necessary, make alternative arrangements for those who don't want to take part.

Consent forms to record consent for children to take part in activities should be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Inform parents and carers about how this information will be stored and used.

3.7 Emergency Information

Create a list of emergency contact numbers for each child and make sure this is easily available to the group leaders who are responsible for the child.

Make sure group leaders know the procedures for contacting the emergency services if they need to. Give parents and carers a number they can call if they need to contact you or their child in an emergency.

3.8 Record Keeping, Retention and Storage³

The Clerk will keep all written records, such as consent forms, medical information, and any records about child protection concerns securely.

Every organisation that holds records about children or adults must have policies and procedures in place regarding the retention and storage of that information. Clear guidelines for the retention, storage and destruction of child protection records are also required as part of safeguarding policies and procedures.

³ Refer to Council Retention of Records Procedure and Council Document & Retention Schedule documents.

4 Safeguarding Training

The Parish Council will provide the necessary resources for induction, training of employees, and Councillors and support mechanisms in relation to Safeguarding incidents and reports.

The appropriate level of training will be given to:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Designated Councillors.
- Councillors.

The NSPCC run a range of online and face-to-face safeguarding training courses for anyone working or volunteering with children and young people.

The CPD Online College run a range of online and face-to-face safeguarding training courses⁴ for anyone working or volunteering with children and young people.

The Clerk will keep a register/record of all safeguarding training on child or vulnerable adult protection.

⁴ <https://cpdonline.co.uk/courses/safeguarding/>

5 Guidelines for responding to abuse or suspicion of abuse – some DO's and DON'Ts

- Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child/adult at risk on the basis that you believe what they are saying.
- Do tell the child/adult at risk they have done the right thing in telling you where they are disclosing to you.
- Do reassure them that they are not to blame.
- Do be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why.
- Do tell the child/adult at risk what you are going to do next and what they can expect to happen.
- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell the Designated Safeguarding lead immediately and always within one hour.
- Do write down everything said, distinguishing fact from opinion, and what was done.
- Do seek medical attention if that appears to be immediately necessary.
- Do inform parents/carers unless there is suspicion of their involvement.
- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Don't interrogate the child/adult at risk – it is not your job to carry out an investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this and have the legal duty to do it.
- Don't cast doubt on what you are being told, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- Don't say anything that makes the child/adult at risk feel responsible for the abuse.
- Don't Do Nothing – make sure you tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately – they will know how to follow this up and where to go for further advice.

6 Definitions of Abuse

Abuse of a child or vulnerable adult may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may occur as a result of a failure to undertake action or appropriate care tasks. It may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur where a child or vulnerable adult is persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which they have not, or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of the individual.

Children and vulnerable adults can be abused either through someone inflicting harm, or failing to act to prevent harm. Abuse can be carried out by someone known to the person or (more rarely) by a complete stranger, and by men, women or other young people. It is not always easy to recognise abuse, especially as many of the indicators may have other reasonable explanations.

Abuse in all of its forms can affect a person at any age and its impact can be so damaging that, if not treated, it may follow the individual for many years. It is important that everyone understands what constitutes abuse, indicators of abuse, what to do, and where to seek advice if abuse is suspected or alleged.

Abuse: emotional

The persistent emotional ill-treatment of a person so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the person's emotional and behavioural development.

Abuse: neglect

The persistent or severe neglect of a person, or the failure to protect a person from exposure to any kind of danger, including cold, starvation or extreme failure to carry out important aspects of care, resulting in the significant impairment of the person's health or development, including non-organic failure to thrive.

Abuse: physical

This includes hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a person. Physical harm may also be caused when a member of the family or carer fabricates or induces illness in a person who they are looking after.

Abuse: sexual

Forcing or enticing a child or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child or vulnerable adult is aware of what is happening, including:

- Physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts.
- Non-contact activities, such as involving persons in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities.
- Encouraging persons to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Abuse: psychological

Includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

Abuse: financial or material

Includes theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions, or benefits.

Abuse: neglect and acts of omission

Includes ignoring medical or physical care needs; failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services; the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Neglect might also occur during organised activities if children or vulnerable adults are exposed to risk of injury or there is a failure to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Sometimes extreme examples of neglect can amount to a criminal offence.

Abuse: discriminatory

Includes race, sex, culture, religion or politics that is based on a person's disability, age or sexuality and other forms of harassment; slurs or similar treatment; hate crime.

Abuse: institutional

Institutional abuse although not a separate category of abuse in itself, requires specific mention simply to highlight that children or adults placed in any kind of care home or day care establishment are potentially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Abuse: multiple forms

Multiple forms of abuse may occur in an ongoing relationship or an abusive service setting to one person, or to more than one person at a time, making it important to look beyond single incidents or breaches in standards, to underlying dynamics and patterns of harm. Any or all of these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate intent and targeting of children or vulnerable adults, negligence or ignorance.

Abuse: domestic

Any incident of threatening behavior, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are, or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.

Abuse: racially motivated

Whilst not classified as an individual category of abuse, racially motivated abuse can take any of these forms and this needs to be noted additionally in situations when the victim perceives abuse to have been racist in its intent.

7 Safeguarding Incident Report

Your information (Person completing the form)			
Name			
Address			
Contact number(s)			
Email			
Name of organisation/club or session		Your role	

Personal information – child / young person/adult at risk			
Name		Date of birth	
Is there any information about the child/young person/adult that would be useful to consider?			

Contact information – parent / carer (if applicable)		
Name(s)		
Address		
Contact number(s)		
Email		
Have they been notified of this incident?	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Please explain why this decision has been taken
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Please give details of what was said / actions agreed

Incident details*			
Date and time of incident			
Please tick one:	<input type="checkbox"/> I am reporting my own concerns.	<input type="checkbox"/> I am responding to concerns raised by someone else – please fill in their details:	
Name of person raising concern		Role within the sport or relationship to the child	
Contact number(s)			
Email			

Details of the incident or concerns (include other relevant information, such as description of any injuries and whether you are recording this incident as fact, opinion or hearsay)

* Attach a separate sheet if more space is required (e.g. multiple witnesses)

Incident details (continued)			
Child/Adults account of the incident			
Please provide any witness accounts of the incident			
Name of witness (and date of birth, if a child)		Role within the sport or relationship to the child	
Address			
Contact number(s)			
Email			
Details of any person involved in this incident or alleged to have caused the incident / injury			
Name (and date of birth, if a child)		Role within the sport or relationship to the child	
Address			
Contact number(s)			
Email			

External Action Taken		
Has the incident been reported to any external agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – please provide further details:
Name of organisation / agency		
Contact person		
Contact number(s)		
Email		
Agreed action or advice given		

Internal Action Taken		
Is the incident being monitored internally?	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes – please provide further details:
Agreed action or advice given:		
Staff/volunteer responsible for internal monitoring:		
Email address:		
Agreed review date: (if applicable)		
Final Outcome:		

Declaration	
Your signature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Print name	
Today's date	