

HORMEAD PARISH COUNCIL

SAFEGUARDING POLICY CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Policy Statement

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Hormead Parish Council is committed to ensuring that children, young people, and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Parish Council.

This Policy will apply to councillors, its employees, its members, its contractors and hirers.

Policy aims

The Parish Council Child Protection Policy is to promote good practice:

- Providing children and young people with appropriate safety and protection;
- Allow all staff /volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific child protection issues.
- To guide members of Hormead Parish Council should any child protection issues or any issues with vulnerable adults arise during their work.

Definitions

Children and Young People Employees and Councillors

- The term children or young person is used to refer to anyone under the age of 18 years.
- The term vulnerable adult is used to refer to anyone over 18
 - o Unable to care for themselves
 - o Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
 - o May be in need of Community Care Services
- The term parent is used as a generic term to represent anyone with legal parental responsibility.
- The terms elected members, staff and volunteers is used to refer to employees, councillors, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of and/or representing the Council whether paid or voluntary.

Policy Objectives

- To ensure that where possible all facilities and activities offered by the Parish Council are designed and maintained to limit the risk to children young people and vulnerable adults.
- To promote the general welfare and 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 to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse and neglect.

As the Parish Council does not directly provide care and supervision services to children, young people and vulnerable adults when attending events organised by the council they do so with the consent of a parent, carer, or other responsible adult.

Responsibilities and Procedures

- The Safeguarding Officer for Hormead Parish Council will be Councillor Jayne Denham under delegated powers with the Responsible Officer ie the Clerk and their responsibilities will include:
- Ensuring that before any Parish Council organised event with children or vulnerable persons the Officer will brief participants appropriately.
- Ensuring that members are aware of the risk they may face whilst carrying out their duties.

- Ensuring that before any volunteers or paid members of staff are recruited to work with children and vulnerable adults they are interviewed and two references taken up.
- Decisions whether any person should be D.B.S. (Disclosure and Banning Service) checked will be made by the Council or the Chairman with the Clerk following a Risk Assessment.
- All new councillors to be provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and are required to acknowledge that they will abide by it.
- Councillors will adhere to the 'List of recommended Behaviour' namely. All personnel should be encouraged to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect themselves from false allegations.

Good practice guidelines

The following are common sense examples of how to create a positive culture and climate:

Good practice means:

- A minimum of two adults present when supervising children.
- Adults to wear appropriate clothing at all times
- Always working in an open environment (e.g. avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication with no secrets).
- Treating all young people with respect and dignity.
- Always putting the welfare of each young person first, before winning or achieving goals.
- Maintaining a safe and appropriate distance with children (e.g. it is not appropriate for staff or volunteers to have an intimate relationship with a child or to share a room with them).
- Making recreation and sport fun, enjoyable and promoting fair play.
- Keeping a written record of any injury that occurs, along with the details of any treatment given.

Practices to be avoided:

The following should be avoided except in emergencies. If cases arise where these situations are unavoidable it should be with the full knowledge and consent of someone in charge or the child's parents.

Practices never to be sanctioned:

The following should never be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child, even in fun
- Allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon
- Avoid spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others

You should also ensure the parents of the child are informed:

- If you accidentally hurt a child.
- If he/she seems distressed in any manner.
- If a child misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done.

Photography

Staff, elected members and volunteers should be vigilant at all times regarding people using cameras or videos. Written consent must be sought from parents when cameras and other image recorders are used to picture children and young people during Council organised activities.

Allegations or incidents

Responding to allegations of concerns about a member of staff elected member or volunteer from your own observations or due to a complaint.

Keep records in an incident book of any allegation a young person may make to a committee member or volunteer.

Record the following

- The Date and Time.
- The child or young person's address and date of birth.
- The nature of the allegation.
- Your observations a description of the child or young person's behaviour, physical and emotional state and any visible injuries.
- Exactly what the child or young person said and what you said.
- Record the child or young person's account of what has happened as closely as possible.
- Sign and date what you have recorded

The incident book to be presented at the next full council meeting after an incident.

- If there is a child abuse incident it should be reported to the Safeguarding Officer who will be responsible for ensuring that the matter is handled in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Board procedures and referred to the council for further action and future risk assessment.
- Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is of allegations for all concerned. Information should be handles and disseminated on a need to know basis only this is usually Social Services or The Police. It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed as any breach of confidentiality could be to the child or young person, their family, those who are the subject of allegations and any child protection investigations that may follow.
- The council will ensure that any premises used for activities and events have been inspected at least annually by R.O.S.P.A. or a similar organisation.
- Any contractor working directly for the parish council, being deemed to be working in an area where children or vulnerable adults may be at risk, the contractor will be required to provide their safeguarding policy.

Declaration

Hormead 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 the Hormead Parish Council should read the Safeguarding Policy. They should be proactive in providing a safe environment for children and vulnerable people who are involved in Parish Council sponsored activities.

Reviewed October 2018

The Policy will be reviewed annually in May of each year.

Next Review May 2019

Sources

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Act 2006
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB)
- Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB)
- East Herts Council Safeguarding Policy and Procedure Children, Young People and Adults at Risk Policy Statement No 41 (Issue No 2), April 2017