

# **STRETTON UNDER FOSSE PARISH COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

## **Introduction**

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. This policy outlines practice that will promote the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults using Parish Council facilities. The Parish Council will review the policy annually.

## **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 be in need of community care services

## **To whom this policy applies**

This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of Stretton under Fosse Parish Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity.

## **Promoting a safe environment**

In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, Stretton under Fosse Parish Council wishes to promote a safeguarding culture within the village. The Parish Council does not own a premises, but there is a Village Hall owned by the village looked after by a Trust and run by a committee of volunteers from the village.

In order to achieve this, Stretton under Fosse Parish Council will:

- Undertake annual safety assessments
- Ensure that councillors and volunteers are aware of the safeguarding expectations
- Make available on public noticeboards and to employees and councillors, the contact details of the following:
  - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 01926 414144
  - Rugby Children’s’ Team at Social Care North, CV22 7AL: phone 01926 413389 or 01926 413234
  - The NSPCC 0800 800 5000: Text 88858: Email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
  - The Social Care Emergency Duty Team (EDT), Child protection, or adult care and support needs at Warwickshire County Council, 01926 410410 or Local Rugby team on 01926 886922
  - If you believe a child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, call the police on 999

Parish Councillors and volunteers all have a duty to protect children, people and vulnerable adults but are not responsible for deciding whether abuse is taking place. If they have concerns, these should be passed on to the Local Social Care Duty Officer, the MASH or EDT as soon as possible.

## **Allegations against Councillors and Volunteers**

Everyone should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or vulnerable adult. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

The Parish should follow the WSCB procedures for managing allegations against councillors/volunteers, a copy of which can be found on the Warwickshire County Council website.

No attempt should be made to investigate or act on any allegation before consultation with the Rugby Children's team (contact details above).

## **Whistleblowing**

We recognise that children or vulnerable adults cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where Councillors or volunteers fail to do so. All Councillors 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 Rugby Children's Team.

## **What should be a cause for concern?**

Councillors, volunteers and staff should be concerned by any behaviour, action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child or a vulnerable adult. A child or vulnerable adult may be abused by parents, other relatives or carers, professionals and their peers, and abuse can occur in any family OR in any other area of society, regardless of social class, wealth or geographical location.

## **Abuse falls into four main categories:**

1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Neglect

All Councillors and Volunteers need to have an awareness that there are many other forms of abuse ranging from Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) through to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

Ideally, Councillors, volunteers and staff who engage with children or vulnerable adults should have accessed appropriate training through the appropriate channels, but Stretton under Fosse Parish Council has no activities where Councillors, volunteers or staff work on their own with unaccompanied children or vulnerable adults, so at present we have not accessed any safeguarding training.

Further information about types of abuse, signs to look for and what to do if you are concerned are also available on the Rugby Borough Council (RBC) website ([www.rugby.org.uk](http://www.rugby.org.uk)). All agencies, whether statutory, voluntary or other are obliged to follow the procedures laid out on the RBC website.

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