

GOOLE TOWN COUNCIL

## Child Protection Policy

Updated December 2012



Goole Town Council acknowledges that the welfare of children and young people is paramount and that all children, without exception, have a right to protection from harm. Goole Town Council accepts its legal and moral responsibilities in creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for children and young people who access Council services.

**All child protection concerns should be acted upon immediately. If you are concerned that a child is at risk of or actually suffering abuse, you should tell the designated child protection officer within your Organisation.**

**Your Designated Officers are: Nicola Dixon and Charlie Studdy**

**Telephone Number: Nicola 01405 800816 Charlie 01405 800818 \*out of hours number will be included in policies to staff**

**If the designated officer is not available, you must speak to a senior member of staff. In an emergency, or if you do not agree with the decision made by your child protection officer, you can make a referral directly yourself.**

Referrals can be made by visiting or telephoning the East Riding of Yorkshire Council Customer Service Centre in the area the child lives, or by telephoning the main Customer Service Centre on 01482 393939. If your concern is out of hours or at the weekend you can call the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 01482 880826.

Advice is available 24 hours a day from NSPCC on **0808 800 5000**, [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) or text **88858** [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

## Every Child Matters:

Change for Children was published in November 2004. This publication emphasised that no single agency could be responsible for meeting the needs of all children and families.

The Change for Children Programme focussed on reducing inequalities, improving outcomes for all children and helping them to achieve:

- **Be healthy:** enjoying good physical and mental health and enjoying a healthy lifestyle
- **Stay Safe:** being protected from harm and abuse
- **Enjoy and achieve:** getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood
- **Make a positive contribution:** being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour
- **Achieve economic well-being:** not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life

It is difficult to acknowledge that abuse or harm could take place within Goole Town Council but any group working with children is vulnerable. It is the responsibility of all of us to put the welfare of children and young people first, and to recognise behaviours that can put children at risk. Under the terms of the Children Act 2004, anyone up to the age of 18 is considered to be a child/young person.

All organisations need to have appropriate arrangements in place for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. These arrangements should include:

- Procedures for staff and others to report concerns they may have about the children they meet that are in line with the East Riding Safeguarding Children Board's procedures
- Appropriate codes of practice for staff, particularly those working directly with children
- Recruitment procedures in accordance with Every Child Matters: Change for Children Programme ([www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)); Working Together to Safeguard Children Guide to Inter Agency Working ([www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/safeguarding](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/safeguarding)) and the East Riding Safeguarding Children Board ([www.erscb.org.uk](http://www.erscb.org.uk))
- Training and Supervision of staff (both paid and voluntary).

We are aware that many children and young people are the victims of different kinds of abuse and that they can be subjected to social factors that can have an adverse impact upon their lives, such as domestic violence, parental substance misuse or neglect.

We aim to create a safe and fun environment within which children and young people can thrive in the security of clear guidance.

These guidelines are for the use of all paid staff, volunteers, visitors and the parents and carers of the children and young people we offer a service to and through them, we will endeavour to ensure that:

- Children and young people are listened to, valued and respected
- All paid staff and volunteers are subject to rigorous recruitment procedures and where eligible a Disclosure and Barring Service check (formally the Criminal Records Board (CRB) clearance)
- All paid staff and volunteers are given appropriate child protection training, support and, where appropriate, supervision.

## **Areas of Application**

Most of the Council's work with children and young people is through Junction. However, grounds maintenance and other staff also come into contact with children and young people during their work. Therefore, this policy and associated procedures apply to all members of Goole Town Council and staff. In addition, visiting companies, freelance workers and volunteers who the council engage in work involving regular one to one contact with children or young people shall be given a copy of this document and will be required to complete the declaration at the back.

It is a condition that any group or organisation seeking or receiving support from this council and which works with children or young people shall have their own Child Protection policy in place (this can be based on the council's policy, adapted as necessary for particular needs).

Any group or organisation hiring Junction that works regularly with children or young people sign a hire agreement which stipulates they must have a Child Protection Policy and where eligible DBS checks on their staff.

The Guidelines are divided in to the following sections:

1. Understanding & Recognising Signs of Abuse
2. What to do with your concerns and how to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse
3. Allegations made against staff
4. Safe Behaviour - Good Practice
5. Safe Behaviour - Unacceptable Practice
6. Safe Recruitment
7. Contacts
8. Declaration

### **1. Understanding and Recognising Signs of Abuse**

Most children receive the love and care they need to grow up as healthy and happy young people. However, some children can end up being hurt, neglected or abused which means they may not be being treated in a safe and proper manner. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by telephone or on the internet. Abuse is usually carried out by people known to the child and sometimes by strangers.

It can be difficult to recognise abuse and the signs listed in these guidelines are only indicators and many can have reasonable explanations. Children may appear unhappy or behave strangely for many reasons as they grow through the stages of childhood and/or their families experience changes. It is still necessary to be alert to the signs of the possibilities of abuse and the responsibility to consult and discuss those concerns.

Form of abuse	Signs
<p><b>Physical abuse:</b> May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unexplained or untreated injuries</li> <li>• injuries on unlikely parts of the body</li> <li>• burns, scalds, bite or belt marks</li> <li>• fear of parents being contacted, going home or receiving medical advice</li> <li>• refusal to discuss injury</li> <li>• covering arms and legs</li> </ul>
<p><b>Emotional abuse:</b> This is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to the child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar that they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• poor self esteem</li> <li>• behavioural changes</li> <li>• over-reaction to mistakes</li> <li>• sudden speech disorders</li> <li>• extremes of emotion</li> <li>• self-mutilation</li> <li>• depression</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sexual abuse:</b> involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. These activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities such as involving children looking at, or in the production of pornographic materials or watching sexual activities or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complaints of pain/injury in the genital area or stomach pains</li> <li>• discomfort when walking</li> <li>• unexplained sources of money</li> <li>• inappropriate drawings, language, knowledge or behaviour</li> <li>• aggressive, withdrawn behaviour or fear of one person</li> <li>• sudden changes in mood</li> <li>• nightmares</li> </ul>
<p><b>Neglect:</b> is 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. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, failure to protect a child from physical harm or danger, 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• poor personal hygiene</li> <li>• dishevelled appearance</li> <li>• constant hunger or tiredness</li> <li>• underweight</li> <li>• lonely, no friends</li> <li>• no parental support or interest</li> <li>• inadequate or inappropriate clothing</li> </ul>

## **2. What to do with your concerns and how to respond to a child wanting to talk about abuse**

In the event that a child or young person makes an allegation or disclosure of abuse about an adult or another child or young person it is important that you:

- Listen to them and/or closely observe their presentation and behaviour
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events.

- Never promise the child that what they have told you can be kept a secret. Explain that you have a responsibility to report what the child has said to someone else;
- Do not try to question the child in detail. If a child tells you someone has hurt them, listen carefully and explain that you will have to tell someone else who will help them to stop this happening. Tell them that you believe them.
- Make a note of what is said as soon as possible, remembering the exact words used if you can. Do not make judgements, rather evidence based recordings. Sign and date your notes. GTC has a Child Protection Report Form (kept in Child Protection folder in Box Office) which will also need filling in.
- Inform your designated Child Protection Officer as soon as possible and complete Child Protection Report Form within 48 hours.
- Where possible it is good practice to inform the parent/carer of the disclosure and referral, this you can discuss with the Child Protection Officer. However, **do not inform the person named as the abuser if you feel this might place the child at risk of further harm.**
- Do not discuss concerns/allegations/disclosures with other people. The child/young person and family have a right to confidentiality with only people who 'need to know' sharing the information.

Sometimes you may just feel concerned about a child but do not know whether to share your concerns or not. In this situation you should always raise your concerns with your designated Child Protection Officer, who will help you decide what to do.

