



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

This document sets out the Policy & Procedures for Hughenden Parish Council (HPC) relating to Safeguarding & Child Protection. The purpose is to provide a framework should any member of staff have concerns about safeguarding, or receive a report by a member of the public regarding safeguarding.

Hughenden Parish Council owns land and maintains playgrounds throughout the Parish. These land assets are open to the public, including children, at all times. The Parish Council has public liability insurance but people use the facilities at their own risk. Parents and carers are expected to supervise their children at all times. The Parish Council does not currently organize events for children.

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This policy promotes good practice in safeguarding for those using Parish Council facilities. It has been developed after reference to various resources, especially the NSPCC web site.

The Parish Council will review it annually.

The framework in England is described at <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/england>.

“The Department for Education (DfE) is responsible for child protection in England. It sets out policy, legislation and statutory guidance on how the child protection system should work.

Local safeguarding partners are responsible for child protection policy, procedure and guidance at a local level.

The local safeguarding arrangements are led by three statutory safeguarding partners:

- *the local authority*
- *the clinical commissioning group*
- *the police.”*

This policy applies to all Councillors and Officers, anyone working for or on behalf of the Parish Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity, for example contracted to do a piece of work. It also applies to any individual using the Parish Council facilities for the purpose of delivering any service to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Policy statement

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is everyone’s responsibility. HPC 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. HPC will promote the welfare of all children, and young or vulnerable people, to keep them safe and work in a way that protects them irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.



HPC will respond to all concerns that are reported to it and fully support any actions by the proper authorities. Relevant but not excessive records will be maintained. As there is no in-house expertise the primary response will be to consult one of the authorities listed in Appendix A.

HPC will provide safe facilities and carry out regular safety assessments, and ensure that any users of parish facilities, are aware of the safeguarding expectations.

All Councillors, Officers & users of Parish facilities should:

- Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction with users should be appropriate and professional.
- Treat each other with respect and show consideration for other groups using the facilities.
- Refrain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism and bullying and in addition to report any instances of such behaviour to group leaders, parish councillors, the parish clerk or parents and carers, as appropriate.

Hughenden Parish Council recognises its responsibilities under the terms of the Children Act 2004, earlier Children's Acts and other relevant legislation (see reference list) to make arrangements for ensuring that its functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

The Council aims to do this by:

- Raising an awareness throughout the Council and Parish of Council's beliefs.
- Requiring all working on behalf of the Council to adhere to these beliefs.
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all its services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Implementing the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures where allegations of breaches are made by its Councillors, Officers or members of the public.

Procedures

These procedures inform Councillors and Officers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected child abuse.

For Councillors, Officers & volunteers

- In the first instance, Officers should take care to avoid situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Roles supporting this policy, i.e. 'who does what':
 - o Responsible for managing – Clerk & Deputy Clerk
 - o Accountable - Councillors
 - o Consulted – extensive use has been made of existing policies developed by other PCs, & from organisations with detailed safeguarding experience (e.g. NSPCC).
 - o Implemented by – All operational Officers, led by the Clerk & Deputy Clerk.

For contractors & those using HPC facilities

It is the responsibility of organisations using Parish facilities to develop their own policies in this area, covering issues such as consent, insurance, staff training.

Contractors should also have their own policies in place.



Identifying risks & incidents

- Officers should be concerned by any action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child or vulnerable adult. Abuse falls into four main categories and can include child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation:
 - o Physical Abuse
 - o Emotional Abuse
 - o Sexual Abuse
 - o Neglect
- In general there are 3 situations that Officers, Councillors and volunteers may need to respond to a concern or case of alleged or suspected abuse:
 - o 1. Responding to a child or young person disclosing abuse, i.e. they make an allegation of abuse.
 - o 2. Responding to allegations or concerns about a Officer, Councillor or volunteer from your own observation or due to a complaint.
 - o 3. Responding to allegations or concerns about any other person, i.e. parent, carer, other service user.
- **In the case of an emergency where a child is in danger phone 999 immediately.**

Responding to Concerns and Allegations:

It is the duty of any Officer or Councillor to report any concerns about a child being subject to abuse, receiving a disclosure or being aware of Officers or Councillors behaving in an inappropriate manner. All reports should be treated as confidential and with respect to the person raising the concern regardless of the outcome.

If an allegation is made against an Officer or volunteer, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of the Parish Council. If that is not appropriate then see the whistleblowing procedure.

Record in writing all the details that you are aware of and what was said, using the child or young person's own words, immediately. In your record you should include the following:

- a) The date and time.
- b) The child or young person's name, address and date of birth.
- c) The nature of the allegation.
- d) Your observations – a description of the child or young person's behaviour, physical and emotional state and any visible injuries.
- e) 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.
- f) Sign and date what you have recorded.

Do not ask questions, other than the child or young person's name, address and date of birth.

Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in telling you. Contact local Social Services or the Police (see Appendix A) without delay and follow their guidance. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Social Services, or the Police, must be the ones to inform parents or guardian, and the person about whom allegations are being made. Recorded information should be handed over to Social Services or the Police and any copies stored in a secure place with limited access in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).



HPC will acknowledge the report, indicating the action that has been taken. This will usually be to inform & seek advice from one of the authorities in Appendix A.

Making records involving children

This usually involves photography. Hughenden Parish Council uses CCTV cameras at some of its sites in order to monitor, and try to eliminate, anti-social or criminal behaviour. Such films are only viewed by Officers and Councillors, or by the police, in the Council Offices; they may be used as evidence in court. These records are retained as set out in HPC's document 'Retention Timescales for Documentation', & then deleted securely.

Other photographic records should only be made in a public space, with consent of the parent / guardian if the child is identifiable, e.g. a facial image with sufficient resolution, or a name. All photography should be made in public where young people are involved. The child or young person should be happy with having their picture taken. The names of children or young people should not be used in photographs or video footage, unless with the express permission of the child or young person's parent.

There may be occasions when photographs of groups of children are taken at public events, e.g: at the opening of a playground. Parents or Guardians should be made aware that photographs are likely to be taken & the purposes for which they will be used. This also applies any member of the media are present. Thus express permission is not needed, but due notice is.

Contractors

A copy of this Policy is given to contractors at the commencement of their working on the Council's behalf. Contractors are therefore aware of, and should abide by, the Council's aims and procedures outlined in this policy.

Whistleblowing

- All Officers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If an Officer feels that an issue is not being addressed then they should seek advice from one of the authorities in Appendix A.

Officer & volunteer recruitment

- Officers currently do not work directly with Children and HPC does not organise children's activities. We do not require a Criminal Records Bureau check as part of the recruitment procedure.

Officer & volunteer training

- As HPC does not directly provide services to children or vulnerable people there is no routine training. However, all staff should be aware of the potential issues & will be reminded of this policy upon recruitment & annually as part of their Code of Conduct refresher. Specific training will be provided if the situation changes.

Record keeping



- Accurate records will be kept of any concern raised with HPC, & of the actions taken, including names, dates & times.
- As HPC does not provide specific services nor have expertise in storing sensitive records, such items will be passed to the local authority for storage at the earliest opportunity.
<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/child-protection-records-retention-storage-guidance>

Date of policy: 2 MARCH 2021

Approving committee: FINANCE & POLICY

Date of committee meeting: MARCH 2, 2021

Policy version reference: V1.2

Supersedes: Child Protection Policy v1.0 Nov 2019

Policy effective from: MARCH 9, 2021

Date for next review: MARCH 2025



References & appendices

Appendix A Statutory safeguarding partners:

Local authority Buckinghamshire Council.

- For children:
 - o On-line at <https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/care-for-children-and-families/child-protection-and-safeguarding/>
 - o or the First Response Team
Telephone: **01296 383 962**
Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5.30pm
Friday 9am to 5pm
 - o If you need an urgent response outside of these hours, contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0800 999 7677.
- For adults
 - o Safeguarding Adults Team - **0800 137915**
 - o Out of hours emergency duty team - **0800 999 7677**
 - o Safeguarding children - **0845 460 0001**

Clinical commissioning group (CCG) – Buckinghamshire CCG

- See under safeguarding at <https://www.buckinghamshireccg.nhs.uk/public/contact-us/>

The police

If a child is in immediate danger, call 999 or to report a crime dial 101, further options on their web page <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/caa/child-abuse/how-to-report-possible-child-abuse/>



Appendix B Other references

- Other relevant HPC policies
 - o Staff Training & Awareness programme

- ChildLine Free helpline for children and young people in the UK. children and young people can call to talk about any problem www.childline.org.uk T: 0800 1111
- NSPCC Information for children and adults
www.nspcc.org.uk/html/home/needadvice/needadvice.htm T: 0808 800 5000
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/> , <<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/writing-a-safeguarding-policy-statement>>

- Samaritans www.samaritans.org T: 08457 909090 Domestic Violence

- Legislation
 - o The [Children Act 1989](#), [Children Act 2004](#), [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#), see <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/england>, and [DfE guidance](#)

- Definitions
 - o Children and young people: Anyone under the age of 18 years
 - o Vulnerable Adult: Anyone over 18 who is:
 - Unable to care for themselves
 - Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
 - Or may be in need of community care services
 - o Staff - anyone with a contractual relationship with HPC, thus including employees, councillors, volunteers, contractors.

Resolved at Full Council :

Review due :