

ASH PARISH COUNCIL

Safeguarding Policy

Adopted 7th November 2022

1. Introduction

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

1.2 This policy outlines practices that will promote the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults using Ash Parish Council facilities.

1.3 This policy will be reviewed regularly.

2. Definitions

1.1 Children and young people: anyone under the age of 18 years.

1.2 Vulnerable adult: anyone over 18 who is unable to care for themselves; unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation; or may need community care services.

2. To whom this policy applies

2.1 This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of Ash Parish Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity.

3. Promoting a safe environment

3.1 In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, Ash Parish Council wishes to promote a safeguarding culture in its premises and activity areas. In order to achieve this, Ash Parish Council will:

- provide safe facilities and undertake regular safety assessments.
- ensure that employees and councillors are aware of safeguarding expectations.
- make available on public noticeboards and to employees and councillors relevant contact details.

3.2 Employees, councillors and volunteers all have a duty to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults but are not responsible for deciding whether abuse is taking place. If they have concerns, these should be passed on to the authorities as detailed below as soon as possible.

4. Allegations against staff and volunteers

4.1 All staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or vulnerable adult. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

4.2 No attempt should be made to investigate or act on any allegation before

consultation with the Somerset Safeguarding Childrens and Adults teams (contact details below).

Somerset Safeguarding Adults

Please don't stay silent to report a safeguarding concern call:

Adult Social Care on 0300 123 2224 (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm, Saturday and Sunday closed).

The phone number for Adults and Mental Health out of hours is 0300 123 23 27

Email: Adult Social Care on adults@somerset.gov.uk

Police: 101 or in emergency 999

Somerset Safeguarding Children

If you are worried about a vulnerable child, **please don't stay silent** to report a safeguarding concern call:

Early Help Advice Hub on 01823 355803

Children's Social Care on 0300 123 2224

Consultation line for DSLs and GPs on 0300 123 3078

Email: childrens@somerset.gov.uk

Police: 101 or in emergency 999

If you know a child already has a social worker then contact the social worker's telephone number.

Somerset Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

If you are worried about a vulnerable adult and would like help, contact:

Phone Adult Social Care on 0300 123 2224

Email at adults@somerset.gov.uk

If you would like to speak to a social worker outside of office hours please phone Adults and Mental Health out of hours on 0300 123 23 27

Police: 101 or in emergency 999

Area-wide

Urgent enquiries will be made to understand the situation by the Somerset Safeguarding teams and they will make decisions about what needs to be done next, to make sure people are safe. All calls will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

You should always call 999 in an emergency – for example when someone's life is at risk or someone is seriously injured or critically ill.

Avon and Somerset Police – 101
NSPCC Helpline – 0808 800 500

5. Whistleblowing

5.1 We recognise that children or vulnerable adults cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff or volunteers fail to do so.

5.2 All staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice will be sought from the Safeguarding Teams at Somerset County Council.

6. What should be a cause for concern

6.1 Staff and volunteers should be concerned by any behaviour, action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child or a vulnerable adult. A child or vulnerable adult may be abused by parents, other relatives or carers, professionals and their peers, and abuse can occur in any family OR in any other area of society, regardless of social class, wealth or geographical location.

6.2 Abuse falls into four main categories:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- neglect

6.3 All staff and volunteers need to have an awareness that there are many other forms of abuse ranging from Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) through to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

6.4 Ideally, staff and volunteers who engage with children or vulnerable adults will have accessed appropriate training.

6.5 Further information about types of abuse, signs to look for and what to do if you are concerned are also available on the Somerset County Council website.

Signed:

Date: