

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Last review date: March 2026

Next review date: March 2029

Policy Statement

Stansfield Parish Council is committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Parish Council.

Introduction and Purpose:

This policy sets out how Stansfield Parish Council operates to keep adults at risk of abuse or neglect and children safe from abuse. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur. We have a Duty of Care to our volunteers and service users. We are committed to the protection and safety of adults at risk and children whether they are volunteers and/or participants in our activities. We will protect and support the volunteers who work with us as well as users of our services. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. Children's legislation includes the

Children's Acts 1989 and 2004. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. For our safeguarding policy to be effective every councillor, lay member, volunteer, and staff member who supports us whatever their role, will play their part in keeping people safe.

Policy Objectives:

1. To ensure that where possible all facilities and activities offered by the Parish Council are designed and maintained to limit risk to children and vulnerable people.
2. To promote the general welfare, health and development of children by being aware of child protection issues and to be able to respond where appropriate as a local government organisation.
3. To develop procedures in recording and responding to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse and neglect.
4. As the Parish Council does not directly provide care or supervision services to children, it expects all children using its facilities to do so with the consent and the necessary supervision of a parent or other responsible adult.

Aims

The aim of this policy document is to guide members of Stansfield Parish Council should any child or vulnerable adult protection issue arise during their work.

Definitions:

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect

For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to paragraph 42.1 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it. If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk

Children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy will apply to all staff, contractors and volunteers and will be used to support their work. "Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children" is defined in Working Together 2018 as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
 - preventing impairment of children's health and development
 - ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- Persons affected by this policy
- All councillors, lay members, volunteers and employed staff
 - All service users
 - All visitors and contractors

Our Policy

STANSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. There are no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect adults at risk and children from abuse, exploitation, radicalisation and mistreatment. STANSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL recognises that under the Care Act 2014 it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised. The welfare of the child and/ or adult at risk is paramount and all adults have the right to protection from abuse. We are committed to working with appropriate agencies including Suffolk Social Care, Suffolk Safeguarding Teams and the police etc. to ensure the reporting of abuse is appropriate and in line with local, national and Charity Commission requirements and Information Sharing guidance. A Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) will be appointed from within the Council. Appropriate recruitment of councillors, lay members, volunteers and staff is in place including policies on when to obtain a DBS check. We will create an environment where councillors, lay members, volunteers and staff feel able to raise safeguarding concerns and feel supported with their safeguarding responsibilities. Appropriate Safeguarding training may be provided to councillors, lay members, volunteers and staff as part of their induction and a safeguarding refresher course will be provided every three years, where appropriate.

Responsibilities & Procedures

- Decisions on which portfolio responsibilities should require the individual holding them to be checked through Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) will be made by the Council or the Chairman after consultation with the Clerk following risk assessment.
- A councillor will hold responsibility for STANSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL's safeguarding arrangements. This may involve the delegation of the role of DSO to the Parish Clerk
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) is responsible for ensuring that:
 - o Any safeguarding incident reported to them is handled in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and also referred to the Council for further action as appropriate and future risk assessment.
 - o information about child protection and good practice is shared with partner organisations, councillors, employees, volunteers, parents and carers.
 - o Facilities offered by the Parish Council have been inspected on a regular basis and at least annually by a representative of RoSPA or a similar organisation.
 - o In the event of a contractor, working directly for the Parish Council, being deemed to be working in any area where children may be at risk, then that contractor will be asked to provide their Child Protection Policy.
 - o before any Parish Council organised event with children or vulnerable persons, participants are briefed appropriately.
- All councillors, lay members, volunteers and staff:
 - o who come into contact with adults at risk of abuse, and children and their families as part of their Stansfield Parish Council duties will be alert to possible signs of abuse and consider whether there may be safeguarding concerns.
 - o be aware of the appropriate reporting and support procedure for safeguarding including the reporting of people at risk of radicalisation and extremism and discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity o will adhere to the 'List of Recommended Behaviour' namely:
 - A minimum of two adults present when supervising children.
 - Adults to wear appropriate clothing at all times
 - Adults not to play physical contact games.
 - Ensure that accidents are recorded in an accident book.
 - Never do anything of a personal nature for a young person.

Declaration

Stansfield Parish Council is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of children by protecting them from physical, sexual, emotional harm and neglect. All members of Stansfield Parish Council should read the Council's Safeguarding Policy. Having read the Policy, they should be proactive in providing a safe environment for children and vulnerable people who are involved in Parish Council activities. This Policy will be reviewed annually at the first meeting following the Annual Parish Council meeting.