

West Halton and Coleby Parish Council

Child Protection Policy and Procedure

1 Statement

- 1.1 West Halton and Coleby Parish Council, considers it the duty of the Council, its members and volunteers to protect children with whom they come into contact from abuse.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 WH&CPC is involved in providing services for a wide range of people. Some of these people are likely to be children.
- 2.2 This policy is based on the national guidance on developing policies and procedures to protect children “Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)”
- 2.3 The Council has obligations to strive to protect children who it may believe to be abused or at risk of abuse or neglect.

3 Definitions.

- 3.1 A child is defined as someone under the age of 18 years

4 Categories of Abuse

PHYSICAL ABUSE

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocation or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child 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 child 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. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploration or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

SEXUAL ABUSE

Involves forcing or enticing a child or 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 in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child 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.

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victims needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

NEGLECT

The persistent 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. 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); or
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

5 Responsibilities of WH&CPC its Councillors, Officers and Volunteers

- 5.1 WH&CPC will appoint a person to act as the designated person to liaise on matters of protection. The Council will also appoint a deputy for this role.

We all have a responsibility to be aware and alert to signs that all is not well with a child. However, we are not responsible for diagnosing or investigating.

It is important for Council members, officers and volunteers to **make written records of any incidents or concerns that they have as soon as possible using the same language the child used and keep records.**

Any Council member, officer or Volunteer may report a disclosure of abuse to social services.

In all circumstances there should be a referral to the appointed person or their deputy, but this should not cause an unnecessary delay and should proceed as a matter of urgency.

6 Disclosure of Abuse

- 6.1 If a child discloses that they are being abused or any member discloses that they are involved in abuse action should continue as in Section 8.

7 Suspicion of Abuse

- 7.1 There may be circumstances when a Council member, Officer or volunteer might suspect that a child is being abused or neglected.
- 7.2 It is vital that any anyone who suspects a child is being neglected or abused discusses the situation immediately with the designated Child Protection nominated Person Action should continue as in Section 9.

8 Action on Suspicion of Abuse

- 8.1 Consult with the appointed person or deputy before acting on the reporting of a suspicion.

9 Making a Referral

- 9.1 Local Authority Safeguarding Board departments have been designated as the lead agencies with responsibility for co-ordinating a response to allegations or concerns of abuse and should be contacted:

Immediately if the child is at risk of serious physical harm, or a serious criminal act has taken place, and evidence will need to be kept safe;

Within 24 Hours if it relates to a specific incident which is, or may be still going on, or may happen again;

Within 7 Days if it is a more general concern, which does not indicate immediate harm.

10 Allegation of Abuse Made Against a Staff Member or Volunteer

- 10.1 Council Members, Officers and Volunteers may be subject to abuse allegations. WH&CPC will offer support in these circumstances. Report immediately to the designated child protection member or deputy.

11 Confidentiality

- 11.1 Confidentiality is part of our responsibility as a Council to all parties concerned and members are reminded to respect this.

12 Preventing Abuse by Council members, Officers and Volunteers

12.1 The general business of WH&CPC does **not** include any electronic safeguarding activity or **working alone with children**. If at some point in the future the work of the Group changes to encompass these activities or there is a case alert this policy is to be reviewed immediately as there would also be a requirement for a Criminal Record Check.

13 Whistle blowing

13.1 If any Council Member, Officer or Volunteer suspects that anyone is abusing a child then they must immediately report this to the person designated for Child Protection, if the allegation is against the Child Protection nominated person then it's to be reported to the Deputy. The member reporting the suspicion will be afforded confidentiality and may make an anonymous report in writing, via phone or email.

LOCAL SAFEGUARDING BOARD **01724 296500**

LADO, INDEPENDENT REVIEWING SERVICE **01724 298293**

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL **01724 297000**

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL OUT OF HOURS SERVICE **01724 296555**

POLICE NON-URGENT **101** POLICE URGENT **999**

Appointed Person	Phone No	Email
Mr C Dent	01724 737175	crdent@wethalton.com