

Lubenham Parish Council Safeguarding Policy

1 Background

Lubenham Parish Council recognises the responsibility it has in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. It acknowledges that children, young people and adults at risk are best protected from harm by high standards of professional practice.

The welfare of 'the child' is paramount as enshrined in the Children Act 1989. All children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have a right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. LPC is aware that some children and adults can be additionally vulnerable because of the impact of previous experiences, the level of their dependency, communication or physical needs or other issues.

2. Aims

The aim of this policy is to show the commitment of Lubenham Parish Council, its Members and Officers to meeting quality standards when interacting with children and vulnerable adults.

This policy is vital to the Council's role and its interaction with the community and the support it provides to community groups.

3. Commitment

In the interests of child protection and the welfare and protection of vulnerable adults, Lubenham Parish Council is committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Parish Council.

Lubenham Parish Council will work in partnership with children, young people, adults at risk, their parents, carers and other agencies to promote young people's welfare.

The Parish Council aims

- to protect, as far as possible, children, young people and adults at risk who use any facility or environment provided by the council. This includes children or adults who use our services.
- to promote the welfare of all children, young people and adults at risk and to keep them safe.
- to prevent unsuitable people working with children in whatever capacity through the workings of Lubenham Parish Council

4. Employees, Councillors and Contractors

LPC shall ensure that anyone employed or engaged by the council will be appropriately checked for suitability when working with or around children and adults at risk by ensuring that staff are DBS checked (formerly CRB) to a standard disclosure unless informed otherwise in which case an enhanced disclosure shall be applied for and references will be sought.

LPC will provide staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors with the overarching principles that guide our approach to safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable adults. The Clerk to Lubenham Parish Council will ensure that all staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors are in receipt of this policy.

LPC will ensure that staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors are aware of the procedure to follow if there is a child protection issue.

LPC will take advice and guidance from relevant bodies/agencies where appropriate.

LPC shall take due consideration to ensure that appropriate training is undertaken by staff, councillors and volunteers as necessary.

LPC understands and recognises four main types of abuse (neglect, physical abuse, emotional abuse and sexual abuse) and will ensure that all staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors are aware of them and alert to types and signs of abuse and the procedure in reporting any concerns.

5. Procedures

Lubenham Parish Council will listen and value any concerns raised by any child or adult at risk. The following procedures will be followed.

- a. A Safeguarding Incident Form will be completed and the appropriate authorities contacted where necessary.
- b. If there is suspicion of abuse or poor practice taking place, there is a clear obligation to report the matter and following consultation with the Chairman (or vice Chairman in the case of a conflict of interests), the Clerk will make the final decision to report to the appropriate authority (under delegated powers).
- c. LPC will ensure that all stages of reporting are documented and marked CONFIDENTIAL and stored securely in compliance with the Data Protection Act.
- d. LPC will use relevant policies and procedures to manage any allegations against staff and volunteers appropriately

6. Code of Conduct

This code of conduct is principally designed to safeguard children and adults at risk and is a guide to all Lubenham Parish Council staff, councillors, volunteers and contractors who may come into contact with the vulnerable groups, during the course of their activities. By following this code of conduct we will reduce the likelihood of any misinterpretations of our actions.

It is key to remember that we have been allocated a position of trust and responsibility and must act in accordance with this.

There are a number of things that we must ensure do not happen whilst we are working or volunteering for Lubenham Parish Council

We will

- treat all of those involved equally with respect and dignity – and understand that offensive, discriminatory or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated.
- understand our role in any policies and procedures, e.g. child protection, health and safety and be clear about what we should do if a concern about the safety or welfare of a young person arises.
- co-operate fully with other officers, volunteers and contractors.
- show respect for our peers and participants, and treat them how we would want to be treated ourselves.
- understand that inappropriate behaviour will be followed up by the appropriate person.
- act as a role model for other young people; our behaviour may influence others

- ensure that permission is sought from parents for any photographs or video of children or young people. These must only be retained by Lubenham Parish Council.
- remember that our behaviour towards participants to whom we are in a position of trust should reflect our role.
- be vigilant of changes in behaviour and inappropriate conduct in other members and report where necessary

We will not

- spend time alone with children or vulnerable adults out of sight of others.
- take or drop off a child or vulnerable person alone unless we are following agreed procedures and have agreed safeguards and permissions in place.
- take children to our home.
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching or physical abuse.
- take part in or tolerate behaviour that frightens, embarrasses or demoralises a child or young person or affects their self-esteem.
- make sexually suggestive comments to a child or vulnerable person, even in fun.
- allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or ignored.
- make a child cry as a form of control.
- do things of a personal nature for children or adults at risk that they can do for themselves.
- contact children or families individually via Facebook or any other social media including mobile phones.
- make promises that we cannot keep.
- show favouritism and/or form special friendships with children or vulnerable adults.

Implementing this policy is the responsibility of all councillors and staff associated with Lubenham Parish Council

7. Monitoring

A councillor or member of staff must report any allegation made to the Clerk or Chair of the Council including if the allegation is against them.

1. Safeguarding concerns and allegations relating to staff will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure (including in instances where the member of staff resigns or leaves). However, investigations by the responsible authorities will take precedence over internal council procedures relating to conduct.
2. The Clerk or Chair of the Council will liaise with the responsible authorities to agree the appropriate course of action.