

WALTON-IN-GORDANO PARISH COUNCIL

In the North Somerset Council Ward of Gordano Valley

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Currently the Council has no facilities of its own and uses the Village Hall for meetings: it does not currently run activities or events. However, should that situation change, this policy will provide a framework within which that can happen. The Parish Council are committed to ensuring compliance with changing laws and guidelines in relation to safeguarding.

Policy Statement

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. Children and young people are defined as anyone under the age of 18. Vulnerable Adults are defined as anyone over 18 who is unable to care for themselves; unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation; or may be in need of community care services

This policy promotes good practice in safeguarding for those involved in Parish Council run gatherings or activities, be they taking place at the Village Hall, or at any other location.

This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of the Parish Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity, for example contracted to do a piece of work.

It also applies to any individual or organisation hiring, leasing or using facilities for the purpose of delivering any service to children, young people or vulnerable adults on behalf of the Parish Council under its written authority or sponsorship. (Hereinafter described as sponsorship).

Promoting a safe environment

The Parish Council will:

- Provide safe facilities and do regular safety assessments.
- Ensure that employees, Councillors and leaders of Parish Council run or sponsored activities, are aware of the safeguarding expectations.
- Members of staff and volunteers who have regular unsupervised contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults during the course of their duties MUST undergo appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service ("DBS") checks BEFORE commencement of such duties.
- In relation to any Parish Council or sponsorship activity, the organisers must display on Parish Council notice boards in the village & in the Village Hall; and also on the Parish Council website, details of the activity and the relevant safeguarding contacts for advice and help. As a Parish Council Governance document, this policy will also be published on the governance page of the Parish Council's website.

Expectations of behaviour

All organisers of Parish Council run or sponsored events, and volunteers should:

- Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction is appropriate and professional.
- Treat each other with respect and show consideration for other groups using the event facilities.
- Refrain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism, homophobia, and bullying and in addition, report any instances of such behaviour to the Chair of the Parish Council, Parish Clerk or parents/carers, as appropriate.

Hiring of facilities to groups for use with children, young people or vulnerable adults

For any event organised by The Parish Council their will be public liability insurance on place.

The organisers of events that are sponsored by the Parish Council will need to:

- Provide evidence of their own, or their organisation's public liability insurance that covers that sponsored event.
- Have a suitable safeguarding policy and/or agree to work to the Parish Council's policy and relevant guidance.
- Ensure leaders make their members aware of the Parish Council Policy and ensure that it is followed.
- Ensure leaders have valid enhanced DBS checks as appropriate and know where the first aid boxes are and how to summon help from the Emergency Services.
- Do risk assessments for individual activities.

Safe working practice

All organisers, volunteers and participants involved in Parish Council organised or sponsored events must follow safe working practices and procedures at all times. For example they should:

- Never leave children, young people or vulnerable adults unattended with adults who have not been subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.
- Plan activities to involve more than one person being present or at least in sight or hearing of others. Alternatively, record, or inform others of their whereabouts and intended action.
- Where possible, have male and female leaders working with a mixed group.
- Ensure registers are complete and attendees are marked in and signed out (under 8's must be collected by a parent/carer).
- Ensure that photos or videos of individuals are not taken without written permission from their parents/carers.
- Ensure they have access to a first aid kit and telephone and know fire procedures.
- When working outside, ensure activities, breaks and clothing are suitable for the weather conditions and that shelter is available where possible.

Allegations against staff and volunteers

All Parish Councillors, staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. The Parish Council should follow the procedures for managing allegations against staff/volunteers as set out on the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSSCP) website at:

<https://nsscp.co.uk/professionals-practitioners/managing-allegations>

where the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) provides information and reporting forms to progress cases. No attempt should be made to investigate or take action before consultation with the LADO.

The LADO can also be contacted by telephone on **07795 092 692**, or by email at **<mailto:lado@n-somerset.gov.uk>**

The Parish Council must not make a judgement on whether the allegations have merit for further investigation, this decision must be for the LADO team.

What should be a cause for concern

Staff and volunteers should be concerned by any action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child. Abuse falls into several main categories and can include child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation, referred to as FGM. The LADO process manages allegations about:

- neglect
- sexual abuse
- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- grooming

It can also be used to manage less obvious potentially harmful behaviour.