

Wortwell Parish Council

Child Protection Policy

Adopted: February 2018

Reviewed: June 2023

Next Review Due: June 2025

Objective:

All children have a right to protection. Wortwell Parish Council has a duty of care to safeguard all children involved in any of its activities from harm. A child is defined as a person under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989). This policy aims to provide children with appropriate safety and protection whilst in the care of the Council whether through use of its facilities, its employees, its Councillors, or volunteers.

Policy:

1.1 Promoting good practice: All Councillors have a responsibility to promote good practice and report any suspicious cases of poor practice they may come across during any Wortwell Parish Council activity in accordance with this policy. Good practice when children are involved means: Always working in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encouraging open communication; treating all young people/disabled adults equally with respect and dignity; always putting the welfare of each young person first; being an excellent role model.

1.2 Practices to be avoided: When children are involved avoid: Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others; taking or dropping off a child to an event; engaging in rough physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay; allowing or engaging in any form of inappropriate touching; allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged; reducing a child to tears as a form of control.

1.3 Allegations: All allegations made by a child must be recorded and acted upon.

- **Incidents:** All incidents must be recorded: It is also necessary to ensure the parents of the child are informed: if a child is *accidentally* hurt; or if a child *appears* distressed in any manner

- **Responding to allegations or suspicions:** It is not the responsibility of anyone working with or for the Council, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities. In the first instance, all allegations or suspicions should be reported to either the Chair or vice Chair. Usually allegations will require escalation to other agencies.

1.4 Confidentiality: Every effort is to be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. No disclosures should be made that may prejudice later legal proceedings.

1.5 Non-reporting: The child (or any other accuser) should be given no assurances that the matter can remain unreported.

General

2.1 Complaints: Complaints made under this policy should be referred to the Clerk as identified under the Council's Complaints Policy.