



Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council
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Clerk/PO Mrs Alex Jack, Clerk/RFO Mrs Helen Symmons
and Assistant Clerk Mrs Parveen Comparat

CHILD/YOUNG PERSON/VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council is a statutory organisation committed to providing a safe environment.

The Council believes that:

- The welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adults is paramount.
- All children, young people and vulnerable adults, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or religion, have the right to protection from abuse.
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff, volunteers and Councillors have a responsibility to report concerns to the designated officer (the Chair).

As part of the policy, all Staff and Councillors are asked to undertake a DBS check should any large youth events be planned in the future or if they are involved in other youth activities such as a parish youth club or regular contact with youth such as the play areas. The Council recognises that this is only part of the overall policy to create and sustain a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults that use the services or facilities provided by the Parish Council, or engage with staff, elected Councillors and volunteers of the Parish Council.

2. UPDATING EXISTING EMPLOYEES, COUNCILLORS AND VOLUNTEERS

It is Council policy that anyone who is in a position where a disclosure is required will need to be updated every three years as the Council will not automatically be informed by the DBS of any updates to the original disclosure. It is the responsibility of the Clerk P/O to ensure that these records are kept up to date.

If as part of the update process the DBS certificate is returned and deemed unsatisfactory then a full investigation will need to be undertaken. This may result in the redeployment or dismissal of the member or an employee or removal of exposure to the risks for Councillors and volunteers.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council is committed to taking all reasonable precautions to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults that use its services. It's aims are to promote a safeguarding culture and environment. A child or young person is

defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children's Act 1989). A vulnerable adult is anyone aged 18 and over who: has needs for care and support, is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect or is unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation (The Care Act 2014).

The Council will ensure that all staff, volunteers, elected Councillors and contractors working on behalf of the Parish Council, refer to this policy and that it, and the accompanying guidelines and procedures are readily available.

POLICY AIMS

The aim of the Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council's Child/Young Person/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy is to promote good practice by:

- Providing carefully planned and appropriate activities for the group of children or young people involved.
- Providing children, young people and vulnerable adults with appropriate safety and protection whilst using Council services or engaging with staff, volunteers and elected Councillors. This means ensuring that all places where activities take place have had appropriate risk assessments and that any person supervising or helping in the activity has the appropriate training, vetting and/or qualification.
- Allowing all staff, volunteers and elected Councillors to make informed and confident responses to specific child/young person/vulnerable adult protection issues.
- Reviewing the Child/Young Person/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy for the Parish Council every two years or whenever government guidelines change.

4. PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE

Good practice protects not only children, young people and vulnerable adults but also staff, volunteers and elected Councillors. In addition, promoting good practice also protects the Council which is responsible for the provision of services these groups may use. By following good practice and the guidelines laid out in this Policy, the Parish Council can reassure the community it serves that it is taking all reasonable precautions to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

5. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Whilst undertaking duties in the parish council area, including at the children's playgrounds, all staff, Councillors and volunteers must act appropriately, treat everyone with respect and provide an example of good conduct for others to follow.

6. CHILD/VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION PROCEDURES

TYPES OF ABUSE

It is generally accepted that there are four main types of abuse. These are Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Neglect.

RESPONDING TO ABUSE OR SUSPICION OF ABUSE.

Neither Councillors, the Clerk, nor volunteers are expected to come into contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults in the normal course of the work of the Parish Council. However, it is possible, during playground inspections and Parish Council events, that children or young people may seek help from them, seeing these people as official representatives.

DO

- Do take further action – you may be the only person in a position to prevent future abuse – tell the designated person of the Parish Council immediately. In the event of the absence of the designated person, refer the matter yourself to the relevant Social Care team, (contact details below).
- Do treat any allegations extremely seriously and act at all times towards the child or young person or vulnerable adult as if you believe what they are saying.
- Do reassure the child, young person or vulnerable adult that they are not to blame.
- Do be honest about your own position and that you will have to tell someone else.
- Do write down everything said and what was done. Dates, times, facts, observations, verbatim speech, if possible. Ensure correct details are available i.e. the person's name and address and name and address of parent/guardian/responsible adult.
- Do seek medical attention if necessary.

DON'T

- Don't make promises you can't keep.
- Don't interrogate the person – it is not your job to carry out investigation – this will be up to the police and social services, who have experience in this.
- Don't cast doubt on what the person has told you, don't interrupt or change the subject.
- Don't say anything that makes the person feel responsible for the abuse.
- Don't do anything further unless asked to do so by the relevant authority you are reporting the incident to.

ACTION BY THE DESIGNATED PERSON (PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR)

Once the Chair of the Parish Council has received information regarding possible abuse, he/she should immediately pass on all available information to:

Medway Council Social Care:

Tel: 01634 334466 Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm

Tel: 03000 419 191 – out of hours

Or complete the online concern form

In all cases, if you think a crime is being committed, or someone is in immediate danger contact the emergency services on 999.

CONFIDENTIAL FILE

As soon as a case begins, the Designated Person (the Chair) of the Parish Council should prepare a confidential file. Action: To record all notes, all conversations, advice from the Duty and Assessment Team. Every effort will be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information will be stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection laws. No other action to be taken unless advised to do so by the Duty and Assessment Team.

Reviewed 10 March, 2026

This Policy was adopted by the Parish Council at their meeting on 19/3/2026