



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK POLICY

1. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to provide a framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk.

The policy aims to ensure that:

- a) all children and adults at risk are safe and protected from harm;
- b) appropriate procedures are in place to enable children and adults at risk to feel safe and adopt safe practices; and
- c) Councillors, staff and volunteers are expected to understand their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and the actions to be taken where there are concerns.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 This policy develops procedures and good practice within the Council to ensure that each person can demonstrate that there is an understanding of the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Council will not tolerate failure at any level to prevent harm, support those affected, and report safeguarding concerns promptly to the appropriate authorities.
- 2.2 This policy has been developed in line with current safeguarding legislation, statutory guidance and relevant Norfolk safeguarding procedures.
- 2.3 The Council takes seriously its responsibility under the current legislation to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults; and to work together with other agencies to ensure that there are adequate arrangements within the Council to identify and support those who are suffering harm.
- 2.4 2.4 Safeguarding Lead

The Council will appoint a Safeguarding Lead and a deputy. The Safeguarding Lead will be responsible for:

- a) receiving and acting upon safeguarding concerns;
- b) ensuring concerns are reported to the appropriate external agencies without delay;
- c) maintaining secure records of safeguarding concerns; and
- d) supporting Councillors, staff and volunteers in applying this policy.

Details of the current Safeguarding Lead and reporting arrangements will be maintained separately and kept up to date.

2.5 Reporting safeguarding concerns

Concerns should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Lead.

Where appropriate, referrals will be made to Norfolk County Council Children's Services, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), or Adult Social Services.

If a child or adult is in immediate danger, 999 should be called.

3. Individual responsibilities

- 3.1 The Council recognises that safeguarding is not just about protecting children, young people and adults from deliberate harm. It also relates to health and safety; meeting the needs of children, young people and adults with medical conditions; providing first aid; visits organised or sponsored by the Council; internet or e-safety; appropriate arrangements to ensure security, taking into account the local context.
- 3.2 Additionally, the Council recognises that safeguarding can involve a range of potential issues such as: bullying, including cyberbullying (by text message, on social networking sites), peer on peer and prejudice-based bullying; racist and homophobic or transphobic abuse; sexting; substance misuse; issues which may be specific to a local area or population, for example gang activity and youth violence and other particular issues affecting children including domestic violence, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, extremist behaviour and radicalisation, forced marriage and modern slavery.
- 3.3 Councillors, staff and volunteers are expected to maintain an attitude of 'it can happen here' and are aware of the signs and indicators of abuse.
- 3.4 Everyone has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for children, young people and adults at risk.
- 3.5 The Council will endeavour to ensure that Councillors, staff and volunteers are provided with opportunities to receive appropriate training, in order to develop their understanding and indicators of abuse and of the Council's safeguarding procedures.

- 3.6 The Council will endeavour to ensure that Councillors, staff and volunteers know how to respond to someone who discloses abuse, or for whom they have a concern, and the procedure to be followed in appropriately sharing a concern of possible abuse or a disclosure of abuse.
- 3.7 This policy will be published so that residents can access the Council's safeguarding approach
- 3.8 When services are delivered by a third party or agency, the Council will follow the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and check that the person presenting themselves is the same person on whom appropriate checks have been made. The Council will seek to ensure the suitability of adults working with and in the presence of children at any time. Community users organising activities for children, young people and adults at risk are aware of and understand the need for compliance with the Council's safeguarding procedures.
- 3.9 The Council operates safer recruitment practices including making sure that:
- a) where roles involve work with children or adults at risk, appropriate pre-appointment checks are carried out, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks where required and proportionate
 - b) statutory guidance relating to volunteers is followed
 - c) recruitment panel members are properly trained.
- 3.10 Should the Council dismiss or remove someone because they have harmed a child or poses a risk of harm to a child or would have done so if they had not left, the Council will report this to the (DBS) and any appropriate professional or regulatory body.
4. **If a child, young person or adult makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or other child or young person, The Council will:**
- 4.1 stay calm and listen carefully;
 - 4.2 reassure the person that they have done the right thing in telling you;
 - 4.3 not investigate or ask leading questions;
 - 4.4 let the person know that they will need to tell the Safeguarding Lead;
 - 4.5 inform the Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible; and
 - 4.6 make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident which will be signed, and dated.
5. **Confidentiality and Information Sharing**
- 5.1 Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults. A key factor identified in many safeguarding practice

reviews has been a failure by practitioners to record information, to share it to understand its significance and then take appropriate action.

- a) The Council recognises that all matters relating to protection are confidential;
- b) The Council will disclose personal information about a child, young person or adult on a need to know basis only;
- c) Councillors, staff and volunteers are aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, young person or adult;
- d) Councillors, staff and volunteers are aware that they cannot promise to keep secrets which might compromise the safety or well-being of a child, young person or adult, or that of another; and

6. Managing Allegations against individuals who work for the Council

6.1 The Council is aware of the possibility of allegations being made against its Councillors, staff or volunteers who are working with or may come into contact with children, young person or adults. They can be made by children, young person or adults or other concerned adults. Everyone in the Council and volunteers have been made aware of the process to be followed if such an allegation is made.

6.2 In such circumstances the Council will:

- a) report the matter through the appropriate Norfolk safeguarding route, including referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where the concern relates to an adult working with children, and to Adult Social Services where the concern relates to an adult at risk.
- b) consider the safeguarding arrangements of the child, young person or adult to ensure they are not in contact with the alleged abuser;
- c) consider the rights of the individual concerned for a fair and equal process of investigation;
- d) ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedure is followed, including whether suspending that person from work or volunteering for us until the outcome of any investigation is deemed necessary;
- e) advise the (DBS) and any other appropriate regulatory or professional body where the individual has been disciplined or dismissed as a result of the allegations founded or would have been if they have resigned.

7. Whistleblowing

The Council recognises that a child, young person or adult cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where the Council fails to do so. Councillors, staff and volunteers are advised of our Whistleblowing Policy and of how it can be

implemented. Councillors, staff and volunteers are aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude and actions of colleagues where these are inappropriate or unsuitable.

8. **Supporting Staff and volunteers**

- 8.1 Councillors, staff and volunteers are advised on the boundaries of appropriate behaviour – such matters form part of our staff and volunteer induction and they have access to support and guidance when required or requested
- 8.2 The Council recognises that staff and volunteers working for the Council who have become involved in the case of a child who has suffered harm, or appears likely to suffer harm, may find the situation stressful and upsetting. The Council support this by providing an opportunity for them to discuss their anxieties with the Safeguarding Lead, or another person as appropriate.

9. **Training**

- 9.1 This policy will be provided to Councillors, staff and volunteers, and the Council will maintain a record of issue and acknowledgement where appropriate.
- 9.2 Councillors, staff and volunteers will have access to appropriate safeguarding training which is **regularly updated** in order to keep it updated in line with local and national guidance/legislation. The Council will also, as part of our induction, issue and promote information in relation to our Safeguarding Policy to all newly appointed individuals