# HENFIELD PARISH COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

# SECTION 1

## Policy Statement

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

This policy promotes good practice in safeguarding for those involved in Parish Council facilities, events and activities. This also includes Henfield Museum.

## Definitions

**Children and young people:**

Anyone under the age of 18 years.

**Vulnerable Adult:**

Anyone over 18 who is:

* 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 the Parish Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity, for example contracted to do a piece of work.

It also applies to any individual or group hiring, leasing or using the Parish Council facilities for the purpose of delivering any service to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

# SECTION 2

## Promoting a safe environment

In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, the Parish Council will:

* Provide safe facilities and do regular risk assessments.
* Ensure that employees, Councillors and leaders of activities in the parish or in/on parish facilities, are aware of the safeguarding expectations.
* Members of staff, Councillors and volunteers who have regular unsupervised contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults during the course of their duties MUST undergo appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (“DBS”) checks BEFORE commencement of such duties.

## Expectations of behaviour

All users of Parish Council facilities, organisers of parish events, staff, Councillors and volunteers should:

* Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction is appropriate, respectful and professional.
* Refrain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism, homophobia, and bullying and in addition, report any instances of such behaviour to the Chair of the Parish Council, Parish Clerk or parents/carers, as appropriate.

## Hiring of facilities to groups for use with children, young people or vulnerable adults

The Parish Council will require the hirer to:

* Have public liability insurance.
* Have a suitable safeguarding policy and/or agree to work to the Parish Council’s policy and relevant guidance.
* Ensure leaders make their members aware of the Parish Council Policy and ensure that it is followed whilst using parish facilities.
* Ensure leaders have valid enhanced DBS checks as appropriate, access to first aid equipment and know how to summon help from the Emergency Services.
* Complete risk assessments for individual activities.

# SECTION 3

## Safe working practice

All staff, Councillors and volunteers must follow the policy and procedures at all times. For example they should;

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| * Never leave children, young people or vulnerable adults unattended with adults who have not been subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. |
| * Plan activities to involve more than one person being present or at least in sight or hearing of others. Alternatively, record, or inform others of their whereabouts and intended action. |
| * Where possible, have male and female leaders working with a mixed group. |
| * Ensure registers are completed and attendees are marked in and signed out (under 8’s must be collected by a parent/carer). |
| * Ensure that photos or videos of individuals are not taken without written permission from their parents/carers. |
| * Ensure they have access to a first aid kit and telephone, and know fire procedures. |
| * When working outside, ensure activities, breaks and clothing are suitable for the weather conditions and that shelter is available where possible. |

**SECTION 4**

## Allegations against staff, Councillors and volunteers

The Parish Council should follow the procedures for managing allegations against staff/volunteers/Councillors on the WSCC Keeping Children Safe website page. No attempt should be made to investigate or take action before consultation with West Sussex County Council Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). See link and contact details below;

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/keeping-children-safe/raise-a-concern-about-a-child/>

**email**: [LADO@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@westsussex.gov.uk) **Phone:** 01403 229900 Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm.

**Emergency team** - all other times, including nights, weekends and bank holidays: 0330 222 6664

**NSPCC Advice Line** Monto Fri 10am to 4pm **Phone** 0808 8005000 **email** help@nspcc.org.uk

## Whistleblowing

All Parish Councillors, 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 LADO or Safeguarding Team as to how to handle such allegations. **The Parish Council must not make a judgement on whether allegations have merit for further investigation, this decision must be for the LADO team.**

## What should be a cause for concern

Staff and volunteers should be concerned by any action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child. Abuse falls into four main categories and can include child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation, referred to as FGM. The categories are as follows:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Neglect

In addition, staff and volunteers must give equal priority to keeping all children and young people safe regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. Children can also be additionally vulnerable because of the impact of discrimination, previous experiences, their level of dependency, communication needs or other issues.

The Parish Council are committed to ensuring the safety of all users of our services, activities and facilities and take our responsibilities seriously. We work with other agencies and West Sussex County Council to ensure compliance with changing laws and guidelines in relation to safeguarding.

The Parish Council confirm this safeguarding policy will be updated as and when such legislative/best practice changes take place or at least three yearly.

Please also refer to the Henfield Parish Council Equality and Diversity Policy available to download here <https://www.henfield.gov.uk/parish-office-documents>

**Dated: 3rd January 2023**