

Marlborough Town Council

Safeguarding Policy

Adopted by Marlborough Town Council on 22 6 26



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.

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.

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, 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

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.

Definitions

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.

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. There are many types of abuse including but not limited to: **Physical, emotional, sexual, online and criminal exploitation.**

Neglect: Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's or adult at risk's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of their health, development, or wellbeing. Neglect may include a failure to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing, or shelter
- Protect from physical or emotional harm or danger
- Ensure appropriate supervision (including the use of unsuitable caregivers)
- Provide access to necessary medical care or treatment

Neglect may also include **emotional neglect**, where there is a persistent lack of care, attention, or responsiveness to an individual's emotional wellbeing.

Radicalisation is the process by which an individual comes to support or be drawn into extremist ideologies, and is recognised as a form of safeguarding harm.

Extremism involves the promotion or support of ideologies based on violence, hatred or intolerance that seek to undermine rights, freedoms, or democratic systems.

Exposure to such ideologies can place children, young people and adults at risk, even where it does not meet the threshold for terrorism.

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.

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 and its services.

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.

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.

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 across its services, 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. Ensuring all staff, councillors and volunteers regularly working with Children and vulnerable adults hold enhanced DBS checks, safeguarding training and are able to recognise and report any concerns they might have.
- g. Recruit all staff and volunteer safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- h. Requiring hirers will follow good practice procedures in relation to Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding

Online Safety

Marlborough Town Council uses the same principles set out in this document to safeguard Children, young people and vulnerable adults online as reflected in both:

- Electronic Communications and Social Media Policy
- Young People's Digital Communication and Social Media Policy

Which set out the principles and procedures for keeping online spaces the Council uses safe for children, Young People and Vulnerable adults.

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).

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.

Supervision of children and young people under the age of 18yrs

Town Council staff, volunteers and Hirers of town council facilities whose work involves children and young people must ensure adequate adult supervision at all times.

Lone working should be avoided.

The following are the minimum adult to children ratios that the town council follows in its work with Children and young people to help keep both 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

The town council recommends this adult to children ratios for all hirers of council facilities. 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.

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), Youth Development Worker, 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.

Preventing radicalisation

Protecting children/ young people from the risk of radicalisation is part of Town Council's safeguarding duties and is similar in nature to protecting children and young people from other forms of harm and abuse. Like all other safeguarding matters, staff

and volunteers should use their judgement in identifying concerns and must report any concerns about a child or young person promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO). The DSO will always act proportionately, and this may include making a referral to the Channel programme or to the MASH.

Training

Marlborough Town Council is committed to providing 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.

Staff who work regularly with children and young people will receive prevent training to recognise the signs of radicalisation.

Responding to Incidents of concern or disclosures - Dos and don'ts For Staff

Concerns

If an incident of concern is observed or brought to the attention of a member of staff, Councillor or volunteer they should report this to the DSO 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 DSO 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.

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.

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.

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** or 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](#)

[Comprehensive child safety guide | NSPCC](#)

UK legislations and Statutory guidance relevant to this policy:

- Children's Act 1989 and 2004
- Care Act 2014
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2014
- Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
- GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

Appendix

Types of Abuse

Physical abuse involves causing physical harm to an individual. This may include actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical injury. It also includes situations where a carer fabricates or deliberately induces illness.

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of an individual which causes severe and lasting adverse effects on their emotional development. This may involve making someone feel worthless, unloved, or inadequate, imposing inappropriate expectations, preventing normal social interaction, exposing them to the abuse of others, or subjecting them to serious bullying, including online. Emotional abuse is present in all forms of abuse, although it may also occur independently.

Sexual abuse and exploitation involve forcing or enticing an individual to take part in sexual activities, whether or not they understand or consent. This can include physical contact, such as penetrative or non-penetrative acts, as well as non-contact activities such as involving individuals in sexual images, conversations, or online activity. It also includes sexual exploitation, where abuse occurs in exchange for money, status, or goods, including through online means.

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted sexual behaviour that causes distress, fear, humiliation, or offence.

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet an individual's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in serious impairment of their health or development. This may include failing to provide adequate food, clothing, or shelter, failing to protect from harm or danger, not ensuring appropriate supervision, failing to provide access to medical care, or neglecting emotional needs.

Bullying, including **cyberbullying**, is repeated behaviour intended to hurt, intimidate, or harm an individual. It can be physical, verbal (including discriminatory language), emotional (such as exclusion or humiliation), or take place online through digital platforms.

Self-harm is the intentional act of injuring oneself and may indicate underlying safeguarding concerns. It should always be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

Online abuse refers to any form of abuse that takes place via digital platforms. This includes online sexual abuse, such as sharing sexual images, coercing individuals into online sexual activity, or engaging in sexual conversations. It also includes cyberbullying, which may involve threatening or abusive messages, sharing humiliating content, exclusion from online groups, or the misuse of fake or stolen identities. Online grooming occurs where an individual builds a relationship with a child or young person to exploit or abuse them, often by pretending to be someone else or using social media and gaming platforms. Sexting, also known as youth-produced sexual imagery, involves the sharing of sexual images or messages and is illegal where it involves individuals under the age of 18. It may also involve coercion or exploitation.

Peer-on-peer abuse occurs when children or young people abuse other children or young people. This can take many forms, including bullying, physical abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, emotional abuse, and the sharing of sexual images.

Criminal exploitation, including county lines, involves individuals being coerced or manipulated into criminal activity, such as drug trafficking or transporting money or goods.

Cuckooing is a form of exploitation where criminals take over the home of a vulnerable person to use it for illegal activities.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a criminal offence involving the removal or injury of female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It causes severe physical and psychological harm and is subject to mandatory reporting requirements.

Forced marriage is a marriage conducted without the full and free consent of both parties and involves coercion. It is a form of abuse and must always be treated as a safeguarding concern.

Trafficking involves the movement of individuals for the purpose of exploitation, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, or criminal activity. Where exploitation is present, consent is not considered valid.

Town Clerk / Youth Development Worker