



Safeguarding policy and procedures

Adopted 12/05/2025

Version:	Date Approved/reviewed:	Review Date:
1.0	10/09/2018	01/07/2019
2.0	22/07/2019	01/08/2020
3.0	27/07/2020	01/08/2021
4.0	19/07/2021	01/08/2022
5.0	18/07/2022	01/08/2023
6.0	18/08/2023	01/08/2024
7.0	12/05/2025	01/08/2026

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Pembury Parish Council ("the Council") acknowledge our responsibilities to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults (vulnerable people). This policy outlines how we will promote the safety and welfare of vulnerable people using Council facilities.
- 1.2. This policy will be reviewed by the Council every year.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy is for use by all Councillors, staff, volunteers and those associated with the Council

3. Purpose of the policy

- 3.1. To provide protection for the vulnerable people who use the Council's facilities and services.
- 3.2. To provide Councillors, staff and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a vulnerable person may be experiencing, or be at risk of, harm.
- 3.3. To provide guidance and procedures they should adopt regarding possible allegations against Councillors, staff or volunteers.
- 3.4. To provide Councillors, staff and volunteers with guidance and procedures they should adopt should they be concerned that a vulnerable person is experiencing, or at risk of harm.
- 3.5. This policy should be read in conjunction with other related Council policies and procedures including the Council's Code of Conduct.

4. Protecting Vulnerable People – Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults – Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- 4.1. **Children and Young People** are any persons under the age of 18 years.
- 4.2. **Safeguarding children** is defined in '[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)' (2018) as:
 - 4.2.1. *Preventing children from maltreatment*
 - 4.2.2. *Preventing impairment of children's health and development*

4.2.3. *Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and*

4.2.4. *Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.*

4.3. **Child protection** is part of the safeguarding process. It focuses on protecting individual children identified as suffering or likely to suffer 'significant harm'.

4.4. **Significant harm** is defined in The Children Act 1989 as 'the ill treatment or impairment of health and development'. This definition was clarified in section 120 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (implemented on 31 January 2005) so that it may include, "for example, impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill treatment of another". Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, Emotional Abuse and Neglect are all categories of Significant Harm (see appendix 1)

4.5. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) states that any professionals with concerns about a child's welfare should make a referral to local authority children's social care.

5. Protecting Vulnerable Adults – definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

5.1. **Vulnerable Adults** are any persons over 18 who are:

5.1.1. Unable to care for themselves

5.1.2. Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation

5.1.3. Or may be in need of community care services.

5.2. **Safeguarding vulnerable adults** means protecting them from maltreatment and preventing injury or significant harm. Abuse violates an adult's human and civil rights. It can vary from treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering.

5.3. A safeguarding concern arises if abuse is suspected or disclosed. Abuse can happen anywhere at home, in a residential or nursing home, a hospital, in the workplace, at a day centre or educational establishment or in the street.

6. Vulnerable People are defined as children, young adults or vulnerable adults.

7. Council Facilities

7.1. Any possible safeguarding concerns regarding vulnerable people that occur at Council facilities must be reported immediately to Social Services or the Police and when appropriate, the Clerk.

8. Pembury Recreation Ground and Play Facilities

- 8.1. The Council provides a Recreation Ground with play equipment for the children and young people of the parish.
- 8.2. The Council will provide safe facilities and undertake regular safety assessments of these.
- 8.3. All children and young people under the age of 18 visiting the Recreation Ground remain the responsibility of their parents or guardians whilst using these facilities. Signage will be installed reminding users of this.
- 8.4. Any concerns regarding anti-social behaviour, vandalism or possible criminal activity will be reported to the Police.

9. Other Parish Facilities

- 9.1. There are other facilities (Pembury Village Hall, Recreation Ground Football Pavilion and Pembury Bowls Club) for which the Council is Guardian Trustee and/or landowner but which as Trusts are run by legally constituted Management Committees which are responsible for all aspects of operation and management including safeguarding of vulnerable people. These bodies endeavour for their premises to be a safe environment for use by a wide range of individuals and groups. To be of assistance a copy of this policy has been provided to all these other bodies.

