Kimberley Town Council

Safeguarding Children Policy

Adopted by Full Council on 25th April 2024 TC/24/018

Whilst abuse and neglect are everyone's business, local authorities have the lead role in co-ordinating the response to safeguarding children.

Safeguarding children means protecting a child's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. This Policy is designed to describe what Kimberley Town Council's role is in safeguarding children.

Principally our role is to recognise and respond to cases of apparent abuse and neglect.

Protecting children at risk is the duty of all staff including paid and unpaid staff, councillors, contractors and anyone who fulfils a role within Kimberley Town Council.

To do this we need to understand:

- What abuse and neglect are
- Who may be at risk
- How we may be alerted to the possibility of historic or current abuse
- How we record information
- How we approach confidentiality when it comes to alerting the appropriate authorities
- How and to whom we report suspected abuse

The aim of Kimberley Town Council's Safeguarding Children Policy is to ensure:

- The needs and interests of children at risk are respected and upheld
- The human rights of children at risk are respected and upheld
- A proportionate, timely, professional and ethical response is made to any child at risk who may be experiencing abuse

Child Protection
Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting welfare; it refers to the actions taken to protect specific children who are suffering or at risk of suffering 'significant harm'.

Significant Harm
The Children Act 1989 states that abuse should be considered to have happened when someone's actions have caused a child to suffer **significant harm** to their health or development. Significant harm includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. It may be a single violent episode or a series of significant events which interrupt, damage or change the child's development.

Abuse and Neglect
Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm:

- Physical abuse includes hitting, shaking, poisoning, burning, suffocating, or fabricating the symptoms of, or deliberately inducing illness in a child or young person.
- Emotional abuse includes persistently telling a child or young person that they are worthless or unloved, overprotection or preventing participation in normal social interaction. It may also involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another.
- Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact or involving children in watching pornographic material or sexual activity.
- Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Abuse and neglect can take place in a variety of settings including in the child or young person's home, with their family or friends, in their neighbourhood or in health, social care, educational, social and leisure settings.

Responsibilities:
All staff, councillors and volunteers have a duty of care to recognise the signs of abuse and to take action where it is reported. Our policy and procedures commit staff, councillors and volunteers to responding promptly to all allegations or suspicions or abuse. Kimberley Town Council's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will ensure that our Safeguarding Policy and Procedures are implemented consistently across the organisation.

Any member of staff, councillor, or volunteer should approach the DSL with any concerns of abuse. They should then:

- Make a safeguarding referral to Nottinghamshire County Council's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by calling 0300 500 80 90
- Consider whether the Police should be informed and contact them if required
- Document all actions, conversations and reasons for decisions made,
- Pass documentation of abuse related events to the DSL