

Castle Cary Town Council

Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Purpose: To define the Policy Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy for Castle Cary Town Council, its Committees and Working Groups

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Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

1. Introduction

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. Castle Cary Town Council (CCTC) takes its responsibilities for everyone using the premises and to protect staff, Councillors and volunteers very seriously.

2. Definitions:

A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 years. A vulnerable adult is someone who by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness is unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. An adult for the purposes of this policy is anyone over 18 years of age. Employees, Volunteers and Councillors are paid staff members or volunteers.

3. Substantial Access:

Where an individual is regularly caring for, training or supervising a child, young person or vulnerable adult. Where an individual has sole charge of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

4. Promoting a Safe Environment:

In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults CCTC wishes to promote a safeguarding culture in its premises and activity areas.

We will achieve this by:

- ✓ Appointing a trained, named Safeguarding Person who will manage the Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check processes keeping a record of essential people, their registration numbers and their dates for renewal.
- ✓ Providing safe facilities and undertaking regular safety assessments.
- ✓ Publish a written code of conduct for users of CCTC facilities.
- ✓ Ensuring that employees, Councillors, volunteers and group leaders of activities are aware of the safeguarding culture.
- ✓ Requiring all employees, Councillors, volunteers who come into regular unsupervised contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults during the course of their duties to undergo appropriate DBS checks. Portability of DBS checks will be acceptable where there are no other prohibitive checks.
- ✓ Maintaining channels of communication with leaders of groups involving children, young people or vulnerable adults in our wider community such as Ansford Parish Council.
- ✓ Making details of the named Safeguarding Person available and contacts for Childline and emergency services.

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We all have a duty to protect our children, young people or vulnerable adults but are not responsible for deciding whether abuse has taken place. If they have concerns these should be reported to the Safeguarding Person, Chair of Council or The Town Clerk who will know how to report an incident to the Local Safeguarding board, the Police or Social Services.

5. Hiring of facilities to groups for use with children, young people or vulnerable adults when group leaders have a regular and substantial access and parents/carers are not present:

CCTC will require the hirer to:

- ✓ Have membership of a National Governing Body (NGB) or similarly recognised body Child and Vulnerable Adult Policy 1 1Castle Cary Town Council Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy
- ✓ Have public liability insurance
- ✓ Have suitable safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults policy or agree to work to the CCTC's policy
- ✓ Have a register for use in emergencies with any details of allergies or medical conditions which parents or carers feel group leaders need to know about.
- ✓ Ensure group leaders have valid DBS checks
- ✓ Do risk assessments for individual activities
- ✓ Ensure group leaders are aware of the whereabouts of the first aid box
- ✓ Ensure that group leaders make their members aware of the CCTC Code of Conduct and ensure that it is followed whilst using Town facilities.

Hiring of facilities for children's parties

Hirers must satisfy the following:

- ✓ Adequate adult supervision is to be provided.
- ✓ They are aware of the Code of Conduct and are prepared to comply with it.

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Safeguarding Code of Conduct

Councillors, volunteers and staff must:

- ✓ Treat all children and people with dignity and respect
- ✓ Provide an example for good conduct that others can follow
- ✓ Challenge unacceptable behaviour e.g. bullying and report allegations/suspicions of abuse
- ✓ Ensure that when possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people, or at least be within sight or hearing of others
- ✓ Respect their right to personal privacy and encourage children and vulnerable adults to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviours they do not like
- ✓ Remember that someone else might misinterpret certain actions, no matter how well intentioned
- ✓ Be aware that any physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted
- ✓ Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with children or vulnerable people
- ✓ Always operate within Castle Cary Town Council's Code of Conduct, principles, guidance, policies and procedures

Councillors, volunteers and staff must not:

- ✓ Have inappropriate or unwarranted physical or verbal contact with children or vulnerable adults
- ✓ Be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour or make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or vulnerable adults
- ✓ Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- ✓ Either exaggerate or trivialise any abuse issues
- ✓ Show favouritism to any individual
- ✓ Rely on your good name or that of Castle Cary Town Council to protect you
- ✓ Believe 'it could never happen to me'
- ✓ Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach

There may be exceptional circumstances where it is necessary to restrain a child or a vulnerable adult to prevent them from damaging themselves or others. Only the minimum reasonable force necessary may be used. All incidents of physical restraint must be recorded on an incident form and submitted to the Town Clerk, as well as informing the parents and/or carer as soon as possible.

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Forms of Abuse for information only

APPENDIX for the Safeguarding Policy

Main Forms of Abuse

- a. **Physical Abuse:** This may involve actions such as hitting, shaking and burning as well as the use of inappropriate restraint. Physical abuse, as well as being a deliberate act, can be caused by an omission or failure to act to protect. In the case of children, it includes the giving of alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison to them.
- b. **Emotional Abuse:** Emotional abuse is a persistent lack of love and affection. A child may be constantly verbally abused, threatened, ignored or taunted. Other forms of emotional abuse include excessive overprotection and unrealistic pressure to succeed. In addition it may include intimidation, humiliation, verbal abuse, harassment or discriminatory harassment to adults.
- c. **Sexual Abuse:** Involves 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 or consents to what is happening. It may also involve noncontact activities such as showing pornographic material, sexual innuendo or encouraging someone to behave in a sexually inappropriate way.
- d. **Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a child's or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs. These needs include adequate food and warm clothing and also medical care, social care and educational services. Neglect may include simply being left alone or excluded

Recognising Abuse This is not always easy to do and it is not the responsibility of Councillors, or staff to decide whether or not abuse has taken place, or if a child or vulnerable adult is at significant risk. However the Council does have a responsibility to act and report promptly to the Named Safeguarding Person if they have any concerns or suspicions.

Indications that a child or person may be subject to abuse include:

- ✓ Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruises, cuts and burns particularly if situated on parts of the body not normally prone to such injuries
- ✓ Injuries for which an explanation seems inconsistent • Fear of parents or carers being approached about such injuries
- ✓ Flinching or cowering when touched or approached
- ✓ Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour
- ✓ Fear of being left with a specific person
- ✓ Changes in appearance - sudden loss of hair, dirtiness, weight loss etc.
- ✓ In children, a failure to grow and thrive and showing difficulties in making friends or socialising
- ✓ In adults, a loss of assets and possessions

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This list is by no means exhaustive and it is important to remember that many children and people will exhibit some of these indicators at some time, and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

It is crucial that Councillors, volunteers and staff realise that this is only a process of observation and that at no point should anyone actively seek out abuse or an abuser. The Town Council's responsibility is to ensure that any concern about the welfare of someone is reported to the Named Safeguarding Person and to never assume that others will do it.

The named Safeguarding Officer is Councillor Judi Morison