

Marlborough Town Council

Safeguarding Policy



Date adopted: 25 3 24

Review Date: Annually (to ensure it reflects any changes in legislation or best practice).

Author: Richard Spencer-Williams (Town Clerk) 17 1 24

Schedule of Amendments following previous

Nature of Amendment	Author(s)	Date of Trustee sign off

1. Introduction

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. Marlborough Town Council takes its responsibility very seriously to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults who use Marlborough Town Council premises, parks, open

spaces, facilities, and direct or indirect services, and sets the principles we expect from our staff, Councillors and volunteers.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the Marlborough Town Council's commitment to safeguarding and protecting children, young people, and vulnerable adults who come into contact with the council or use its facilities or services. The council aims to promote the welfare and wellbeing of individuals and to ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities and obligations to safeguard those they come into contact with.

3. Policy Statement

Marlborough Town Council recognises its responsibility to ensure that children, young people, and vulnerable adults are safeguarded from harm and that their welfare is promoted. We are committed to ensuring that all staff and volunteers understand their role in safeguarding, promoting the welfare of individuals and that they are provided with appropriate training, support, and supervision.

We will:

- Ensure all council facilities, provision, events, and services support, promote, and facilitate a safe experience for all who use them.
- Ensure that all individuals who come into contact with the council are treated with dignity and respect and are safeguarded from harm.
- Ensure that all staff, councillors, and volunteers understand their role in safeguarding, promoting the welfare of individuals and that they are provided with appropriate training, support, and supervision.
- Ensure that all staff, councillors, and volunteers are aware of their responsibility to report any concerns or suspicions they may have about the welfare of a child, young person, or vulnerable adult.
- Ensure that all staff, councillors, and volunteers are aware of the council's procedures for reporting and responding to concerns or allegations of abuse.
- Take appropriate action to investigate any concerns or allegations of abuse and to support individuals who may be affected.
- Ensure that all staff, councillors, and volunteers are subject to appropriate recruitment procedures, including obtaining relevant criminal record checks.
- Ensure that all staff, councillors, and volunteers are aware of and comply with the council's code of conduct and policies and procedures relating to safeguarding.
- Ensure that individuals who come into contact with the council are made aware of the council's safeguarding policies and procedures and how to raise concerns or make a complaint.

4. Roles and Responsibilities:

All staff, councillors, and volunteers have a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults who come into contact with the council. This includes:

- Reporting any concerns or suspicions they may have about the welfare of an individual.
- Complying with the council's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding.
- Undertaking appropriate training and supervision to ensure they are able to carry out their role effectively.

5. The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities and obligations to safeguard individuals.
- Providing advice, guidance, and support to staff and volunteers on safeguarding matters.
- Ensuring that the council's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding are up to date and are being implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that concerns or allegations of abuse are reported and responded to appropriately.
- Liaising with external agencies, including the local authority and police, as required.

The DSO for Marlborough Town Council will be the Town Clerk , unless otherwise agreed by the Full Council.

6. Definitions

- **A child or young person** is anyone under the age of 18 years. 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, does not change his/her status or entitlements to services or protection.
- **A vulnerable adult** is someone who by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness is unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. An adult for the purpose of this policy is anyone over 18 years of age.
- **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults as defined for the purposes of this policy:**
 - protecting children and adults from maltreatment, or harm
 - preventing impairment of children's and adult's health or development
 - ensuring that children and adults are participating in experiences, using services, or facilities consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and provision
 - taking action to enable all children and adults to have the best life chances, or user experience.
- **Abuse:** A form of maltreatment of a child or adult. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children or adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more rarely, by others (e.g. via the internet). They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.
- **Physical abuse:** A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or adult. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child or dependent adult.

- **Emotional abuse:** The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child or adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's or adults' emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child or adult that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the or adults opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or adults. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's or adults' developmental capability, as well as hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children or adults to frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children or adults. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child or adult, though it may occur alone.
- **Sexual abuse:** Involves forcing or enticing a child, or adult young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children or adults in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children or adults to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child or adult in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.
- **Neglect:** The persistent failure to meet a child's or adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's or adult's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:
 - provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
 - protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
 - ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
 - ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
 It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's or adult's basic emotional needs.
- **Substantial Access:** This policy defines substantial access as;
 - Where an individual is regularly caring for, training, or supervising a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
 - Where an individual has sole charge of children, young people and venerable adults.

7. To whom this policy applies

This Policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of Marlborough Town Council whether paid, voluntary, or commissioned, all hirers and users of our facilities, or services, or those within the remit of the duties and responsibilities of Marlborough Town Council.

8. Promoting a Safe Environment

In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, Marlborough Town Council wishes to promote a safeguarding culture in its premises and play areas, and open spaces. We will achieve this by:

- a. Providing safe facilities and undertaking regular health and safety assessments

- b. Ensuring that employees, Councillors, volunteers and group leaders of activities are aware of our safeguarding culture
- c. Work in partnership with other agencies and community organisations and groups to promote an anti-bullying environment
- d. Requiring all employees, Councillors, volunteers and group leaders of activities are aware of the safeguarding culture, and report or make appropriate interventions
- e. Provide effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support, training and quality assurance
- f. Recruit all staff and volunteer safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- g. Requiring hirers will follow good practice procedures in relation to Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding

9. Creating a Culture of Safeguarding & Equality statement

Some children have an increased risk of abuse and additional barriers can exist for some children with respect to recognising or disclosing it. Marlborough Town Council recognises and supports anti-discriminatory practice and how this can inform the development of a safe environment for beneficiaries of council provision.

