

NORTH CERNEY PARISH COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

ADOPTED 05/04/2024

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4.0		
5.0		

1. Introduction

1.1. North Cerney Parish Council acknowledge our responsibilities to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults (vulnerable people). This policy outlines how we will promote the safety and welfare of vulnerable people using Parish Council facilities.

1.2 North Cerney Parish council represents the communities of North Cerney, Woodmancote and Calmsden.

1.3. This policy will be reviewed and updated by the Parish Council every year.

2. Scope

2.1. This policy is for use by all Councillors, staff, volunteers and those associated with North Cerney Parish Council.

3. Purpose of the policy

3.1. To provide protection for the vulnerable people who use the Parish Council's facilities and services.

3.2. To provide Councillors, staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect or be concerned a vulnerable person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

3.3. To provide guidance and procedures they should adopt regarding possible allegations against Councillors, staff or volunteers.

3.4. This policy should be read in conjunction with other related Parish Council policies and procedures.

4. Protecting Vulnerable People – Definition of Children & Young People

For the purposes of this policy:

4.1. **Children and Young People** are any persons under the age of 18 years.

4.2. **Safeguarding children** is defined in '[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)' (2023) as:

4.2.1. Preventing children from maltreatment

4.2.2. Preventing impairment of children's health and development

4.2.3. Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and

4.2.4. Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

4.3. **Child protection** is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer 'significant harm'.

4.4. **Significant harm** is defined in The Children Act 1989 as ‘the ill treatment or impairment of health and development’. This definition was clarified in section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (implemented on 31 January 2005) so that it may include, "for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another". Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse and Neglect are all categories of Significant Harm (see appendix 1)

4.5. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) states that any professionals with concerns about a child’s welfare should make a referral to local authority children’s social care.

5. Protecting Vulnerable People – Definition of Vulnerable Adults

For the purposes of this policy:

5.1. **Vulnerable Adults** are any persons over 18 who are:

5.1.1. Unable to care for themselves

5.1.2. Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation

5.1.3. Or may be in need of community care services.

5.2. **Safeguarding vulnerable adults** means protecting them from maltreatment and preventing injury or significant harm. Abuse violates an adult’s human and civil rights. It can vary from treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering.

5.3. A safeguarding concern arises if abuse is suspected or disclosed. Abuse can happen anywhere at home, in a residential or nursing home, a hospital, in the workplace, at a day centre or educational establishment or in the street.

6. **Vulnerable People** are defined as children, young adults or vulnerable adults.

7. North Cerney Parish Council Facilities

7.1. Any possible safeguarding concerns regarding vulnerable people that occur at North Cerney Parish Council facilities must be reported immediately to Social Services, or the Police, and when appropriate, the Parish Clerk.

8. Woodmancote Playground and Community Space

8.1. North Cerney Parish Council provides a Playground and Community Space with play equipment for the children and young people of the parish.

8.2. North Cerny Parish Council will provide safe facilities and undertake regular safety assessments of these.

8.3. All children and young people under the age of 18 visiting the Recreation Ground remain the responsibility of their parents or guardians whilst using these facilities. Signage will be installed reminding users of this.

8.4. Any concerns regarding anti-social behaviour, vandalism or possible criminal activity will be reported to the Police.

9. Other Parish Facilities

9.1. The Parish also has a Village Green in North Cerney and there are two defibrillators, one in North Cerney and one in Woodmancote. Training on the use of these defibrillators has been provided to relevant Councillors and residents and may be used as required in medical emergencies. If a defibrillator is used or damaged, the Parish Clerk should be notified.

10. Contact with Vulnerable People

10.1. North Cerney Parish Councillors, staff and volunteers are not required to undertake activities that involve them being on their own with vulnerable people and are asked not to put themselves in possible vulnerable situations.

10.2. We ask that Councillors, staff and volunteers recognise their position of trust in the local community and behave appropriately at all times.

10.3. All Councillors, staff and volunteers must adhere to these safeguarding procedures and report any issues or concerns accordingly.

10.4. Any concerns about a Councillor, member of staff or volunteer and their conduct or contact with vulnerable people must be raised immediately with the Parish Clerk and the relevant authorities (see section below).

11. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

11.1. Any concerns regarding the welfare of vulnerable people in the village should be reported immediately to the relevant social care team.

If you are concerned about the immediate safety of a child or adult, please contact the Police on 101 at any time. In an emergency call 999.

11.2. Gloucestershire County Council assesses all situations where concerns have been raised about the safety of a child or vulnerable adult. More information is available from the [Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children's Board website](#) or for adults from the [Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board website](#).

11.3. During the day and in office hours:

11.3.1. **Concerned about a child?** Call the Children and Families Help Dest on 01452 426 565 (Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm) or email childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk

11.3.2. **Concerned about an adult?** Call Help Desk on 01452 426 868 (Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm) or email socialserviceseng@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

11.4. Out of hours and in an emergency

11.4.1. If you need to contact outside of normal office hours, for example during the night, for both child and adult call the ***Out of Hours Emergency Duty Team*** on 01452 614 194.

11.4.2. If you think someone is in ***immediate danger***, the best thing to do is call 999 for the emergency services.

11.5. If you have concerns about a Councillor, member of staff or volunteer, contact the Parish Clerk, who will contact the Chair and refer to the relevant safeguarding helpdesk. The Parish Clerk can be contacted via: <https://www.northcerneypc.org.uk/contact/>

12. Procedures to be followed by a member of North Cerney Parish Council in the event of a concern being reported to them.

12.1. If you are approached by a vulnerable person, with a disclosure that they are being, or have been harmed or abused, or you are informed of such a disclosure by a colleague or member of the public,

12.1.1. Do:

- Stay calm.
- Provide a listening ear and an open mind.
- Be reassuring, particularly that the individual is doing the right thing by telling you.
- Record the information you are provided with and report as quickly as possible to your Parish Clerk who will decide what further action will need to be taken.
- Make it clear that you have a duty to refer the matter on and that the information is likely to be shared with the relevant persons on a need to know basis.
- Make a record of the details, time, date and persons present.

12.2. Allegations against Parish Councillors, staff or volunteers:

12.2.1. Don't:

- Promise to keep the information secret.
- Stop the individual who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make the individual tell anyone else. They may have to be formally interviewed later and it is important to minimise the number of times information is repeated.
- Make any suggestions to the individual about how the incident may have happened.
- Never ask why this happened or ask leading questions.
- Use your own words – note down the exact child or vulnerable adults words
- Question the individual, except to clarify what they are saying.
- Discuss the information with anyone other than the relevant safeguarding professionals involved or the Parish Clerk.

12.2.2. All Councillors, members of staff and volunteers should take care not to put themselves in potentially vulnerable situations. For example, inappropriate use of the internet or being alone with a vulnerable person on Parish duty.

12.2.3. If you are concerned that a Councillor, member of staff or volunteer is harming or abusing a vulnerable person, or acting inappropriately in their behaviour or conduct, you must immediately contact the Parish Clerk or a member of the Parish Council who will report your concerns appropriately to the Local Authority, Social Services department or Police.

Appendix A: Definitions of abuse (NSPCC):

Physical Abuse

In relation to children:

Physical Abuse is a form of Significant Harm which may involve including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child

In relation to adults:

The non-accidental infliction of physical force that results in bodily injury, pain or impairment. Examples of such behaviour include: hitting, pushing, slapping, scalding, shaking, kicking, pinching, hair-pulling, the inappropriate application of techniques or treatments, involuntary isolation or confinement, misuse of medication. N.B. inadvertent physical abuse may also arise from poor practice, e.g. poor manual handling techniques.

Sexual Abuse

The following definition is taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children.

