



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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BEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

Bembridge Parish Council believe that children and young people have the right to have fun and be safe in the services provided for them and the activities they choose to participate in.

Bembridge Parish Council believe all children and young people have the right to live their lives to the fullest potential, to be protected, to have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy any activity and to be treated with dignity and respect.

Bembridge Parish Council believe that all children and young people irrespective of their age, class, religion, culture, disability, gender, ethnicity or sexual preference have the right to protection.

Bembridge Parish Council is committed to ensuring that all children and young people are protected and kept safe from harm whilst engaged in services organised and provided by the Council. This Council will also safeguard the welfare of children and young people who use the Council's services or who attend activities within its venues, by protecting them from abuse.

Bembridge Parish Council works to the principles embodied within the Children's Act 1989 and 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010. These guidelines are designed to protect all children and vulnerable people coming into contact with Bembridge Parish Council and persons employed by them or volunteers through any of its initiatives.

2. Definition

Child protection involves excluding known offenders, preventing abuse in our care and recognising and responding to the signs of abuse. The law defines someone as a child until they are 18 years old and children of all ages can be abused. Concerns may also relate to poor practice or bullying. Any individual with concerns should discuss them immediately with the Chair or designated person. Abuse can take many forms, but they are usually divided into four categories (see Appendix A):

- Physical Abuse
- Neglect
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse

3. Procedure

Bembridge Parish Council aims to:

- a. Ensure that sufficient staff/elected members/volunteers who have access to children and vulnerable people will undergo a criminal records disclosure by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and that the Parish Council complies with any recommendations or obligations imposed by the Independent Safeguarding Authority;
- b. Make sure that all staff/elected members/volunteers understand and have access to Bembridge Parish Council's Child Protection Policy and that all staff/elected members/volunteers understand the principles and procedures including the different roles and responsibilities;
- c. Follow procedures in cases where concerns become apparent and where referrals are being made to the Isle of Wight Council's Children's Services (Appendix D & E);
- d. Have consistent ways of: -
 - recording and monitoring concerns involving agencies (Appendix C)
 - gathering information
 - keeping staff/volunteers informed
- e. Keep a central file which is easy to use, up-to-date, known to exist and accessible to those with a 'need to know' but secure from others;
- f. Ensure that all staff/elected members/volunteers follow a Good Practice Guide (Appendix B) designed to protect children, vulnerable people and other staff/elected members/volunteers;
- g. Ensure that sufficient staff/elected member/volunteers have the opportunity to undertake up-to-date awareness training to identify signs and symptoms of abuse and are able to deal with any concerns or disclosures.

4. Responding to Concerns

If you have any concerns you should write down what you have seen or heard that gives you concern, keep that document safe and confidential. Complete a reporting form (Appendix C) and contact the Chair or Clerk as soon as possible.

If there is an imminent risk of harm then you should phone 999; otherwise you may phone 101. A form will also need to be completed (Appendix C) and submitted to the Clerk as soon as possible.

5. Responding to Disclosures

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff/elected members/volunteer they should:

- Allow the child to make the disclosure at their own pace in their own way.
- Avoid interrupting except to clarify what the child is saying.
- Not ask leading questions or probe for information that the child does not volunteer.
- Reassure the child that they have been heard and explain what you will do next and to whom you will talk.
- NEVER promise to keep it a secret.

- Record the conversation as soon as possible.
- Tell the Chair or Clerk
- Fill out a Concern Form (Appendix C)

The Chair or Clerk will consult with Children's Services for advice about referral as soon as is possible.

6. Allegations involving members of staff, elected members or volunteers

Any concerns that involve allegations against a member of staff, elected member or a volunteer should be referred immediately to the Chair or Clerk. The Chair or Clerk will contact Children's Services to discuss and agree further action to be taken about the child and any necessary investigation into the allegation. No investigation into the allegation should take place before this consultation has been made.

The Parish Council's complaints procedure or Code of Conduct, whichever is appropriate, will be followed in respect of the member of staff/elected member/volunteer. Any proven allegation of misconduct may result in the dismissal of the member of staff or appropriate alternative disciplinary action.

