

LEDBURY TOWN COUNCIL

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Policy Statement

Ledbury Town Council recognises that everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This policy promotes good practice in safeguarding for those using Parish Council facilities.

Ledbury Town Council will review this policy annually.

SECTION 1 – Introduction

Definitions

Children and young people – Anyone under the age of 18 years.

Vulnerable Adult – Anyone over the age of 18 years who is:

- Unable to care for themselves
- Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
- Or may need community care services

To whom does this policy apply?

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

This policy also applies to any individual hiring, leasing or using the Council's facilities for the purpose of delivering any service to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Different Types of Abuse

Staff and volunteers should be aware of the different types of abuse (outlined below). They should be concerned by any action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child. Abuse falls into four main categories and can include child sexual exploitations and female genital mutilation.

Physical abuse (i.e. hitting, pushing, shaking, misusing medication)

Sexual abuse (i.e. rape, sexual assault)

Emotional or psychological abuse (i.e. threats of harm or abandonment, humiliation, controlling, intimidation)

Neglect abuse (i.e. ignoring medical or physical care needs)

Abuse can also be:

Mistreatment that violates a person's human and civil rights;

Treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering

Domestic (i.e. controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, "honour" based violence, female genital mutilation, forced marriage)

Self-neglectful (neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene or health)

Discriminatory (i.e. abuse based on race, sexuality or a person's disability)

Modern slavery (i.e. forced labour, debt bondage, sexual exploitation, organisational abuse)

SECTION 2 – Promoting a safe environment

In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults Ledbury Town Council will:

- Provide safe facilities and do regular safety assessments
- Ensure that employees, Councillors and leaders of activities making use of Council facilities and premises, are aware of the safeguarding expectations
- Decisions on whether any person should be Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checked will be made by the Council or the Chairman after consultation with the Clerk following a risk assessment
- Ensure that any employee or volunteer are aware of the risk they may face in certain circumstances whilst carrying out their duties
- All new employees, volunteers and Councillors will be provided with a copy of this policy and be required to acknowledge that they will abide by it
- Councillors will adhere to the "List of Recommended Behaviour" namely:
 - A minimum of two adults present when supervising children
 - Not to play physical contact games
 - Adults to wear appropriate clothing at all times
 - Ensure that accidents are recorded in an accident book
 - Never do anything of a personal nature to a young person
- Keep records in an incident book of any allegations a young person may make to any staff member, committee member or volunteer. Incident book to be presented to the next Resources Committee Meetings (if there have been any entries since the last meeting of the Committee)
- If there is a child abuse incident it should be reported to the Clerk who will be responsible for ensuring the matter is handled in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board procedures and also referred to the Council for further appropriate and future risk assessment.
- Facilities offered by Ledbury Town Council have been inspected on a regular basis, at least annually, by a representative of RoSPA or a similar organisation
- Display on notice boards the relevant safeguarding contacts for advice and help
- Sharing information about child protection and good practice with partner organisations, councillors, employees, volunteers, parents and carers
- Any organisation which may make contact with children or vulnerable adults shall be required to show proof of its own appropriate Safeguarding Policy before being allowed to participate in the use of any council owned facilities

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

Ledbury Town Council will require the hirer to:

- Have and provide sight of public liability insurance
- Have a suitable Safeguarding Policy and/or to agree to work to the Council's policy and relevant guidance
- Ensure leaders make their members aware of the Council's policy and ensure that it is followed whilst using parish facilities
- Ensure leaders have valid enhanced DBS checks as appropriate and know where the first aid box is/or provide their own
- Complete risk assessments for individual activities. These should be available on demand should Ledbury Town Council require to see a copy

SECTION 3 – Safe working practice

All users of Parish facilities must adhere to the following requirements at all times in order to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults:

- Never leave children, young people or vulnerable adults unattended with adults who have not been subject to a 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 parents/carers
- Ensure they have access to a first aid kit and telephone and understand fire procedures including emergency exits
- Ensure that where a child, young person or vulnerable adult needs assistance with toilet trips and when first aid is required, that this is carried out in pairs or in the latter case, that it is carried out where they can be seen
- When working outside, ensure activities, breaks and clothing are suitable for weather conditions and that shelter is available where possible.

Expectations of behaviour

All users of Ledbury Town Council facilities should:

- Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction with users are appropriate and professional
- Treat each other with respect and show consideration for other groups using the facilities
- Refrain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism and bullying and in addition to report any instances of such behaviour to group leaders, Town Councillors, the Clerk, or parents and carers, as appropriate.

SECTION – Allegations against staff and volunteers

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

If an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Town Clerk.

If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Town Clerk the recipient of the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of the Town Council's Resources Committee.

Persons to be notified

No attempt should be made to investigate or act before consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Ledbury Town Council must inform LADO within one working day when an allegation is made and prior to any further investigation taking place.

The LADO will advise the Council whether informing the parents of the child/ren involved will impede the disciplinary or investigative process. Acting on this advice, if it is agreed that the information can be fully or partially shared, the Council should inform the parent/s. In some circumstances, however, the parent/s may need to be told straight away (e.g. if a child is injured and requires medical treatment)

The Council should seek advice from the respective LADO, the Policy and Children's Social Care about how much information should be disclosed to the accused person.

Subject to restrictions on the information that can be shared, particularly if there is a Police investigation, the Council should, as soon as possible, inform the accused person about the nature of the allegation, how enquiries will be conducted and the possible outcome (e.g. disciplinary action and dismissal or referral to the DBS or regulatory body).

If it is concluded that the Police and/or Children's Social Care need to be involved in further inquiries, informing the accused should not happen prior to a Strategy Discussion or until the decision is made at a Strategy meeting.

The accused member of staff should:

- Be treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved
- Be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary or related process
- If suspended, be kept up to date about events in the workplace
- Offered support from Ledbury Town Council

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. Apart from keeping the child, parents, and accused person (where this would not place the child at further risk or compromise evidence) up to date with the progress of the case, information should be restricted to those who have a need to know to protect children, facilitate enquiries, manage related disciplinary or suitability processes.

Support

The Council, together with the respective Children's Social Care and/or Police where they are involved, should consider the impact on the child concerned and provide support as appropriate. Liaison between the agencies should take place to ensure that the Child's needs are addressed.

As soon as possible after an allegation has been received, the accused member of staff should be advised to contact their union or professional association.

Whistleblowing

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 LADO or Safeguarding Team.

Safeguarding Training

All staff and volunteers coming in to contact with children need to have an awareness of safeguarding.

SECTION 5 – Declaration

Ledbury Town Council is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults by protecting them from physical, sexual, emotional harm and neglect.

All members of Ledbury Council should read the Safeguarding Policy. Having read the Policy they should be proactive in providing a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults who are involved in council activities.

14 February 2024

Review Date: 13 February 2025

Safeguarding Contact Details

If you witness abuse or neglect it is your duty to report it as soon as possible using the contact details below. In an emergency call 999. To report a crime call 101.

Contact	Website	Telephone
Herefordshire Safeguarding Adult Board	https://www.herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/safeguarding-adults-board	04132 260100
Herefordshire Council Child Protection Reporting Service	https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/social-care-support/protect-someone	8.45 am – 5.15 pm Mon-Thurs and 8.45 am – 4.45 pm Fri – 01432 260800 Out of hours 01905 768020