

Thorney Parish Council Safeguarding Policy

Introduction

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. This Policy outlines practice that will promote the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults using Parish Council facilities. The Policy will be reviewed by the Parish Council regularly.

Definitions

Children and Young People – anyone under the age of 18 years

Vulnerable Adult – anyone over the age of 18 years who are

- Unable to care for themselves
- Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
- Or may be in need of community care services

To Whom This Policy Applies

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

Promoting a Safe Environment

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

- Provide safe facilities and undertake regular safety assessments
- Ensure all employees, and Parish Councillors are aware of safeguarding expectations
- Make available the contact details for Peterborough Children's Social Care, Peterborough Adult's Social Care, Peterborough City Council Out of Hours Emergency and NSPCC
- Employees, Parish Councillors and volunteers all have a duty to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults but are not responsible for deciding whether abuse is or has taken place. If they have concerns, these should be passed on to either Peterborough Children's Social Care or Peterborough Adult Social Care as soon as possible.
- Ensuring that before any volunteers or paid members of staff are recruited to work with children and vulnerable persons they are interviewed and two references taken up.
- Decisions on whether any person should go through the Disclosure Barring Service will be made by the Parish Council or the Chairman after consultation with the Clerk following a risk

assessment and in line with guidance on the Government's website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about>).

Responding to complaints and alleged or suspected incidents.

The following guidelines should be used when an allegation is disclosed by a child, young person or vulnerable adult to a member of Parish Council staff and/or volunteer:

a)

- Listen and reassure
- Maintain confidentiality but do not make promises you cannot keep, and explain that the information will have to be passed on and what action you will be taking in this regard.
- Be calm.
- Be reassuring and make it clear that you are glad that they have told you.
- Show that you are taking the child, young person or vulnerable adult seriously and that you understand and believe them.
- Keep questions to a minimum; if you have to ask questions keep them open and not leading.

Important points to remember when dealing with a disclosure:

- Try not to display any sign of shock or disapproval when the child, young person or vulnerable adult is making a disclosure.
- Do not jump to conclusions.
- The child, young person or vulnerable adult may not regard the experience as either bad or painful, they may not feel guilty or angry.
- Be aware of your own feelings which may be different to those of the child, young person or vulnerable adult.
 - Take care of yourself by making sure that you have an opportunity to discuss your feelings with someone at a later stage.
- Do not destroy any evidence as it may be useful in a court of law.
- Initial disclosure, even if retracted, must still be referred.

b) Recording information. A book specifically for children, young people and vulnerable adult's protection issues will be used and updated when necessary. The book will be kept by and can be accessed through the designated Safeguarding Parish Councilor.

c) Informing the appropriate authorities. If abuse has been disclosed to you or you suspect that it is happening, you must inform a member of Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board or Peterborough City Council staff as soon as possible. You must then complete a disclosure form and ensure that the procedure set out overleaf is followed. Contact details are below.

Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers

- All staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child, young person or vulnerable adult. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parent not to be conducted in view of others.
- All staff should be aware of the Parish Councillor Code of Conduct.
- The Parish should follow the Peterborough Safeguarding Children's Board procedures for managing allegations against staff/volunteers. This can be found through the link below;
<http://www.safeguardingpeterborough.org.uk/children-board/professionals/lado/>

No attempt should be made to investigate or act on any allegation before consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (contact details below).

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children, young people or vulnerable adults cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff or volunteers fail to do so. All staff, Parish Councillors 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 LADO or Safeguarding Team.

What Should be a Cause for Concern

Staff, parish Councillors 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, young person 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.

Abuse falls into four main categories;

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional abuse
3. Sexual abuse

4. Neglect

All staff, Parish Councillors 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).

Ideally staff, Parish Councillors and volunteers who engage with children, young people or vulnerable adults will have accessed appropriate training through the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB) but further information about types of abuse, signs to look for and what to do if you are concerned are also available on the PSCB website (<http://www.safeguardingpeterborough.org.uk/children-board/>).

All agencies, whether statutory, voluntary or other are obliged to follow the procedures laid out on the PSCB website.

Contacts

Thorney Parish Council Safeguarding Contact
Samantha Godley, Parish Councillor
07572 876311
samgodley@hotmail.co.uk

Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board
01733 864170

Peterborough Children's Social Care
01733 864180
PDSC@peterborough.gov.uk

Peterborough Adult Social Care
01733 747474

Peterborough Out of Hours (5pm to 9am)
01733 234724

Local Authority Designated Officer
01733 864038
lado@peterborough.gov.uk

NSPCC (for adults concerned about a child)
0808 800 5000

Thorney Parish Council Procedures Document 14

Police

101 for non-emergencies

999 for emergencies