**It is not however the responsibility of the Child Protection Co-ordinator or other staff to investigate suspected abuse.**

The responsibility for investigating allegations of abuse, whether they result from the disclosure of a child or young person or the concerns of an adult, lies with Children's Social Care social workers and police officers from the Family Protection Unit. It is normally the responsibility of your designated child protection co-ordinator to make a referral to these agencies but if you judge the situation to be urgent and/or you require immediate advice you can report your concerns directly.

Either the Children's Social Care worker or the Family Protection Unit officer will advise you if or when to inform the child's parents or carers about any concerns. If they decide to pursue a child protection investigation you should;

- Work closely and collaboratively with all professionals involved in the investigation, in order to keep the child safe;
- Attend a child protection conference, if you are invited, where you will be asked to provide information about your involvement with the child. This is one of the reasons why it is important to keep dated records of your concerns;
- Attend any subsequent child protection conferences.

*You can find out more detail about the identification of abuse and what to do about it in the booklet, "**What to do if you are worried a child is being abused**". This is available both from your local Safeguarding Children Board, [www.erscb.org.uk](http://www.erscb.org.uk) or from the DCSF website, [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk). There are copies of these and other useful documents in the Child Protection Folder in Box Office.*

## DEALING WITH CHILD WELFARE CONCERNS

**STAFF MEMBER HAS CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD'S WELFARE**



**ADDRESS CONCERNS WITH PARENTS / CARERS**  
(Unless to do so would place the child / young person at risk of significant harm)

**DISCUSS CONCERNS WITH CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER**  
Nicola Dixon during office hours 01405 880816 emergency out of hours 07825 232073  
Charlie Studdy during office hours 01405 880818 emergency out of hours 07724 211632

**COMPLETE GOOLE TOWN COUNCIL REPORT FORM**



**IF STILL CONCERNED, MAKE A REFERRAL TO THE SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT/POLICE**  
ERYC Social Services Emergency Duty Team (out of office hours) 01482 880824=6  
POLICE Humberside Police Family Protection Unit 01430 808406  
EAST RIDING SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD 01482 396999



**FOLLOW-UP REFERRAL IN WRITING WITHIN 48 HOURS**  
Using GTC report form from Box Office. Return it to Junction, Paradise Place, Goole DN14 5DL Marked CONFIDENTIAL fao CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER



**SOCIAL SERVICE MAKE DECISION ON WHAT ACTION TO TAKE WITHIN 24 HOURS AND SHOULD INFORM REFERRER IN WRITING OF OUTCOME OF THEIR REFERRAL**

### 3. Allegations made against staff

All organisations that work or come in to contact with children and young people need to be aware of the possibility that allegations may be made against members of their staff or volunteers. Allegations will usually be that some kind of abuse has taken place. They may be made by a child, young person or another concerned adult. Allegations may be made for a variety of reasons, some of them being that:

- Abuse has actually taken place

- Something happens to a child that reminds them of an event that happened in the past – the child is unable to recognise that the people and situation are different
- Your language or actions are misinterpreted by a child or young person because they are reminded of someone else
- Some children know how powerful an allegation can be and, if they are angry or upset with you, have made the allegation as a way of hitting out
- An allegation can be a way of seeking attention.

It may be difficult to accept that abuse could occur within GTC or that the person being named could be responsible but **all allegations should be brought to the attention of the child protection coordinator immediately**. In cases where the allegation is against the co-ordinator the complaint should be taken to a more senior member of the organisation or you should take the following action yourself:

- Make sure that the child or young person is safe and away from the person alleged to have abused them
- Speak to Child Protection Officer immediately who will investigate and if necessary
  - Contact Children's Social Care Services as explained above
  - Contact the parents/carers of the child if advised to do so by the social worker or police officer in charge of the investigation
  - Irrespective of any investigation by Children's Social Care Services or the police, GTC will follow the appropriate disciplinary procedures. Common practice is for the alleged abuser to be suspended from attending the organisation or workplace until the outcome of any investigation is known;
  - Consider whether the alleged abuser has access to children anywhere else and whether those organisations or groups need to be informed;
  - Act upon the decisions made in any strategy decision from Childrens Social Care/ERSCB/Police

All incidents will be investigated internally, after any external investigation has finished, to review practice and put in place any additional measures to prevent a similar thing happening again. Where an allegation is deemed unfounded or where a member of staff requires retraining, full support will be given to that member of staff. If an allegation is upheld GTC disciplinary procedures will commence.

