



Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy

Adopted 15 March 2024 – Full Council – Minute 2052

It is a legal requirement for any organisation working with young children or vulnerable adults (V.A's) to ensure that there are procedures in place which, as much as possible, provide for their safety. As the Town Council operate a number of activities for children and vulnerable adults it is important that we adopt a robust set of procedures to protect both individuals and the Council.

The policy statement below is supported by a more detailed working procedures document which all staff, volunteers and councillors should be aware of and for which the Council will provide basic training during the induction process.

1. Responsibility

Every staff member, volunteer or councillor who supports activities involving young people or vulnerable adults has a duty of care to themselves and to others and should familiarise themselves with the procedures relating to this policy.

2. Responsible Officer

The Town Clerk will be the responsible officer for all Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection issues and any activities undertaken by the Town Council which are likely to involve these people should be reported to the Town Clerk prior to their commencement.

3. Reporting Procedures

When there is a suspicion of child or adult abuse taking place it should be reported to the Town Clerk who in turn should report all incidents to the Town Mayor. If the Town Clerk is unavailable then the incident should be reported to the Deputy Town Clerk. Staff, volunteers and councillors should acquaint themselves with the types of abuse and how to recognise signs of abuse.

4. Types of Abuse

Neglect	Sexual
Physical	Emotional

5. Confidentiality

It is important to ensure confidentiality about any suspicions, or allegations being made by a child or V.A. Whilst it is recommended that notes are made as soon as possible these should be treated in confidence until required by investigating authorities.

6. Emotional Distress

It is possible that anyone having abuse reported to them or identifying the signs of abuse may be affected emotionally. In such cases staff, volunteers or councillors should contact the Town Clerk or the Emergency Duty Team at Social Services for advice and support.

7. Procedures

Guidelines on precautions and checks to be carried out should be followed at all times. Advice on whether an activity requires special measures in place is available from the Town Clerk or the procedures relating to this policy. It is recommended to always err on the side of safety.

8. Staff DBS Checks

Any staff member, volunteer or councillor who wishes to support activities involving children and/or vulnerable adults must be DBS checked first. Anyone not DBS checked must not support activities where there is a possibility of unsupervised contact with a child or V.A. occurring.

9. Self Certification

To avoid adverse effects on planned activities whilst staff, volunteers and councillors are awaiting their full DBS check a 'Self Certification' form can be completed.

Self Certification is a minimum requirement and does not negate the need for a full disclosure.

10. External Staff / Bought in Staff

If an activity requires the buying in of outside expertise e.g. children's entertainers or trainers, then DBS must have been carried out. Individuals should have their own DBS certification which should be checked:

- The original document or the DBS number can be accepted as proof of a DBS - photocopies should not be accepted and On Line Checks should be explored prior to arrival.
- Certificates more than 3 years old MUST NOT be accepted
- Where certificates are more than 6 months old individuals must complete a 'Self Certification' form
- Bought in staff should not have unsupervised access to children or V.A's at any time during the course of activities.

11. Additional Information / Support

If anyone has concerns about Child Protection or V.A. issues additional support is available from:

Kent: Social Services Team
Tel 03000 41 11 11

<mailto:social.services@kent.gov.uk>

Emergency Duty Team

Tel 03000 41 91 91

12. Disclosure

Any information about allegations or suspicion of abuse incidents must be conveyed to Town Council responsible officers as soon as possible. This will enable procedures to be examined and statements prepared if the allegations require further investigation.

13. Procedures Document

Procedural information relating to this policy is available from the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk.

———— **POLICY ENDS HERE** ————