



HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

Date of Approval:	Town Council 9 th December 2013
Date of Review:	5 th December 2016

Statement

Houghton Regis Town Council recognises the importance to protect and safeguard the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It will endeavour to make sure that all necessary steps are taken in the event of a disclosure.

Policy

The Council believes that it is always unacceptable for a child, young person or vulnerable adult to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people or vulnerable adults, by a commitment to a practice which protects them.

The Council recognise that:

- the welfare of the child/young person/vulnerable adult is paramount
- everyone, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- working in partnership with children, young people, vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting welfare.

The purpose of the policy:

- To provide protection for the children, young people and vulnerable adults who receive the Council's services.
- To provide employees and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.

This policy covers all employees at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, employees, trainees, homeworkers, part-time and fixed-term employees and Members.

The Council will seek to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults by:

- valuing, listening to and respecting them
- adopting protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- sharing information about protection and good practice with children, young people, vulnerable adults, parents, staff and volunteers
- sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and those affected appropriately
- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training

The Council are committed to reviewing this policy and good practice annually.

Code of Behaviour

You must:

- treat all children, young people and vulnerable adults with respect
- provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow
- ensure that, whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children, young people and vulnerable adults or at least that you are within sight or hearing of others
- respect a child, young person or vulnerable adults right to personal privacy
- encourage children, young people, vulnerable adults and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like
- remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned
- be aware that physical contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted
- recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children, young people or vulnerable adults
- operate within the Council's Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults policy
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse. All allegations/suspensions of abuse should be reported to the Town Clerk

You must not:

- have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults
- allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour
- make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children, young people or vulnerable adults
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- either exaggerate or trivialise abuse issues
- show favouritism to any individual
- rely on your good name or that of the Council's to protect you
- believe "it could never happen to me"
- take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach.

You should give guidance and support to inexperienced helpers.

Confidentiality

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only. Information should be stored in a secure place and in line with data protection principles.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Corporate Services Committee.