



# Kessingland Parish Council

## Safeguarding Definitions & Procedures

### Procedure and Systems

#### Definitions of Abuse – Children:

##### **Physical Abuse**

Physical abuse is defined as deliberately hurting a child and causing physical harm (Department of Health, 2017; Department for Education, 2023; Scottish Government, 2023; Wales Safeguarding Procedures Project Board, 2020).

It includes injuries such as bruised, broken bones, burns and cuts.

It may involve hitting, kicking, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, or drowning and any other method of causing non-accidental harm to a child.

Physical abuse may also happen when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. (Department for Education, 2023; Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, 2017; Scottish Government, 2023; Wales Safeguarding Procedures Project Board, 2020).

Breast ironing or breast flattening, a practice of using hard or heated objects to suppress or reverse the growth of breasts, is a recognised form of child abuse (Crown Prosecution Service, 2019).

##### **Sexual Abuse**

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is when a child is forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This may involve physical contact or non-contact activities and can happen online or offline. (Department for Education, 2023; Department of Health, 2017; Scottish Government, 2023; Wales Safeguarding Procedures Project Board, 2020).

Children and young people may not always understand that they are being sexually abused (IICSA, 2022).

Children and young people of any age, including very young children and babies, can experience sexual abuse.

**Contact abuse** involves activities where an abuser makes physical contact with a child. It includes:

- Sexual touching of any part of the body, whether the child is wearing clothes or not
- Forcing or encouraging a child to take part in sexual activity
- Making a child take their clothes off or touch someone else's genitals
- Rape or penetration by putting an object or body part inside a child's mouth, vagina or anus.

**Non-contact abuse** involves activities where there is no physical contact. It includes:

- Flashing at a child
- Encouraging or forcing a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- Not taking proper measures to prevent a child being exposed to sexual activities by others
- Making a child masturbate while others watch
- Persuading a child to make, view or distribute child abuse images (such as performing sexual acts over the internet, sexting or showing pornography to a child)
- Making, viewing or distributing child abuse images

- Allowing someone else to make, view or distribute child abuse images
- Meeting a child following grooming with the intent of abusing them (even if abuse did not take place)
- Sexually exploiting a child for money, power or status (child sexual exploitation).

## Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the ongoing emotional maltreatment of a child, which can have a severe and persistent negative effect on the child's emotional health and development. It's also known as psychological abuse.

Exposing a child to aggression, cruelty or abuse between others is also a form of emotional abuse.

Most forms of abuse include an emotional element, but emotional abuse can also happen on its own.

Children can be emotionally abused by anyone: parents or carers, family members, other adults or other children.

## Neglect

Neglect is not meeting a child's basic physical and psychological needs (Department for Education, 2023; Department of Health, 2017; Scottish Government, 2023; Wales Safeguarding Procedures Project Board, 2020).

It is a form of child abuse that can have serious and long-lasting impacts on a child's life – it can cause serious harm and even death.

The four main types of neglect are:

- **Physical neglect:** not meeting a child's basic needs, such as food, clothing or shelter: not supervising a child adequately or providing for their safety
- **Educational neglect:** not making sure a child receives an education
- **Emotional neglect:** not meeting a child's needs for nurture and stimulation, for example by ignoring, humiliating, intimidation or isolating them.
- **Medical neglect:** not providing appropriate health care (including dental care), refusing care or ignoring medical recommendation (Howath, 2007).

Neglect can happen at any age, sometimes even before a child is born. If a mother has mental health problems or misuses substances during pregnancy, for example, she may neglect her own health, and this can damage a baby's development in the womb (Haynes et al, 2015).

## Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is any type of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between people who are, or who have been in a relationship, regardless of gender or sexuality. It can also happen between adults who are related to one another.

Domestic abuse can include:

- **Coercive control** such as being told where to go and what to wear or being isolated from friends and family
- **Physical abuse** such as being punched, kicked, cut, or being hit with an object
- **Emotional abuse** such as being constantly undermined, sworn at, intimidated, ridiculed, harassed, or threatened with harm or death
- **Sexual abuse and rape** including within a relationship or being made to have sex with other people
- **Stalking and harassment** such as being repeatedly followed or spied on, being regularly given unwanted gifts or receiving unwanted communication
- **Economic and financial abuse** such as having access to money controlled or withheld, or being prevented from earning money
- **Technology-facilitated abuse** such as having messages and emails monitored or deleted, constantly being sent messages or calls, or being tracked via device location (Women's Aid, n.d.; Surviving Economic Abuse, n.d.; Refuge, n.d.).

