



Worth Parish Council Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

Worth Parish Council is committed to ensuring that children and adults at risk are protected and kept safe from harm whilst engaged in any activity organised and provided by, or on behalf of, the Council.

Safeguarding children and adults at risk is everyone's responsibility.

The purpose of this policy is to make clear to all Councillors, Officers and volunteers what is required in relation to the protection of children and adults at risk.

This policy applies to all Councillors, staff and volunteers working for, or in partnership with, Worth Parish Council.

It is not the role of Worth Parish Council to investigate allegations of abuse. However, all Councillors, staff and volunteers have a responsibility to act when they suspect or recognise that a child or adult at risk may be the victim of significant harm or abuse.

Worth Parish Council expects all children, young people and adults at risk using its facilities to do so with the consent and supervision of a parent, carer, or other responsible adult.

2. Definitions

- **Child:** Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday (Children Act 1989).
- **Adult at risk:** A person aged 18 or over who has care and support needs, is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect, and, as a result of those needs, is unable to protect themselves (Care Act 2014).
- **Safeguarding:** The actions taken to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and protect them from harm.
- **Abuse and neglect:** Forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child or adult at risk by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) defines the four main categories of abuse for children: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect. For adults at risk, categories also include domestic abuse, financial abuse, discriminatory abuse, organisational abuse, self-neglect and modern slavery.

3. Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Worth Parish Council is the Chief Officer (Clerk).

If the DSL is unavailable the Assistant Clerk must be notified or if the DSL is implicated in any concern, the matter must be referred to the Assistant Clerk and the Chair of the Council.

4. Safeguarding Procedure

If a Councillor, staff, or volunteer has a safeguarding concern, suspects that a child or adult at risk is being harmed, or receives a disclosure, they must:

1. Report it immediately to the DSL at the earliest opportunity.
2. Record it clearly: note dates, times, observations, verbatim speech and relevant facts.
3. If the DSL is implicated, contact the Chair of the Council.
4. The DSL will raise the concern with the appropriate local safeguarding authority.

Reporting a Concern

For children:

Referrals should be made through the West Sussex Integrated Front Door / Request for Support Portal, or by telephone via the numbers published on the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership website.

In an emergency or if a child is in immediate danger, dial 999.

For adults at risk:

Concerns should be raised via the West Sussex "Raise a Concern about an Adult" online form or by contacting Adult Social Care via the telephone numbers listed on the West Sussex County Council website.

If an adult is in immediate danger, dial 999.

Always check the West Sussex County Council safeguarding webpages for the most up-to-date contact details.

Record Keeping

- The DSL will maintain confidential, secure records of concerns, actions, and referrals in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Records will be retained in accordance with Council policy and statutory requirements.

Information Sharing

Information will be shared only where it is necessary, proportionate and relevant to protect a child or adult at risk, in line with Information sharing: advice for safeguarding practitioners (2024).

Data protection legislation does not prevent sharing information where there is a safeguarding concern.

Commented [A(1)]: Linked to my last comment, do any of the buildings we hold Youth Club in expect us to tell them if there's been any safeguarding incidents on their premises as part of their terms & conditions?

5. Concerns About an Adult Working with Children

If an allegation is made about a Councillor, staff, or volunteer working with children who may have behaved inappropriately or harmed a child:

- The matter must be reported immediately to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) via the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership website and referral form. - [West Sussex SCP](#)
- Completed forms should be sent to LADO@westsussex.gov.uk.
- The LADO can be contacted for advice at 033 022 26450.

No internal investigation should begin until advice is sought from the LADO.

6. Youth Support Service

Worth Parish Council provides Youth Support Services within the Parish.

All Youth Support Workers and volunteers will:

- Adhere to this Safeguarding Policy.
- Hold an Enhanced DBS check if engaging in regular activity with young people (per GOV.UK DBS guidance).
- Provide two satisfactory references and complete a probationary period.
- Receive safeguarding and first aid training appropriate to their role.
- Undertake risk assessments for each session.
- Maintain registers of attendance, parental consent and medical information.
- Ensure parental consent is obtained for photos/videos and participation.
- Follow recommended supervision ratios — as advised by NSPCC and National Youth Agency — and never work alone with children.
- Ensure two adults are present at all youth sessions or activities.
- Record and report all accidents and incidents to the Chief Officer.
- Uphold the values of fairness, respect, and equality throughout.

7. Safer Recruitment

While most Councillors, staff and volunteers will not work directly with children or adults at risk, all must:

- Receive a copy of this policy and understand their duty to report concerns.
- Provide references (minimum two for staff).
- Complete identity and right-to-work checks.
- Where roles involve regular activity, an Enhanced DBS will be required.
- Follow a probationary period before confirmation in post.

Recruitment decisions will follow DBS eligibility guidance (GOV.UK).

8. Mandatory Safeguarding Duties

- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** Under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, certain professionals (e.g. teachers, social workers, regulated health professionals) have a duty to report known cases of FGM in under-18s directly to the Police.
- **Prevent Duty:** Under the Counter-Terrorism *and* Security Act 2015, the Council will have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Staff will be alerted to concerns that may indicate radicalisation and will report them through safeguarding channels.

9. Social Media

Worth Parish Council operates official social media pages (e.g. Facebook) for Council business only.

Posts and content are moderated by the Chief Officer (or nominated officer), who may remove any inflammatory, defamatory or inappropriate posts without notice.

Concerns about online content must be reported to the Chief Officer.

See Worth Parish Councils policies below for further details.

- Communications Strategy
- General Privacy Notice
- Data Protection Policy

10. Use of Images (Photography and Videos)

The Council will obtain documented parental or guardian consent before taking or using images of children.

Consent can be withdrawn at any time.

Images will be stored and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

11. Training

- The Council will make this policy available to all Councillors, staff and volunteers.
- The Chief Officer will identify and arrange suitable safeguarding training.
- The Council HR Committee will review the Chief Officers training needs during appraisal.
- Online learning resources from the West Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children Partnership are recommended.

12. Other Council Services

Grants: Organisations applying for a Council grant must supply their safeguarding policy.

Council-owned Land: Organisations applying to use Council land must provide a safeguarding policy and lost-child procedure.

Contractors: Contractors and sub-contractors working where regular contact with children/adults at risk may occur must have a safeguarding policy or comply with this one.

13. Whistleblowing

Worth Parish Council encourages an open culture in which Councillors, staff and volunteers can raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice. Concerns will be handled confidentially and without victimisation.

See the Confidential Reporting (whistleblowing) policy for details.

14. Data Handling and Record Retention

- Safeguarding records will be held securely and separately from general files.
- Access will be restricted to the DSL and authorised officers.
- Records will be retained in line with Council retention schedules and statutory guidance.

15. Review

Date of Adoption: 19th November 2025

Next Review: November 2027, or earlier if required by legislative or procedural change.

16. References

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (Department for Education, 2023)
- Children Act 1989
- Care Act 2014
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Information sharing: advice for safeguarding practitioners (HMG, 2024)
- Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) eligibility guidance, GOV.UK
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent duty)
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as amended)
- **West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership** – www.westsussexscp.org.uk
- **West Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board** – www.westsussexsab.org.uk
- **West Sussex County Council** – [West Sussex County Council](http://WestSussexCountyCouncil)
- **NSPCC** – learning.nspcc.org.uk
- **National Youth Agency (NYA)** – www.nya.org.uk
- **Reporting prevent Duty** - Making a referral to Prevent - GOV.UK
- **Reporting of FGM** - Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation: procedural information - GOV.UK