The Council will follow guidance from the Safeguarding Childrens Board, the Police and the Children's Social Care Services on dealing with allegations.

We encourage an environment where people feel safe to express their concerns about the practice of others. If a staff member, volunteer or participant has concerns they should not be victimised in any way for expressing them.

#### **4. Safe Behaviour - Promoting Good Practice**

Promoting good practice is aimed at minimising the situations in which harm or abuse could occur and to help protect staff, freelancers and volunteers from false allegations.

As staff and volunteers you should -

- ✓ Always put the welfare of children and young people first.
- ✓ Treat all children and young people with respect and dignity (and feel entitled to expect the same in return).

- ✓ Always work in an open environment, i.e. avoiding private or unobserved situations and wherever possible with a minimum of two adults present.
- ✓ Always consider with the young people involved if parents/carers/others are to be allowed to watch an activity. This may be particularly relevant, for example, at a dance class.
- ✓ Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- ✓ Be aware of any special needs of any child or young person, whether due to cultural, religious, medical, physical, emotional or other needs, prior to working with them.
- ✓ Be vigilant for anything, which may constitute a health and safety risk in the place your are to conduct activity, take appropriate action and report.
- ✓ Be sure that there is a record immediately available of the name, home address and an emergency contact number for every child involved in the activity.
- ✓ Be sure you know where to access a phone and the numbers of emergency services, Child Protection Officer and Social Services.
- ✓ Obtain formal permission from parents/carers for every use of photographs or film of activities involving children.
- ✓ Be alert to strangers frequently waiting outside a venue with no apparent purpose. Children should not be collected by anybody other than their parents unless prior notification has already been received
- ✓ if a child has not been collected after a session it is reasonable to wait for at least half an hour. If the parent or carer has still not arrived and cannot be contacted they should contact the Child Protection Officer, then the nearest duty team or the police and request advice and assistance

**As a Council we undertake to –**

- Adhere to East Riding Safeguarding Children Board (ERSCB) Guidelines and Procedures.
- Follow any guidance issued from government/ERSCB /Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)
- Ensure all staff, freelance workers and volunteers are carefully selected and accept in writing their responsibility for helping prevent abuse or harm to children in their care.
- Respond quickly and appropriately to all allegations of abuse.
- Listen to what children and young people are saying.
- Assure all staff that it will support and protect anyone who, in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague has, is or may be harming or abusing a child or whose actions may constitute poor practice.
- Require that all groups or organisations supported by the Council, which work with children and young people have an appropriate protection policy and procedures in place.
- Review the effectiveness and implementation of this policy on an annual basis.
- Have this written Child Protection Policy
- Have 2 designated Child Protection Officers who must undergo child protection training every 2 years.

- Ensure that all staff working with children should attend basic child protection training every 3 years and should have regular supervision from a more experienced staff member;
- Observe Health and Safety Regulations through risk assessments and written, safe working practices;
- Have a trained First Aider on duty at all times Junction is open to the public
- Have an accident/incident reporting procedure
- Have an attendance register for every session involving children, ensuring the registers are kept up to date with contact details.
- Encourage Child Protection Officers to visit classes unannounced
- Make sure everyone involved in the organisation actively promotes a culture of openness, where everyone (including children and young people) feels free to share their views and concerns
- Deal with any allegation about a child or adult in a confidential manner and only share the information with those who need to know
- Discourage members of staff to be left alone with a child/children where they cannot be observed by others
- Not allow members of the public to enter workshops run for children without prior consent and adequate supervision.
- Endeavour, where possible, that there should always be at least two members of staff/volunteers with a group of children – It is vital that the ratio of child to adult is adequate to ensure safety. For children under 8 no more than 1:8 and under 5 no more than 1:6