Domestic abuse always has an impact on children. Being exposed to domestic abuse in childhood is child abuse. Children and young people may experience domestic abuse both directly and indirectly.

### **Online Abuse: What is online abuse?**

Online abuse is any type of abuse that happens on the internet. It can happen across any device that's connected to the web, like computers, tablets and mobile phones. It can happen anywhere online, including:

- Social media
- Text messages and messaging apps
- Emails
- Online chats
- Online gaming
- Live-streaming sites

Children can be at risk of online abuse from people they know or from strangers. It might be part of other abuse which is taking place offline, like bullying or grooming. Or the abuse might only happen online.

### **Types of Online Abuse**

Children and young people might experience different types of online abuse, such as:

- Cyberbullying
- Emotional abuse
- Grooming
- Sexting
- Sexual abuse
- Sexual exploitation

### **Who's At Risk**

Any child who uses the internet can be at risk of online abuse. It's important parents are aware of the risks and talk to their child about staying safe online.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (Department for Education, 2017; NIdirect, 2021; Scottish Government, 2018; Wales Safeguarding Procedures Project Board, 2020a).

Children and young people in sexually exploitative situations and relationships are persuaded or forced to perform sexual activities or have sexual activities performed on them in return for gifts, drugs, money or affection.

CSE can take place in person, online, or using a combination of both.

### **Power Imbalance**

Perpetrators of CSE use a power imbalance to exploit children and young people. This may arise from a range of factors, including age, gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status, and access to economic or other resources (Department of Education, 2017).

### **Grooming and Coercion**

Sexual exploitation is a hidden crime. Young people have often been groomed into trusting their abuser and may not understand that they're being abused. They may depend on their

abuser and be too scared to tell anyone what's happening because they don't want to get them in trouble or risk losing them. They may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. Some children and young people are trafficked into or within the UK for sexual exploitation.

### **Child Sexual Exploitation Online**

When sexual exploitation happens online, young people may be persuaded or forced to:

- Have sexual conversations by text or online
- Send or post sexually explicit images of themselves
- Take part in sexual activities via a webcam or smartphone (Hamilton-Giachritsis et al, 2017).

Abusers sometimes use the threat of sharing images, videos or copies of conversations to make young people do things they don't want to do. This might include forcing a young person to pay them money or take part in further sexual activity. This is sometimes referred to as sexually coerced extortion or 'sextortion' (Internet Watch Foundation, n.d.).

Images or videos may continue to be shared long after the sexual abuse has stopped. Whatever form child sexual exploitation takes, it can have a significant impact on children and young people. It's vital that everyone who works and volunteers with children can identify the signs of child sexual exploitation and know how to act to keep children safe.

### **Child Trafficking**

Trafficking is where children and young people are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved or transported and then exploited, forced to work or sold. Children are trafficked for:

- Sexual exploitation
- Benefit fraud
- Forced marriage
- Domestic slavery like cleaning, cooking and childcare
- Forced labour in factories of agriculture
- Committing crimes, like begging, theft, working on cannabis farms or moving drugs.

Trafficked children experience many types of abuse and neglect. Traffickers use physical, sexual and emotional abuse as a form of control. Children and young people are also likely to be physically and emotionally neglected and may be sexually exploited.

### **Types of Child Trafficking**

Traffickers often groom children, families and communities to gain their trust. They may also threaten families with violence or threats. Traffickers often promise children and families that they'll have a better future elsewhere.

Trafficking is also an economic crime. Traffickers may ask families for money for providing documents or transport and they'll make a profit from money a child 'earns' through exploitation, forced labour or crime. They'll often be told this money is to pay off a debt they or their family 'owe' to the traffickers.

Traffickers may:

- Work alone or in small groups, recruiting a small number of children, often from areas they know and live in
- Be medium-sized groups who recruit, move and exploit children and young people on a small scale
- Be large criminal networks that operate internationally with high-level corruption, money laundering and a large number of victims.

### **Signs of Child Trafficking**

Knowing the signs of trafficking can help give a voice to children. Sometimes children won't understand that what's happening to them is wrong. Or they might be scared to speak out.