10. Contact Vulnerable People

- 10.1. Councillors, staff and volunteers are not required to undertake activities that involve them being on their own with vulnerable people and are asked not to put themselves in possible vulnerable situations.
- 10.2. We ask that Councillors, staff and volunteers recognise their position of trust in the local community and behave appropriately at all times.
- 10.3. All Councillors, staff and volunteers must adhere to these safeguarding procedures and report any issues or concerns accordingly.
- 10.4. Any concerns about a Councillor, member of staff or volunteer and their conduct or contact with vulnerable people must be raised immediately with the Clerk and the relevant authorities (see section below).

11. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

- 11.1. Any concerns regarding the welfare of vulnerable people in the village should be reported immediately to the relevant social care team.

11.2. During the day and in office hours:

11.2.1. **Concerned about an adult?** Call **03000 41 61 61** (text relay 18001 03000 41 61 61) or email social.services@kent.gov.uk.

11.2.2. **Concerned about a child?** Call **03000 41 11 11** (text relay 18001 03000 41 11 11) or email social.services@kent.gov.uk.

11.3. Out of hours and in an emergency

11.3.1. If you need to contact Social Services outside of normal office hours, for example during the night, call **03000 41 91 91**.

11.3.2. **If you think someone is in immediate danger, the best thing to do is call 999 for the emergency services.**

11.3.3. If you have concerns about a Councillor, member of staff or volunteer contact the Clerk, who must contact the [Local Authority Designated Officer \(LADO\)](#) on 03000 41 08 88 or kentchildrenslado@kent.gov.uk.

11.4. When appropriate the Council can also be contacted:

The Clerk
Pembury Parish Council
Parish Office
Lower Green Recreation Ground
Pembury TN2 4DZ
Tel: 01892 823193

12. Procedures to be followed by a member of the Council in the event of a concern being reported to them.

12.1. If you are approached by a vulnerable person, with a disclosure that they are being, or has been harmed or abused, or you are informed of such a disclosure by a colleague or member of the public,

12.1.1. Do:

- Stay calm.
- Provide a listening ear and an open mind.
- Be reassuring, particularly that the individual is doing the right thing by telling you.

- Record the information you are provided with and report as quickly as possible to your Clerk who will decide what further action will need to be taken.
- Make it clear that you have a duty to refer the matter on and that the information is likely to be shared with the relevant persons on a need to know basis.
- Make a record of the time, date and persons present.

12.2. Allegations against Councillors, staff or volunteers:

12.2.1. **Don't:**

- Promise to keep the information secret.
- Stop the individual who is freely recalling significant events.
- Make the individual tell anyone else. They may have to be formally interviewed later and it is important to minimise the number of times information is repeated.
- Make any suggestions to the individual about how the incident may have happened.
- Never ask a child why this happened or ask leading questions.
- Use your own words – note down the exact child's words
- Question the individual, except to clarify what they are saying.
- Discuss the information with anyone other than the Clerk, or the relevant safeguarding professionals involved.

12.2.2. All Councillors, members of staff and volunteers should take care not to put themselves in potentially vulnerable situations. For example, inappropriate use of the internet or being alone with a vulnerable person in the Parish Offices.

12.2.3. The following outlines the steps you should take if you are concerned that the behaviour of a Councillor, member of staff or volunteer is threatening, or potentially threatening, the well-being or welfare of a vulnerable person.

12.2.4. If you are concerned that a Councillor, member of staff or volunteer is harming or abusing a vulnerable person, or acting inappropriately in their behaviour or conduct, you must immediately contact the Clerk who will

report your concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Social Services department or Police.

- 12.2.5. If a person, such as a member of the public reports safeguarding concerns to you about a Councillor, member of staff or volunteer then you must immediately inform the Clerk who will report your concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Social Services department or Police.
- 12.2.6. If the allegation is against the Clerk, then another suitably senior member of staff should be contacted immediately, or you can contact the LADO directly for advice and consultation.
- 12.2.7. **No attempt should be made to investigate the allegation before consultation has been made with the LADO.**
- 12.2.8. The Council adhere to the Kent County Council Managing Allegations Against Staff Practice Guidance (March 2017) and KCC procedures, which can be accessed via the Kent Safeguarding Children Board website www.kscmp.org.uk.

13. Other national safeguarding priorities

13.1. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

- 13.1.1. Female genital mutilation, also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting, is defined as the range of procedures which involve "the partial or complete removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or any other non-therapeutic reason" Source: World Health Organisation.
- 13.1.2. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as amended by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) introduced a mandatory reporting duty for all regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales. Professionals must make a report to the police, if, in the course of their duties they are informed by a girl under the age of 18 that she has undergone an act of FGM OR they observe physical signs that an act of FGM may have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18.
- 13.1.3. If Councillors, staff or volunteers obtain any information that indicates that a child may have had FGM or may be at risk of having FGM, then they must contact Social Services immediately.
- 13.1.4. FGM procedures can be found on the Kent Safeguarding Children Board website www.ksmpb.org.uk.

14. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

- 14.1. A child is sexually abused when they are forced or persuaded to take part in sexual activities. This doesn't have to be physical contact, and it can happen online. (NSPCC).
- 14.2. **Child sexual exploitation (CSE)** is a type of sexual abuse in which children are sexually exploited for money, power or status. Children or young people may be tricked into believing they're in a loving, consensual relationship. They might be invited to parties and given drugs and alcohol.
- 14.3. **'Say Something If You See Something'**. Kent has recently launched a campaign to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation called Operation Willow. If you have concerns about a child or young person whom you believe is at risk of sexual exploitation call Kent Police on **101** quoting Operation Willow. You can also contact the National Child Sexual Exploitation Helpline on **0800 800 5000** or email **help@nspcc.org.uk**.

15. Radicalisation

- 15.1. A process by which an individual or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or reject and/or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice.
- 15.2. The Counter Terrorism Security Act 2015 Requires public bodies, including local authorities, health, schools and others to act to **prevent** people from being drawn into terrorism, ensuring awareness of risks of terrorism.
- 15.3. If a Councillor, staff member or volunteer is concerned that a vulnerable person is at risk of being radicalised then they must contact Social Services.

Appendix 1 **Definitions of abuse (NSPCC):**

Physical Abuse

In relation to children:

Physical Abuse is a form of Significant Harm which may involve including hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child

In relation to adults:

The non-accidental infliction of physical force that results in bodily injury, pain or impairment. Examples of such behaviour include: hitting, pushing, slapping, scalding, shaking, kicking, pinching, hair-pulling, the inappropriate application of techniques or treatments, involuntary isolation or confinement, misuse of medication. N.B. inadvertent physical abuse may also arise from poor practice, e.g. poor manual handling techniques.

Sexual Abuse

The following definition is taken from Working Together to Safeguard Children.

In relation to children:

Sexual abuse is a form of Significant Harm which involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the Internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

In relation to adults:

Direct or indirect involvement in sexual activity without valid consent. Consent to a particular activity may not be given because:

- A person has Capacity and does not want to give it;
- A person lacks Capacity and is therefore unable to give it;
- A person feels coerced into activity because the other person is in a position of trust, power or authority.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a form of [Significant Harm](#) which involves the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or "making fun" of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including [Cyberbullying](#)) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Neglect

In relation to children:

Neglect is a form of [Significant Harm](#) which involves the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

In relation to adults:

The repeated deprivation of assistance that the person needs for important activities of daily living, including a failure to intervene in behaviour which is dangerous to them or to others, or poor manual handling techniques.

Under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, wilful neglect and ill-treatment of a person lacking [Capacity](#) becomes a criminal offence.

Self-neglect on the part of an adult will not usually lead to the initiation of Adult Protection Procedures unless the situation involves a significant act of commission or omission by someone else with established responsibility for an adult's care. Other assessment and

review procedures, including risk assessment procedures, may prove a more appropriate intervention in situations of self-neglect