In relation to children:

Sexual abuse is a form of Significant Harm which 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.

In relation to adults:

Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without valid consent. Consent to a particular activity may not be given because:

- A person has Capacity and does not want to give it;
- A person lacks Capacity and is therefore unable to give it;
- A person feels coerced into activity because the other person is in a position of trust, power or authority.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a form of Significant Harm which involves 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 children 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 the 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 Cyberbullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglect

In relation to children:

Neglect is a form of Significant Harm which involves 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 and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

In relation to adults:

The repeated deprivation of assistance that the person needs for important activities of daily living, including a failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to them or to others, or poor manual handling techniques.

Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, wilful neglect and ill-treatment of a person lacking Capacity becomes a criminal offence.

Self-neglect on the part of an adult will not usually lead to the initiation of Adult Protection Procedures unless the situation involves a significant act of commission or omission by someone else with established responsibility for an adult's care. Other assessment and review procedures, including risk assessment procedures, may prove a more appropriate intervention in situations of self-neglect.

Appendix B: Other safeguarding definitions

There are a number of specific acts that constitute abuse which could affect both vulnerable adults and children;

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM is a collective term used for illegal procedures, such as female circumcision, which include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs, or injury to the female genital organs for a cultural or non-therapeutic reason.

Honour Based Violence (HBV)

HBV is abuse in the name of honour, covering a variety of behaviours (including crimes), mainly but not exclusively against females, where the person is being punished by their family and/or community for a perceived transgression against the 'honour' of the family or community, or is required to undergo certain activities or procedures in 'honour' of the family.

It is a form of domestic abuse which relates to a victim who does not abide by the 'rules' of an honour code. This will have been set at the discretion of relatives or community; the victims are punished for bringing shame on the family or community.

Forced Marriage

In a forced marriage a person is coerced into marrying someone against their will. They may be physically threatened or emotionally blackmailed to do so. It is an abuse of human rights and cannot be justified on any religious or cultural basis.

It is not the same as an arranged marriage where they have a choice as to whether to accept the arrangement or not. The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and countries for a very long time.

Stalking

The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 defines "stalking" as an offence. However, there is no legal definition, but examples include: following or spying on a person or forcing contact with the victim through any means including social media. Any of these examples carried out repeatedly or persistently can cause significant alarm or distress.

Radicalisation

Prevent is a government strategy which aims to raise awareness and resilience to radicalisation. It recognises that children and vulnerable adults can be susceptible to extremist views and coerced into criminal behaviour.

Modern Slavery

There are many different characteristics that distinguish slavery from other human rights violations, however only one needs to be present for slavery to exist. It involves people being forced to work through mental or physical threat, owned or controlled by an 'employer' usually through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse, dehumanised and being treated as a commodity or bought and sold as 'property'.

Human Trafficking

Takes place when a victim is moved from one place to another for the purpose of exploitation, this could be through sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced labour, forced criminality or organ harvesting. The trafficker is able to control and exploit through violence, coercion or deception.

Cyber Crime

Cyber-crime is defined as criminal activity carried out by means of computers or the internet. Criminals are increasingly exploiting the speed, convenience and anonymity of the internet to commit a diverse range of criminal activities without physical or virtual borders. These crimes can cause serious harm and pose significant threats to vulnerable adults and children. Cyber-crime may take the form of cyber bullying. Cyber-bullying is the process of using the Internet, mobile phones or other devices to send or post text or images intended to hurt or embarrass another person. Victims of cyberbullying may not know the identity of their bully, or why the bully is targeting them. The harassment can have wide-reaching effects on the victim, as the content used to harass the victim can be spread and shared easily among many people and often remains accessible for a long time after the initial incident.

For further information visit:

- [CDC Safeguarding Policy 2020 \(cotswold.gov.uk\)](https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/cdc-safeguarding-policy-2020)
- [Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board | Safeguarding Adults in Gloucestershire](#)