It may not be obvious that a child has been trafficked, but you might notice unusual or unexpected things. They might:

- Spend a lot of time doing household chores
- Rarely leave their house or have no time for playing
- Be orphaned or living apart from their family
- Live in low-standard accommodation
- Be unsure which country, city or town they're in
- Can't or are reluctant to share personal information or where they live
- Not be registered with a school or a GP practice
- Have no access to their parents or guardians
- Be seen in inappropriate places like brothels or factories
- Have money or things you wouldn't expect them to
- Have injuries from workplace accidents
- Give a prepared story which is very similar to stories given by other children.

## **Who's at risk**

Any child is at risk of child trafficking. Human trafficking happens due to:

- Inequalities between countries, such as different education or employment opportunities
- Poverty
- The effects of war
- The demand for cheap or free labour or a workforce who can be easily controlled and forced into criminal activity
- Low levels of education
- Lack of equal opportunities, discrimination or marginalisation.

## **Bullying & Cyberbullying**

Bullying is intentional behaviour that hurts someone else. It includes name calling, hitting, pushing, spreading rumours, threatening or undermining someone. It can happen anywhere – at school, at home or online. It's usually repeated over a long period of time and can hurt a child both physically and emotionally.

### **Types of Bullying**

Bullying can take different forms. It could include:

- Physical bullying: hitting, slapping or pushing someone
- Verbal bullying: name calling, gossiping or threatening someone
- Non-verbal: hand signs or text messages
- Emotional abuse: threatening, intimidating or humiliating someone
- Exclusion: ignoring or isolating someone
- Undermining, constant criticism or spreading rumours
- Controlling or manipulative behaviour
- Making silent, hoax or abusive calls

The following types of bullying are also hate crimes:

- Racial, sexual, transphobic or homophobic bullying
- Bullying someone because they have a disability.

## **What is Cyberbullying?**

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place online. Unlike bullying offline, online bullying can follow the child wherever they go, via social networks, gaming and mobile phone. A person can be bullied online and offline at the same time.

## **Types of Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying can include:

- Sending threatening or abusive text messages
- Creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos
- Trolling – the sending of menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games
- Excluding children from online games, activities or friendship groups
- Shaming someone online
- Setting up hate sites or groups about a particular child
- Encouraging young people to self-harm
- Voting for or against someone in an abusive poll
- Creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a young person or cause trouble using their name
- Sending explicit messages, also known as sexting
- Pressuring children into sending sexual images or engaging in sexual conversations.

## **Signs of Bullying**

No single sign will indicate for certain that your child's being bullied, but watch out for:

- Belongings getting 'lost' or damaged
- Physical injuries, such as unexplained bruises
- Being afraid to go to school, being mysteriously 'ill' each morning, or skipping school
- A change in how they are doing at school, including a dip in grades or not handing homework in
- Asking for, or stealing, money (to give to whoever's bullying them)
- A change in behaviour, including being nervous, losing confidence, or becoming distressed and withdrawn
- A change in eating or sleeping habits
- Bullying others.

All children who are affected by bullying can suffer harm – whether they are being bullied, bully others or witness bullying. It's important all children get support if they are being bullied, or if they are displaying bullying behaviours towards others.

## **Who's at Risk?**

Any child can be bullied for any reason. If a child is seen as different in some way or seen as an easy target they can be more at risk. This might be because of their:

- Race or ethnic background
- Gender
- Sexual orientation.

Or it could be because they:

- Appear anxious or have low self-esteem
- Lack assertiveness
- Are shy or introverted.

Popular or successful children are also bullied, sometimes because others are jealous of them. Sometimes a child's family circumstance or home life can be a reason for someone bullying them. Disabled children can experience bullying because they seem an easy target and less able to defend themselves.

## **Grooming – What is Grooming?**

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. Children and young people who are groomed can be sexually abused, exploited or trafficked. Anybody can be a groomer, no matter their age, gender or race. Grooming can take place over a short or long period of time – from weeks to years. Groomers may also build a relationship with the young person's family or friends to make them seem trustworthy or authoritative.

### **Types of Grooming**

Children and young people can be groomed online, in person or both – by a stranger or someone they know. This could be a family member, a friend or someone who has targeted them – like a teacher, faith group leader or sports coach. When a child is groomed online, groomers may hide who they are by sending photos or videos of other people. Sometimes this will be of someone younger than them to gain the trust of a “peer”. They might target one child online or contact lots of children very quickly and wait for them to respond. The relationship a groomer builds can take different forms. This could be:

- A romantic relationship
- As a mentor
- An authority figure
- A dominant and persistent figure.

A groomer can use the same sites, games and apps as young people, spending time learning about a young person's interests and use this to build a relationship with them. Children can be groomed online through:

- Social media networks
- Text messages and messaging apps, like Whatsapp
- Email
- Text, voice and video chats in forums, games and apps.

Whether online or in person, groomers can use tactics like:

- Pretending to be younger
- Giving advice or showing understanding
- Buying gifts
- Giving attention
- Taking them on trips, outings or holidays.

Groomers might also try and isolate children from their friends and family, making them feel independent on them and giving the groomer power and control over them. They might use blackmail to make a child feel guilt and shame or introduce the idea of ‘secrets’ to control, frighten and intimidate. It's important to remember that children and young people may not understand they've been groomed. They may have complicated feelings, like loyalty, admiration, love, as well as fear, distress and confusion. A child is unlikely to know they've been groomed. They might be worried or confused and less likely to speak to an adult they trust.

### **Who's at Risk?**

Any child is at risk of being groomed, and it is important to remember that both boys and girls can be groomed. Children who are groomed online could be abused by someone they know. They could also be abuse by someone who commits a one-off act or a stranger who builds a relationship with them. Some children are more at risk of grooming, particularly those who are vulnerable. Children in care, with disabilities or who are neglected can be targeted by groomers. Groomers will exploit any vulnerability to increase the likelihood a child or young person will become dependent on them and less likely to speak out.

### **What is Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)?**

FGM is when a female's genitals are deliberately altered or removed for non-medical reasons. It's also known as 'female circumcision' or 'cutting' but has many other names. FGM is a form of child abuse. It's dangerous and a criminal offence in the UK. We know:

- There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM
- It's often performed by someone with no medical training, using instruments such as knives, scalpels, scissors, glass or razor blades
- Children are rarely given anaesthetic or antiseptic treatment and are forcibly restrained
- It's used to control female sexuality and can cause long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

FGM can happen at different times in a girl or woman's life, including:

- When a baby is new-born
- During childhood or as a teenager
- Just before marriage
- During pregnancy.

A child who's at risk of FGM might ask you for help. But some children might not know what's going to happen to them. So, it's important to be aware of the signs.

### **Signs FGM Might Happen**

- A relative or someone known as a 'cutter' visiting from abroad
- A special occasion or ceremony takes place where a girl 'becomes a woman' or is 'prepared for marriage'
- A female relative, like a mother, sister or aunt has undergone FGM
- A family arranges a long holiday oversea or visits a family abroad during the summer holidays
- A girl has an unexpected or long absence from school
- A girl struggles to keep up in school
- A girl runs away – or plans to run away – from home.

### **Signs FGM Might Have Taken Place**

- Having difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- Spending longer in the bathroom or toilet
- Appearing quiet, anxious or depressed
- Acting differently after an absence from school or college
- Reluctance to go to the doctors or have routine medical examinations
- Asking for help- though they might not be explicit about the problem because they're scared or embarrassed.

### **Effects of FGM**

There are no health benefits to FGM. It can cause serious harm, including:

- Severe and/or constant pain
- Infections, such as tetanus, HIV and hepatitis B and C
- Pain or difficulty having sex
- Infertility
- Bleeding, cysts and abscesses
- Difficulties urinating or incontinence
- Organ damage
- Problems during pregnancy and childbirth, which can be life threatening for the mother and baby
- Mental health problems, such as depression, flashbacks and self-harm
- Death from blood loss or infections.

### **Why FGM Happens**

FGM is carried out for a number of cultural, religious and social reasons. Some families and communities believe that FGM will benefit the girl in some way, such as preparing them for marriage or childbirth. But FGM is a harmful practice that isn't required by any religion and there are no health benefits of FGM.

(Information supplied by [nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse](http://nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/types-of-abuse)).

## **Adult Abuse and Safeguarding**

### **Types of Abuse**

There are many types of abusive behaviour, some of which are difficult to spot. Abuse can include:

- Domestic violence: abuse that takes place between family members or intimate partners regardless of gender or sexuality. It can consist of psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and so-called 'honour' based violence
- Sexual abuse: any sexual act that a person does not agree to
- Psychological or emotional: this is when someone makes threats of harm, abandonment, humiliation, intimidation or verbal abuse
- Financial: this includes stealing someone's money or denying them access to their money, property or possessions
- Neglect or acts of omission: this can be both physical and emotional. It could be failing to keep an adult at risk clean or warm, not promoting optimum health, not providing adequate nutrition or medication. It could also mean preventing someone from making their own choices
- Discriminatory: abusive remarks or actions relating to a person's age, race, religion, sex or abilities
- Organisational abuse: this happens when the routines in use force residents or service users to sacrifice their own needs, wishes or preferred lifestyle to the needs of the institution or service provider
- Modern slavery: such as human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.

### **Who is at Risk of Abuse?**

Any vulnerable adult can be at risk of abuse or harm. People can be abused in:

- Their own homes
- Care homes (with or without nursing)
- Day centres
- Workplaces
- Hospitals
- Police stations
- Public places

It is important to recognise that children and adults who have disabilities may be particularly vulnerable to abuse and may have added difficulties in communicating what is happening to them. Dependency on others for primary needs, e.g. feeding and clothing, may make a person feel powerless to report abusive treatment.

This policy is inclusive of all children, young people and vulnerable adults, irrespective of their age, gender, sex, race or ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

### **Responding to Allegations**

Responding to concerns about a child's/vulnerable adult's welfare where there has been a specific disclosure or allegation

If a person discloses abuse by someone else:

- Stay calm, take the allegation seriously

- Allow the person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said, but DO NOT investigate
- Only ask questions for clarification; do not ask leading questions
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgment. Reassure them that they did the right thing by talking to you
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you MUST pass the information on, do not offer to keep secrets
- Record the facts as you know them
- Refer the allegation immediately and directly to the appropriate person. If an employee, member, volunteer or another child/young person/vulnerable adult is implicated, refer to the council's Safeguarding Officer. If the Safeguarding Officer is implicated, refer directly to the Parish Clerk and/or the Chair of Personnel. If one of them is implicated, then refer to the other and/or to the Chair of the parish council. All allegations must be referred, no matter how insignificant they may seem to be, or when they occur.
- Try to ensure that no one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.

As soon as possible after the incident or disclosure has occurred:

- Write down notes, dates, times, facts, observations, and verbatim speech
- Ensure the correct details are available, the young person/vulnerable adult's name and address of their parent or guardian
- Ensure that this information is passed on to the council's Safeguarding Officer. Maintain a copy of your report in a secure location in case you need to refer to it, as this is the record which you took at the time, and your memory may not be perfect if you need to provide information in the future. Only retain the copy whilst there is a need to retain it.
- Upon receipt of a report, the Safeguarding Officer should immediately contact the Social Services Department at Suffolk County Council. Ask for a duty officer and indicate that you wish to discuss a matter of child/vulnerable person protection. Ask for the name of the person with whom you are speaking. Do not filter out or withhold any information. Ask if there is anyone else who should be informed.
- Inform the Local Authority's Monitoring Officer (Head of Legal Services, East Suffolk Council).
- Prepare a confidential file. Record all notes, conversations and advice from Social Services. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.
- Store information in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection legislation.
- Follow the advice from Social Services; take no other action unless advised to do so by Social Services.
- If in doubt about the advice you have received at any stage refer to Social Services for guidance.

### **Responding to concerns about a child's/vulnerable adult's welfare where there has been no specific disclosure or allegation**

All members, employees, volunteers and organisations contracted to provide services on behalf of the Council are encouraged to share concerns with the Parish Clerk. The Parish Clerk will consult with the council's Safeguarding Officer and, if appropriate, one of them will make a referral to Social Services. Recognising abuse is not always easy. The list below provides some indicators of abuse; however, the list is not exhaustive and contains only indicators, not confirmation, of abuse:

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body, e.g. cigarette burns, bite marks

- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent, or which has not been treated adequately
- Sudden changes in behaviour, including becoming withdrawn or becoming aggressive, severe temper outbursts
- Reluctance to get changed, e.g. for swimming
- Neglected in appearance, dirty or 'smelly'
- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions
- Fear of parents or carers being approached for an explanation
- Flinching when approached or touched
- Neurotic behaviour e.g. hair twisting, rocking
- Being unable to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self-harm
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people, lack of trust in adults
- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental age
- Sexual drawings or language
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about
- Not allowed to have friends

### **Contact Details for Social Services, the Monitoring Officer, the Police and NSPCC:**

- Social Services Child Protection - Suffolk County Council: Telephone: 0808 800 4005
- East Suffolk Council - Monitoring Officer: Telephone: 0333 0162 000
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: Telephone: 0808 800 5000
- Suffolk Police: Telephone: 101 or in an emergency 999

### **Confidentiality**

Members, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers must not discuss allegations of abuse, substantiated or not, with anyone other than in connection with the formal investigation. Where it is necessary to put in procedures to prevent continuing abuse the matter should be shared with the Parish Clerk so that appropriate risk assessments may be undertaken.

### **Prevention – Recruitment**

- Prospective employees will be interviewed, and previous, relevant experience will be noted. Two appropriate references will be provided for all employees. All employees will undergo a probationary period.
- All members, employees and volunteers who are required to carry out duties that involve working with children or vulnerable adults or whose roles mean they come directly into contact with children or vulnerable adults will be checked by the Government's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and/or appropriate safeguarding agency. In line with best practice, these checks will be repeated at a minimum of every four years.

### **Training**

- The council will make the Safeguarding policy available to all members, staff, volunteers, external contractors and the hirers of council facilities. The Parish Clerk & Personnel Committee will encourage good practice and identify any training needs required through the Council's internal training records and staff appraisal system. Where an external organisation is involved, the council will raise concerns with an appropriate person within that organisation.

- All members, employees, volunteers, external contractors, and hirers of council facilities are expected to read this policy. The signing of a council contract will indicate the signatory's agreement to abide by this policy.
- Members will be offered appropriate training on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Training will be through a regulated and approved body, for example, Community Action Suffolk, and updated following policies and procedures, on a two-year basis. Training will be recorded and monitored by the Parish Council office.

## **Reporting**

The Council is committed to maintaining an open culture where members, employees, volunteers, children, vulnerable individuals, parents, guardians, and carers feel able to express concerns about child protection and issues of poor practice. In addition to the procedures outlined in this policy, the Council's Complaints Policy and Whistleblowing Policy are available to all members, staff, volunteers, and the general public.

## **Codes of Practice and Behaviour**

These guidelines have been devised to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse, as well as to protect members, staff and volunteers from situations where false allegations may occur. The guidelines apply to those working with children or vulnerable persons involved in activities organised by or on behalf of Kessingland Parish Council or at services provided by Kessingland Parish Council.

### **Members, Staff, and Volunteers must:**

- Treat everyone with respect, regardless of their age, gender, sex, ethnicity, social background, ability, sexual orientation, culture or religious beliefs
- Provide an example of good conduct they wish others to follow
- Plan activities which involve more than one other person being present, or at least which are within sight or hearing of others
- Respect a person's right to personal privacy
- Provide access for young people and vulnerable adults to talk to others about any concerns they may have
- Encourage all individuals, but especially young people and vulnerable adults, to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviours that they do not like or that make them uncomfortable
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret their actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues, such as bullying, bereavement, abuse or personal development
- Recognise that some children or vulnerable adults will be more vulnerable to abuse than others and may face extra barriers in getting help because of their race, gender, sex, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, social background or culture
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse
- Be identifiable and wear a name badge at all times around young persons & vulnerable adults whilst on council business.

### **Members, Staff, and Volunteers must not:**

- Engage in physical horseplay, such as wrestling or tickling
- Have any inappropriate verbal or physical contact with children or vulnerable people, or make suggestive remarks or gestures
- Permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying, etc.)
- Play physical contact games with children or vulnerable adults
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts

- Ask children or vulnerable adults to do things that are potentially dangerous, illegal or otherwise unreasonable
- Exaggerate or trivialise abuse issues
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Rely on just their good name to protect them
- Believe it could “never happen to me”
- Take chances when common sense, policy or practice suggests a more prudent approach
- Allow allegations made to go unchallenged, unrecorded and not acted upon.

Kessingland Parish Council takes its responsibility very seriously. Employees who breach these guidelines will face investigation and may face disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal. Volunteers or contractors in breach of the above guidelines may face investigation, which could lead to their services being terminated and their parent organisation (as appropriate) being informed. If a hirer is found to have breached these guidelines, then their hire may be cancelled and any fees/deposits withheld. If a member breaches this policy, there may be grounds for reporting their behaviour to the Monitoring Officer, who may require an investigation under the Suffolk Code of Conduct. Where there is evidence of illegal activity, the member, employee, volunteer, contractor or hirer will be reported to the relevant authorities and may face a criminal investigation.

## **Procedure in Relation to Specific Services**

### **Work Experience**

Kessingland Parish Council may offer work experience placements. The Council will ensure that employees working with children or vulnerable adults are aware of the Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy. Line managers are responsible for the health, safety and welfare of work experience students who, under law are regarded as employees.

### **Leisure Services/Facility Hire**

Independent sports clubs and private individuals who regularly use the facilities operated by Kessingland Parish Council should have appropriate child protection and vulnerable adult policies in place, commensurate with the level of contact they have. Furthermore, their employees or volunteers who have significant and regular unsupervised contact with children and vulnerable adults should have satisfactory DBS checks.

The Council will state on its Booking Forms and posters in its Halls for hire that the Council expects that groups will follow good practice procedures concerning Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding.

### **Use of Contractors**

Kessingland Parish Council will take reasonable care that contractors doing work on behalf of the Council are monitored appropriately. Any contractor or sub-contractor engaged by the Council in areas where workers are likely to come into regular contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults, should have its own equivalent Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult policies, or failing this, must comply with the terms of this policy. This requirement will be written into the contract. If this is not met, the contractor will be deemed to be in breach of their contract.

### **Internet and E-Mail Policy**

Please refer to Kessingland Parish Council's Data Protection policy.

### **First Aid**

The administration of first aid to children, young people and vulnerable adults can present risks. Under ordinary circumstances, a child or young person can be administered first aid only if their parent or guardian expressly permits this course of action. When administering

first aid, wherever possible, employees should ensure that another adult is present or is aware of the action being taken. Parents/carers should always be informed when first aid is administered. Child welfare is of paramount importance. In certain circumstances, members, employees, volunteers, and contracted service providers may undertake first aid as a last resort, notifying parents/carers as soon as possible, to minimise the distress of a child or vulnerable adult. Training will be provided by an appropriately registered organisation and updated following statutory guidance currently every three years). Training will be recorded and monitored by the Parish Council office.

## **Special Events – Photography**

### **Use of Video and Photography**

The use of photographs and images of young people will be controlled to prevent possible misuse. In general, written agreement will be sought from parents that images can be used as appropriate.

It is an unfortunate fact that some people have used children's and young people's events as opportunities to take inappropriate photographs or footage of children. Every attempt should be made to ensure that this does not happen. Members, employees, volunteers, contractors and hirers should be vigilant at all times. Legally, a photographer can capture anyone in public spaces within their photograph, as there can be no expectation of privacy in a public space. Whilst it is legal for anyone to take photographs in public places without having to get permission, anyone using cameras or film recorders for or on behalf of the Council should obtain written consent (using a council consent form) from the parents of children being photographed or filmed before the activity commences as well as their permission to hold onto council images in a secure manner. The council will only retain images including people under the age of eighteen for a period of one year unless the photograph is of a special community event where the images are being stored for heritage and posterity. In this case, wherever reasonable possible, the council will contact the young person when they reach eighteen in order to gain their consent as an adult in particular with using the image as a piece of public property.

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to cover Council services, events and activities, the Council's expectations must be made clear in relation to child protection by checking the credentials of any photographers, ensuring identification is worn and by not allowing unsupervised access to children or one-to-one photographic sessions.

## **Misuse of Procedure**

Malicious complaints about members/employees/volunteers/contractors/hirers and/or serious and/or persistent abuse of these safeguarding policies and procedures will not be tolerated. If they are internal, they will be dealt with through Kessingland Parish Council's disciplinary process or via the Monitoring Officer as appropriate. Where they are from an external source, they may initially be dealt with by contacting the parent or relevant bodies, the council's complaints procedure or recourse to legal methods.

## **Policy Monitoring and Review**

All incidents and allegations of abuse, and complaints will be recorded, monitored and reviewed anonymously to consider if there are any alterations to this policy are required. The policy will be reviewed annually and in particular if there are any amendments to legislation, case law or best practice.