



EARLEY TOWN COUNCIL

CHILD PROTECTION & VULNERABLE PERSONS POLICY

Policy Statement

Earley Town 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 Town Council.

Policy Objective

It is the policy of Earley Town Council to safeguard children and vulnerable adults taking part in all our activities from physical, sexual or emotional harm. Earley Town Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that, through appropriate procedures and trainings, children participating in activities do so in a safe environment. We recognise that the welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount and that all children and vulnerable adults have an equal right to protection from abuse.

Aims

The aim of this policy document is to guide members of Earley Town Council should any child protection issue arise during their work.

The Designated Person

The Designated Person is the Town Clerk. In the absence of the Town Clerk, the Deputy Town Clerk will act as their deputy. If the Town Clerk is implicated, refer to the Chair of the Council.

The Designated Person has responsibility for:

- Ensuring all staff, volunteers and Town Council members are aware of and follow the ETC safeguarding procedures.
- Being the first point of contact for any concerns or allegations from children or adults and ensuring that confidentiality is maintained in all cases.
- Deciding on the appropriate action to be taken in line with ETC's procedures and record all actions and findings.
- Keeping the relevant authorities informed as necessary,

Reporting Incidents

It is the duty of any officer, volunteer or Member to report any concerns about a child or vulnerable adult and any issues of poor practice. All reports made will be confidential.

If a person discloses to you abuse by someone else:

- Stay calm and allow the person to speak without interruption.
- Do not ask leading questions, but you can ask if there is anything else they want to tell you.
- Reassure that child or vulnerable adult that they have done the right thing by talking to someone.
- Be honest and explain that you must pass this information but their disclosure will be treated sensitively.

Immediately record all the details that you are aware of and if taking a disclosure from a child or vulnerable adult, use their own words. Include in your record:

- Date and time
- Name, address, age or date of birth of the child/vulnerable adult
- Any contact details of a parent or guardian
- The nature of the allegation
- Your own observations e.g. their emotional state or any visible injuries
- In the event of a disclosure: exactly what the individual said and your response
- Sign and date the record

Role of the Designated Person

Where information is reported that a person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child or vulnerable adult is suffering, or is at risk of suffering, significant harm, the Designated Person will refer the concerns to Wokingham Borough Council Social Care Team.

Where the information received indicates the possible commission or attempted commission of a criminal offence, the matter will also be referred by the Designated Person to Thames Valley Police.

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.

Any individual against whom an allegation has been made has the right to be notified about the cause for concern. This should be done in consultation with Social Care, and if appropriate, the Police. It is important that the timing of this does not prejudice any investigation.

Safe Recruitment

Earley Town Council takes safe recruitment seriously and adheres to the following process:

- All prospective employees will be interviewed
- Two appropriate references are taken up for the successful candidate
- Original certificates for any relevant training or qualifications must be provided
- Proof of identification must be provided on the first day of employment
- If the role requires, a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) will be carried out
- All staff will receive a full induction and be provided with all ETC policies and procedures
- All employees will undergo a six month probationary period.

Use of Contractors

In the event of a contractor, working directly for the Town 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.

Code of Practice and Behaviour

These guidelines have been devised to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse, as well as to protect staff, volunteers and elected members.

The guidelines apply to those working with vulnerable persons or children involved in activities organised by Earley Town Council or on behalf of Earley Town Council or at services provided by Earley Town Council.

You must:

- Treat everyone with respect, regardless of their age, ethnicity, social background, ability, sexual orientation, culture or religious beliefs.
- Provide an example of good conduct you wish others to follow.
- Wear appropriate clothing at all times.
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned.
- Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive topics such as bullying, bereavement, abuse or personal development.
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse.

You must not:

- Engage in physical horseplay such as wrestling or tickling
- Have any inappropriate verbal or physical contact with children or vulnerable people, or make suggestive remarks or gestures.
- Permit abusive youth peer activities such as ridiculing or bullying
- Play physical contact games with children or vulnerable adults
- Carry out tasks of a personal nature for the child or vulnerable adult
- Fail to respond to an allegation made by a child or vulnerable adult

All staff, volunteers and Members are responsible for:

- Following good practice and guidelines
- Recognising any training needs and asking for assistance and guidance from Line Managers if appropriate.
- Recognising signs of abuse.
- Reporting all concerns, no matter how small.

Declaration

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

All members of Earley Town Council should read the Council's Child Protection Policy. Having read the Policy they should be proactive in providing a safe environment for children and vulnerable people who are involved in Earley Town Council activities.

Date of policy: September 2020

Approving committee: Policy & Resources Committee

Date of committee meeting: 16th September 2020

Policy effective from:

Date for next review: September 2022

Child Protection & Vulnerable Persons Incident Record Form

This form must be completed and passed to the Designated Person without delay

Earley Town Council Venue and/or Club/Activity:	
Your Name:	
Your Position:	
Child's Name/Vulnerable Adult's Name:	
Child's/Vulnerable Adult's Contact Details:	
Child's Date of Birth: (if applicable):	
Date and time of incident:	
Your Observations:	
Record the exact conversation, both parties: (Remember not to lead the child/vulnerable adult) Record factual details – continue on a separate sheet if necessary)	
Signature: Print Name: Date: By signing this form I confirm this is a true and factual account of the findings. To maintain the confidentiality of this allegation, I confirm I will not discuss the incident with anyone other than those who need to know	

To be completed by Designated Person

Action taken so far:

External Agencies Contacted

1. Agency Name & Department:

Date & Time:

Name and Contact Number:

Advice Received:

2. Agency Name & Department:

Date & Time:

Name and Contact Number:

Advice Received:

Additional Information / Follow Up Steps

Signature:

Print Name:

Date:

