



St Stephen in Brannel Parish Council

Mrs Linda Ranger - Clerk and RFO
E-mail: clerk@ststepheninbrannel-pc.org.uk
www.ststepheninbrannel-pc.org.uk

Office 2, Brannel Room
22 Fore Street, St Stephen
St Austell, PL26 7NN
Tel: 01726 823003
Fax: 01726 821233

Safeguarding Policy¹

Introduction

Safeguarding is about protecting children, young people and adults from abuse, harm or neglect.

Safeguarding is everybody's business. Everybody has the right to be safe no matter who they are or what their circumstances.

We are all responsible for the protection of children, young people and adults. We must ensure that we are doing all we can to protect the most vulnerable members of our society.

This policy applies to all members of staff, all Councillors and the organisations who have a working relationship with the Parish Council, including volunteers.

St Stephen in Brannel Parish Council has appointed a Safeguarding Lead who has responsibility for dealing with all safeguarding issues.

The Safeguarding Lead is Linda Ranger who can be contacted through the Parish Council office.

Safeguarding Children

Definition

A child is "anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate for children and young people, does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under the Children Act 1989.

(See Children's Act 2004)

¹ Adopted at the Full Council Meeting held on Wednesday 6th June 2018 under minute reference FPC131/18

What is child abuse?

Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. It can occur in a family or in an institutional or community setting. It may be by people known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger for example via the internet. They may be abused by adults, or other children. There are various signs of child abuse that you should be aware of and alert to in reporting any concerns.

The main forms are:

- Physical abuse: such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.
- Emotional abuse: persistent emotional maltreatment of a child that could cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.
- Sexual abuse: forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. Actual physical contact isn't always involved: it can include non-contact activities, such as encouraging them to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Neglect: failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development, such as:
 - not providing adequate food, clothing and shelter;
 - not protecting a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
 - not ensuring adequate supervision; or
 - not ensuring appropriate medical care or treatment.

Safeguarding Adults

The Care Act 2014 and supporting statutory guidance states that 'safeguarding duties' apply to an adult who:

- "has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect'

What is adult abuse?

Examples of some of the main forms of abuse and neglect quoted in the Act include:

- Physical abuse
- Domestic violence
- Psychological abuse
- Financial or material abuse
- Modern slavery
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisation abuse

- Neglect and acts of omission
- Self neglect
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The Act also states that, 'Exploitation, in particular, is a common theme.

Safeguarding Arrangements

If a child, young person or adult makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse against an adult or other child or young person, we will:

- stay calm and listen carefully;
- reassure the person that s/he has done the right thing in telling;
- not investigate or ask leading questions;
- let the person know that s/he will need to tell the Safeguarding Lead;
- not promise to keep what they have been told a secret;
- inform the Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible; and
- make a written record of the allegation, disclosure or incident which will be signed, and dated.

Managing Allegations against individuals within the organisation.

We are aware of the possibility of allegations being made against someone who works for our organisation or volunteers that are working with or may come into contact with children, young person or adults. They can be made by children, young person or adults or other concerned adults.

Everyone in our organisation and volunteers has been made aware of the process to be followed if such an allegation is made.

In such circumstances, the matter will be reported to the Safeguarding Lead, who will

- contact and report the matter to the MARU;
- consider the safeguarding arrangements of the child, young person or adult to ensure they are not in contact with the alleged abuser; and
- consider the rights of the individual concerned for a fair and equal process of investigation.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults. A key factor identified in many serious case reviews (SCRs) has been a failure by practitioners to record information, to share it to understand its significance and then take appropriate action. Therefore,

- we recognise that all matters relating to protection are confidential;
- we will disclose personal information about a child, young person or adult on a need to know basis only;
- everyone is aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, young person or adult;
- everyone is aware that they cannot promise to keep secrets which might compromise the safety or well-being of a child, young person or adult, or that of another; and

- we will always undertake to share our concerns with the Multi-Agency Referral Unit (MARU), unless to do so could put the child, young person or adult at greater risk of harm, or impede a criminal investigation. If in doubt, we will consult with the MARU.

Further Guidance

Further guidance can be found by referring to the following sources –

- 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', March 2015
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- Keeping Children Safe in Education, July 2017
- 'What To Do If You Are Worried A Child Is Being Abused', March 2015
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-to-do-if-youre-worried-a-child-is-being-abused--2>
- Information Sharing advice for practitioners, March 2015
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>
- The South West Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures
<https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/>
- National Crime Agency - Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre
www.ceop.org.uk
- www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- Cornwall Council Safeguarding Adults
www.cornwall.gov.uk/safeguardingadults
- Dealing with Child Exploitation
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation--2>