

# Chart Sutton Parish Council

## Safeguarding Policy

### Policy Statement

The welfare of a child or an adult at risk of abuse or neglect (hereafter referred to as vulnerable) is paramount and is the responsibility of everyone. All vulnerable children and adults, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse, whether physical, verbal, bullying, exclusion or neglect. Bullying, shouting, physical violence, sexism and racism towards vulnerable children or adults will not be tolerated.

Chart Sutton Parish Council has a duty to safeguard vulnerable children and adults, and those who may come into contact with vulnerable people.

This policy is in place to protect all vulnerable persons regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, religion or faith.

### Definition of Child Abuse

In England a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Child protection guidance points out that even if a child has reached 16 years of age and is:

- living independently
- in further education
- a member of the armed forces
- in hospital; or
- in custody in the secure estate

they are still legally children and should be given the same protection and entitlements as any other child (Department for Education, 2018a).

The Working Together 2015 definition of child abuse quotes “ *A form of maltreatment of a child. Someone may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.* ”

Types of child abuse (taken from NSPCC) include:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Grooming
- Child Sexual exploitation
- Child Trafficking
- Neglect
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Bullying
- On-line abuse

## **Definition of Adult Abuse**

An adult at risk of abuse or neglect is defined as a person aged 18 or over who “ *may be in need of services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who may not be able to take care of him or herself, or who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.*”

Types of adult abuse (informed by the Care Act 2014) include:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Financial abuse
- Discriminatory abuse
- Institutional abuse

All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a vulnerable child or adult will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately. Anyone who has a suspicion or concern should in the first instance report this to the parish clerk. This person is responsible for escalating the suspicion or concern as a matter of urgency to the appropriate agency.

The Parish Council will endeavour to keep any premises used by it safe for use by vulnerable children and adults.

Activities/Groups that take place organised by the Parish Council that involve vulnerable children and/or adults will need to comply with the requirements for safeguarding. It is the responsibility of the organisers of these groups/activities to ensure that they comply and have all the appropriate policies in place. Each group/activity should have its own safeguarding policy.

Consent should be obtained for photography.

## **General Points**

The Parish Council does not supervise vulnerable children or adults as part of their function within the parish. DBS checks are not required by them unless they are to have unsupervised access to vulnerable children and adults. Should DBS checks become necessary they will be undertaken in compliance with the Protection of Children Act (1999), The Children’s Act (2004), part V of the Police act (1997), the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 and the Care Act 2014.

When the Parish Council organise events to include children – it is always stated that children must be accompanied by parents or guardians.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or when changes occur in National Legislation or Procedures. New councillors will be provided with an understanding of their responsibilities in line with this policy.

Any volunteers working for the Parish Council and having unsupervised access to vulnerable children or adults will also be provided with an understanding of their responsibilities in line with this policy.

## **Guidelines for responding to abuse and neglect or a suspicion of abuse or neglect**

- **DO call 999 if you believe any vulnerable child or adult is in immediate danger**
- DO take action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse or neglect – tell your nominated person immediately

- DO treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the vulnerable person as if you believe them
- DO tell the vulnerable child or adult that they are right to tell you
- DO reassure the vulnerable child or adult that they are not to blame
- DO be honest about your own position, who you have to tell and why
- DO tell the vulnerable child or adult what you are doing and when and keep them up to date with what is happening
- DO inform parents/carers unless there is suspicion of their involvement
- DO NOT make promises you cannot keep
- DO NOT interrogate the vulnerable child or adult – it is not your responsibility to investigate – this is the role of the police or appropriate agency.
- DO NOT cast doubt on what the vulnerable child or adult has told you
- DO NOT say anything that makes the vulnerable child or adult feel responsible for the abuse or neglect
- DO NOT do nothing – make sure you tell your nominated person immediately in order that they can escalate the concern and take appropriate advice.

### Useful Contacts

Kent police	01622 690690 (24hours)
NSPCC	0800 800 5000
National Domestic Violence Helpline	0808 200 0247
Concerns for a child	<a href="mailto:social.services@kent.gov.uk">social.services@kent.gov.uk</a> 030000 41 11 11
Concerns for a child	<a href="mailto:social.services@kent.gov.uk">social.services@kent.gov.uk</a> 030000 41 61 61
Social Services out of hours	030000 41 91 91

### Websites

- [www.kscmp.org.uk](http://www.kscmp.org.uk) (Child safeguarding)
- [www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adultsafeguarding](http://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adultsafeguarding) (adult safeguarding)