Isle of Wight Councils Children's Services	01983 823435
Isle of Wight Councils Adult Safeguarding Team	01983 821105

APPENDIX A -

TYPES OF ABUSE

Physical abuse	Where adults or other young people physically hurt or injure a child by hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, biting, scalding, suffocating, drowning or otherwise causing physical harm. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes, ill health to a child whom they are looking after (for example, fictitious illness by proxy or Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy).
Neglect	Where adults fail 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 (for example, failure to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment). It may also include refusal to give children love, affection and attention. Neglect in sport could include a teacher or coach not ensuring that children were safe, exposing them to undue cold, heat or to unnecessary risk of injury.

Sexual abuse	Involving a child or adolescent in sexual activities that she/he does not understand, cannot give consent to and which are not acceptable in our society. Where girls and boys are abused by adults and sometimes by other children and young people, to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing children pornographic material (books, videos, pictures) is also a form of sexual abuse.
Emotional abuse	The persistent emotional ill-treatment so as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. It may involve causing children to feel frightened or in danger by being constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child.

Indications that a child may be being abused include:

- **Unexplained or suspicious injuries** such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent.
- The child describes what appears to be an **abusive act** involving him/her.
- Someone else (a child or adult) expresses **concern about the welfare** of another child.
- **Unexplained changes in behaviour** (for example, becoming very quiet, withdrawn or displaying sudden outbursts of temper).
- **Inappropriate sexual** awareness.
- Engaging in **sexually explicit** behaviour.
- **Distrust of adults**, particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Difficulty in **making friends**.
- Is **prevented from socialising** with other children.
- **Variations in eating patterns**, including overeating or loss of appetite.
- Unexplained **weight loss** for no apparent reason.
- **Increasingly dirty or unkempt** appearance

This is not an exhaustive list and the presence of one or more of the indicators are not proof that abuse is actually taking place. It is **not** the responsibility of those working for or connected with Bembridge Parish Council to decide that child abuse is occurring but it is their responsibility to report any concerns.

APPENDIX B

Promoting Good Practice when working with children, young people and vulnerable adults

The following guidelines should be used to ensure Good Practice is achieved.

Do treat everyone with respect.

Do provide an example you wish others to follow.

Do plan activities, which involve more than one person being present, or at least are within sight or hearing of others.

Do respect a young person's right to personal privacy.

Do provide access for young people to talk about any concerns they may have.

Do encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.

Do avoid situations that compromise your relationship with young people and are unacceptable within a relationship of trust (eg a sexual relationship between a member of staff/volunteer and a youth member over the age of consent)

Do remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.

Do recognise that caution is required even in sensitive moments of counselling, such as when dealing with bullying.

APPENDIX C - CONCERN FORM

ABOUT YOU

Your name

Position

Address

Tel

Mobile

Email

ABOUT THE CHILD

Child's name

Date of
birth

Child's address

Parent's/Carer's names

Address



ABOUT THE INCIDENT

Date		Time		Location	
Your observations (Continue on separate sheet if necessary)					
Write exactly what the child said and what you said					

Signed

Dated

APPENDIX D - REFERRAL FORM

ABOUT YOU

Your name

Position

Department

Address

Tel

Mobile

Email

ABOUT THE CHILD

Child's name

Date of birth

Child's address

Parent's/Carer's names

Address



ABOUT THE INCIDENT

Date		Time		Location	
Your observations (Continue on separate sheet if necessary)					
Write exactly what the child said and what you said					

ABOUT THE ALLEGED/SUSPECTED ABUSER

APPENDIX E

OTHER AGENCIES INVOLVED

Police

Name of contact

Time of contact

What was their advice?

Children's Services

Name of contact

Time of contact

What was their advice?

External Organisations

Name of contact

Time of contact

What was their advice?

APPROVAL FOR REFERRAL

Parents/Carer

Name

Time of contact

Parent's signature approving referral

.....

Time..... Dated

.....

Time Dated

Signature.....

Dated

SEND TO CHILDREN'S SERVICES