All Marlborough Town Council staff, councillors, and volunteers have a role and responsibility to safeguard Members and should maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. They should;

- ✓ be alert to risks and issues affecting children's, young peoples, and vulnerable adult's welfare.
- ✓ identify concerns early.
- ✓ be aware of the process and principles for sharing information within the Town Council.
- ✓ bring any concerns promptly to the attention of the Forum's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

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

When group leaders have a regular and substantial access to children, young people and vulnerable adults, and parents/carers are not present Marlborough Town Council will require the hirer to:

- a. Have membership of a National Governing Body (NGB) or similarly recognised body.
- b. Have public liability insurance
- c. Have a suitable safeguarding child, young people and vulnerable adults' policy.
- d. Ensure group leaders have valid DBS checks
- e. Do Risk assessments for individual activities
- f. Have a register for use in emergencies with any details of allergies or medical conditions
- g. Ensure group leaders have first aid provision
- h. Notify Marlborough Town Council of any safeguarding concerns or alerts.

Marlborough Town Council reserves the right to request the evidential provision of any of the above, and refuse a booking if the conditions above are not met.

11. Hiring of Facilities for provision involving children and young people under the age of 18yrs

Hirers must ensure adequate adult supervision must be provided. Lone working should be avoided. We recommend the following adult to child ratios as the minimum numbers to help keep children and staff protected.

- 0 - 2 years - 1 adult to 3 children
- 2 - 3 years - 1 adult to 4 children
- 4 - 8 years - 1 adult to 6 children
- 9 - 12 years - 1 adult to 8 children
- 13 - 17 years - 1 adult to 10 children

If the outlined ratios are considered not appropriate for the purposes of the hirers activities where the activity has a governing body, then adult to child ratios should be adopted as stated by the governing body of the specific related activity.

Also, where hirers activities encompass mixed age ranges, and people with additional or special needs, then hirers should consider their staff ratios and amend them appropriate to the combined need.

12. Staff

Staff (including councillors and Volunteers) whose role specifically means they will come into with children, young people or vulnerable adults will be required to undertake a DBS check and undergo safeguarding training. Details of these staff, the DBs check, and training undertaken will be held on record.

Examples of these might include the DSO (Town Clerk), caretakers, grounds staff who regularly inspect and tend to play areas, councillors with allocated council roles related to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults , and who would be perceived as a person of trust by these groups.

13. Training

Marlborough Town Council recognise this policy is likely to give rise for training for staff, volunteers, and Councillors. Marlborough Town Council is committed to the provision of needs led training to support the effective implementation of this policy.

Marlborough Town Council will ensure that all staff and volunteers are provided with appropriate training and support to enable them to carry out their role effectively. This will include training on:

- Recognising and responding to signs of abuse or neglect.
- The council's policies and procedures relating to safeguarding.
- The importance of confidentiality and information sharing.
- The council's code of conduct and expectations of behaviour.

14. Making a complaint / raising an alert

Marlborough Town Council Safeguarding Officer: is Richard Spencer-Williams (Town Clerk)
Whistle blowers are given protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

16. Responding to Incidents of concern or disclosures - Dos and don'ts for Staff

Concerns

If incident of concern are observed or brought to the attention of a member of staff. Councillor or volunteer they should report this to the DSL without delay.

Disclosures

Do

- create a safe environment by offering the child, young person, or vulnerable adult a private and safe place if possible.
- stay calm and reassure the child, young person, or vulnerable adult and stress that he/she is not to blame.
- tell the child, young person, or vulnerable adult that you know how difficult it must have been to confide in you.
- listen carefully and tell the child, young person, or vulnerable adult, what you are going to do next.
- tell only the DSL without delay, using the child's own words where possible.

DO NOT:

- take photographs of any injuries.
- postpone or delay the opportunity for the pupil to talk.
- take notes while the pupil is speaking or ask the pupil to write an account.
- Do not ask leading questions
- try to investigate the allegation yourself.
- promise confidentiality e.g. to say you will keep 'the secret'.
- approach or inform the alleged abuser.

17. Whistleblowing

All staff, councillors and volunteers can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the Forum's safeguarding regime and the Whistleblowing policy should be followed to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practices.

Such concerns will be reviewed by the Staffing Committee. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the Staffing Committee or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they can approach The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline (see front page) or Wiltshire Council MASH team or LADO.

19. CONTACT

Children

If there is a believe a child or young person is at risk of significant harm, neglect or injury, report your concerns to;

Wiltshire Council's Integrated Front Door (IFD) which includes **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** on **0300 456 0108**. mash@wiltshire.gov.uk

Out of Hours Service on 0300 456 0100 - Phones are diverted to the Social Work Standby Service from midnight - 9am (7 days a week).

If you believe a child or vulnerable person is in immediate risk of significant harm, injury or danger, phone the Police on 999

If you have significant safeguarding concerns about **someone who is working or volunteering with children and young people**, contact the Designated Officer for Allegations (DOFA) on 0300 456 0108 or dofaservice@wiltshire.gov.uk

Adults

If you have concerns about a vulnerable adult contact Adult MASH:

Telephone: 0300 456 0111 textphone:01225 712501

Email: adviceandcontact@wiltshire.gov.uk

Monday to Thursday: 08:30-17:20 and Friday: 08:30 – 16:20

If you need urgent help or advice outside of these hours, you can call 0300 456 0100

USEFUL LINKS

[Contact children's services - Wiltshire Council](#)

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/what-is-child-abuse/>