

FAIRFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Safeguarding Policy

2023

SECTION 1

Introduction

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. This policy promotes good practice in safeguarding for those using Town Council facilities and services.

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 need community care services

Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of the Town Council whether in a paid, voluntary, or commissioned capacity, for example contracted to do a piece of work. It also applies to any individual hiring, leasing, or using the Town Council facilities or services for the purpose of delivering any service to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

SECTION 2

Promoting a safe environment

To promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, the Town Council will:

- Provide safe facilities or services and do regular safety assessments.
- Ensure that employees, councillors, and leaders of activities in Town facilities or services, are aware of the safeguarding expectations.
- Members of staff 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 checks BEFORE commencement of such duties.
- The relevant safeguarding contacts for advice and help will be made available of the Town Council website.

SECTION 3

Safe working practice

All users of Town facilities and services must follow the safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults' policy and procedures at all times. For example, they should:

- 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 so that more than one person involved is present or at least in sight or hearing of others. Alternatively, record, or inform others of their whereabouts and intended actions.
- Ensure registers are complete and attendees are recorded and signed out (with under 8's collected by a parent/carer).
- Ensure there is access to a first aid kit and telephone and are aware of fire procedures.
- Ensure that photos or videos of individuals are not taken without permission from their parents/carers and only after signing the Council's photography consent form.
- When working outside, ensure activities, breaks, materials and clothing are suitable for the weather conditions and that shelter is available where possible.

Expectations of behaviour

All users of Town facilities and services should:

- Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction with users should be appropriate and professional.
- Adhere to the guidance and instructions of Town employed staff
- Treat each other with respect at all times and show consideration for other groups using the facilities and services.
- Abstain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism and bullying and in addition to report any instances of such behaviour to the Town Chief Officer/Clerk and RFO or parents/carers, as appropriate. The Town Chief Officer/Clerk and RFO will then decide the next course of action required, if any.

SECTION 4

Allegations against staff and volunteers

- All staff and volunteers should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or vulnerable adult. It is advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults where possible.
- If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Clerk. The Clerk will then inform the Chair of Staffing. If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Clerk the recipient of the allegation will immediately inform the Deputy Clerk who will then inform the Chair of the Staffing Committee.

If you are worried or concerned about anyone under 18 who you think is being abused or neglected, or that a child and their family need help and support, please contact the 'Front Door' on 01452 42 6565 selecting either Option 1 – Urgent Concerns or Option 3 - Children's Practitioner Advice Line or by email at childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk during the opening hours of 9am - 5pm.

Outside of office hours, you should contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 01452 614 194 or, if you have concerns about the safety of the child or young person or you believe a serious criminal offence has been committed, please contact the Police at any time on 101

- The Town Council should follow the procedures for managing allegations against staff/volunteers on the SBC Safeguarding website.

To report a concern about a professional working with vulnerable adults Call the Adult Help Desk on (01452) 426 868.

No attempt should be made to investigate or take action before consultation with LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)

To report a concern about a professional working with children contact Nigel Hatten, LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) on 01452 426 994, email nigel.hatten@gloucestershire.gov.uk or Tracy Brooks, Allegations Management Co-ordinator on 01452 426 320, email tracy.brooks@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

Whistleblowing

All Town 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 Town Council must not make a judgement on whether the 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
5. Financial Abuse/Manipulation

The Town Council is committed to ensuring the safety of all users of our services and facilities and take our responsibilities seriously. We regularly work with other agencies and Cotswold District Council to ensure compliance with changing laws and guidelines in relation to safeguarding. The Town Council confirm this safeguarding policy will be updated as and when such legislative/best practice changes take place or at least annually.