

**Brewood and Coven Parish Council
with Bishop's Wood and Coven Heath.**

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Introduction

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and those adults with care and support needs who are or may be at risk of abuse or neglect (referred to in this policy as adults at risk).

This policy outlines practices that will promote the safety of children, young people and adults at risk who use Parish Council facilities. The policy will be reviewed by the Parish Council on a regular basis.

Brewood and Coven Parish Council is committed to ensuring that children and adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Parish Council.

Definitions

Children and young people: Anyone under the age of 18 years

Adult at risk: Anyone over 18 who is unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation.

To whom this policy applies

This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of Brewood and Coven Parish Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity i.e. Parish Councillors, employees, contractors and volunteers.

Promoting a safe environment

In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and adults at risk, Brewood and Coven Parish Council wishes to promote a safeguarding culture in its premises and activity areas. In order to achieve this, the Council will:

- ❖ Provide safe facilities and undertake regular safety assessments
- ❖ Ensure that councillors, employees and volunteers are aware of the safeguarding expectations
- ❖ Make available on public noticeboards and to employees and councillors, the contact details of the following:
 - **Staffordshire First Response Team (Children)** 0800 1313 126
 - **Staffordshire Adults Team (contact centre)** 0845 604 2719
 - **Staffordshire Police MASH Team (Professionals only) 101 ask for MASH TEAM**
 - **Emergency Duty Service (Out of Hours)** 0345 604 2886
 - **Staffordshire Police 101 or in an emergency 999**

Councillors, employees and volunteers have a duty to protect children, young 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 Safeguarding Children Board or the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) as soon as possible.

Allegations against councillors, staff and volunteers

All councillors, staff and volunteers should take care not to place themselves in a susceptible situation with a child or adult at risk. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. All Councillors, staff and volunteers should be aware of the procedure for managing allegations against Parish Councillors, staff or volunteers, a copy of which can be found on the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) website. No attempt should be made to investigate or act on any allegation before consultation with the board (contact details above).

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children or adults at risk cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where staff or volunteers fail to do so.

All staff 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 safeguarding team.

What should be a cause for concern?

Councillors, staff and volunteers should be concerned by any behaviour, action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child or an adult at risk.

A child or adult at risk 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 is any form of ill treatment, including neglect; infliction of harm or failure to protect from harm.

Abuse falls into four main categories:

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

All councillors, staff 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, staff and volunteers who engage with children or vulnerable adults will have accessed appropriate training through the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) but further information about types of abuse, signs to look for and what to do if you are concerned are also available on the SSCB website (www.staffsscb.org.uk).

All agencies, whether statutory, voluntary or other are obliged to follow the procedures laid out on the SSCB website.

Useful Safeguarding Contact Details:

Childline www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111

NSPCC www.nspcc.org.uk

Mental Health www.youngminds.org.uk

Professionals with any safeguarding concerns should contact the children's assessment team at: Staffordshire County Council: 01785 277151.