## **5. Safe Behaviour – don'ts and unacceptable practices**

Staff should avoid spending time alone with a child, or giving a child a lift to or from an activity except in an emergency e.g. child sustains an injury and needs to go to hospital or the parent/carer fails to collect a child after a session. Parents/carers should be informed of the situation as a matter of urgency and the person in charge of the session and the CPO should also be informed.

The following practices should **never** be sanctioned. You should never:

- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- Share a room with a child
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- Make sexually suggestive comments to a child or refer inappropriately to a child's physicality
- Reduce a child to tears as a form of control
- Let suspicion, disclosure or allegations of abuse, go unrecorded or unreported.
- Do things of a personal nature for a child that they can do themselves
- Invite or allow children to stay at your home

- Smoke in the presence of children or young people.
- Jump to conclusions without checking facts
- Believe 'it could never happen here'
- Believe 'it could never happen to me'

## **6. Safe Recruitment**

To reduce the risk of abuse to children and the likelihood of allegations being made that are founded, every organisation should have clear and rigorous recruitment procedures. These procedures should always include the following:

- All prospective workers (paid and voluntary) should complete an application form which asks for details of previous employment and the names of two referees. Referees should be reminded that they should not misrepresent the candidate or omit to say things that may be relevant to their employment.
- All prospective workers (paid and voluntary) who work regularly unsupervised with children and are eligible to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check must have one. Anyone who refuses to do so should not be employed.
- All prospective workers (paid and voluntary) should be interviewed to establish previous experience of working in an environment where there is contact with children and their perceptions of acceptable behaviour
- Nobody should start work before positive references have been received and the DBS process completed with a disclosure certificate received.
- All appointments to work with children should be subject to a probationary period.
- New members of staff should be clear about their responsibilities and wherever possible work to an agreed job description.
- These guidelines should be signed as read by all staff members and volunteers and be a part of any induction process.

Due to the changes to Freedom of Information in September 2012 and subsequent change from CRB to DBS, not all members of staff are eligible to receive a DBS clearance. All who work regularly and unsupervised with the same group of children or young people and who are eligible for a DBS check will have one.

## **7. Contact Numbers**

**In all cases where abuse is suspected:** the staff member must;

- Share their concerns with the CPO as a matter of urgency;
- Seek advice from the CPO or other professional if they are not available;
- Complete a Goole Town Council report form;

1. Goole Town Council CPO – Nicola Dixon 01405 800816 \*
2. Deputy CPO in the absence of the above – Charlie Studdy 01405 800818 \*
3. ERYC main customer service number for referrals (office hours): 01482 393939
4. ERYC Social Services Emergency Duty team (out of office hours): 01482 880826
5. Humberside Police Family Protection Unit: 01430 808406

Advice is available 24 hours a day from NSPCC on **0808 800 5000**, [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)  
[help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) or text **88858**

\*out of hours number will be included in policies to staff

## **8. Declaration for Goole Town Council Staff, Freelancers and Volunteers**

I confirm that I have received a copy of Goole Town Council's protection policy for children and young people and I am committed to upholding and working within the guidelines.

I have read and understood the policy and I accept my responsibility to care for the children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom I come into contact. I can confirm there is no reason why I should not have unsupervised access or otherwise to children and young people whilst working with Goole Town Council.

I have declared all my previous convictions (subject to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Acts 1974) to the organisers.

There are no disciplinary proceedings, criminal convictions, civil findings, injunctions or cautions relevant to this declaration and I am willing for (where eligible) a DBS check to be carried out.

I understand that failure to disclose or purposefully withhold such information will lead to my instant dismissal and in some circumstances may lead to criminal prosecution being taken against me.

Signature:

Print name:

Date: