

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy Statement

In the interests of child protection and the welfare and protection of vulnerable adults, Methwold 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 associated with the Parish Council.

Methwold Parish Council will:

- Ensure the safety and protection of all children and vulnerable adults through adherence to the Safeguarding Policy adopted by the Parish Council.

Policy Aims

The aim of the Methwold Parish Council Safeguarding Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children, young people and vulnerable adults with appropriate safety and protection;
- To ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults visiting the Council's premises or using its facilities can be protected by setting standards of best practice.
- To guide members of the Parish Council should any child protection issue or any issues with vulnerable adults arise during their work.

Policy Objective:

- To ensure that where possible all facilities and activities offered by the Parish Council are designed and maintained to limit 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 of 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.

Good practice guidelines

All councillors and adults supervising activities on Parish Council property should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations. The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate:

- Treating all young people under the care of this policy with respect and dignity.
- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.

- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children
- Making recreation and sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Involving parents/carers wherever possible.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.
- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others [except in the case of an emergency [e.g. a child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital].

Responsibilities & Procedures

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

- Ensuring that before any Parish Council organised event with children or vulnerable persons, participants are appropriately briefed by the Child Protection Officer.
- Ensuring that members are aware of the risk they may face in certain circumstances whilst carrying out their duties.
- 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.
- 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 whether any person should be DBS checked will be made by the Council or the Chairman after consultation with the Clerk following a risk assessment.
- All new Councillors are to be provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and are required to acknowledge they will abide by it.
- Councillors will adhere to the 'List of Recommended Behaviour' namely:
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 - A minimum of two adults present when supervising children.
 - Not to play physical contact games.
 - Adults to wear appropriate clothing at all times.
 - Ensure that accidents are recorded in an 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 or volunteer. Incident book to be presented to every Full Parish Council meeting for inspection.
- If there is a child abuse incident it should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer who will be responsible for ensuring the matter is handled in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and also referred to the Council for further action as appropriate and future risk assessment.
- Facilities offered by the Parish Council have been inspected on a regular basis and at least annually by a representative of RoSPA or a similar organisation.
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with partner organisations, councillors, employees, volunteers, parents and carers.

- 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.

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.

Declaration

Methwold Parish Council is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of children and vulnerable adults by protecting them from physical, sexual, emotional harm and neglect.

All members of Methwold 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.

Communication of Policy

A copy of this policy statement will be issued to each new employee.

Employees and Members have a responsibility to ensure that the Parish Council complies; not only with the legal requirements, but with the achievement of the policy, and their active involvement is encouraged.

Reviewed: May 2021

Approved by Council: 10 June 2021