

Kirkwhelpington Parish Council Safeguarding Policy

Policy Adopted: November 2024

Next Review Date: November 2025

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. This policy outlines practices that will promote the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults who may have contact with Kirkwhelpington Parish Council. This policy will be reviewed regularly.

Definitions

Children and young people: anyone under the age of 18 years.

Vulnerable adult: anyone over 18 who is unable to care for themselves; unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation; or may need community care services.

To whom this policy applies

This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of Kirkwhelpington Parish Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity.

Promoting a safe environment

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

- provide safe facilities and undertake regular safety assessments;
- ensure that employees and councillors are aware of safeguarding expectations;
- make available on public noticeboards and to employees and councillors relevant contact details (see below).

Employees, councillors and volunteers all 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 authorities as detailed below as soon as possible.

Allegations against staff and volunteers

All staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or vulnerable adult. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.

No attempt should be made to investigate or act on any allegation before consultation with the Newcastle/Northumberland Safeguarding Children and Adults teams (contact details below).

Newcastle Safeguarding Children

- Initial Response Service – 0191 277 2500
- Emergency Duty Team – 0191 278 7878

Newcastle Safeguarding Adults

- All safeguarding adult referrals should be made to Community Health and Adult Social Care Direct (0191 278 8377) or the allocated Social Worker.

Northumberland Safeguarding Children

- Non-emergency: If this is a new contact then please ring: - Onecall: 01670 536400
- If you know a child already has a social worker then contact the social worker's telephone number, or if unavailable ring Onecall
- For the 14+ Team please ring 01670 622930

Northumberland Safeguarding Adults

- Onecall: 01670 536 400
- Text phone: 01670 536 844
- Email: onecall@northumbria.nhs.uk

If you need medical advice and support fast, but it's not life threatening, call your GP or NHS 111.

Area-wide

- Northumbria Police – 101
- NSPCC Helpline – 0808 800 5000

You should always call 999 in an emergency – for example when someone's life is at risk or someone is seriously injured or critically ill.

Whistleblowing

We recognise that children or vulnerable adults 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 Teams at either Newcastle City Council or Northumberland County Council.

What should be a cause for concern

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 a vulnerable adult. A child or vulnerable adult 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

Falls into four main categories: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, financial abuse and neglect. All 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.

Further information about types of abuse, signs to look for and what to do if you are concerned are also available on the Newcastle City Council and Northumberland County Council websites.