



BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

APPROVED 6TH JULY 2022

1. Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. This policy promotes good practice in safeguarding for those using town council facilities.
2. Bexhill-on-Sea Town Council (the Council) will review this policy annually.
3. Definitions:
 - a) Children and young people: anyone under the age of 18 years
 - b) Vulnerable Adult: anyone over 18 who is:
 - i. Unable to care for themselves
 - ii. Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
 - iii. May need community care services
4. This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of the Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity, for example contracted to do a piece of work. It also applies to any individual hiring, leasing or using the Council facilities for the purpose of delivering any service to children, young people or vulnerable adults.
5. **Promoting a safe environment**
 - 5.1 In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, the Council will:
 - a) Provide safe facilities and do regular safety assessments
 - b) Ensure that staff, Councillors and leaders of activities in the town or in/on council facilities, are aware of the safeguarding expectations
 - c) Ensure that members of staff and volunteers who have regular unsupervised contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults during the course of their duties **MUST** undergo appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (“DBS”) checks **BEFORE** commencement of such duties
 - d) Ensure that **ALL** councillors will undergo an enhanced DBS check within two months of taking office, at no personal cost to themselves
 - e) Display on Council notice boards in the town & in the Town Hall the relevant safeguarding contacts for advice and help
 - f) A copy will also be made available on the Town Council website.
6. **Expectations of behaviour**
 - 6.1 All users of Council facilities, organisers of events and volunteers should:
 - a) Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction is appropriate and professional

- b) Treat each other with respect and show consideration for other groups using the Council facilities
- c) Refrain from any discriminatory behaviour and in addition, report any instances of such behaviour to the Chair of the Council, Clerk or parents/carers, as appropriate

7. Hiring of facilities

7.1 When hiring council facilities, the Council will require the hirer to:

- a) Have public liability insurance
- b) Have a suitable safeguarding policy and/or agree to work to the Council's policy and relevant guidance
- c) Ensure leaders make their members aware of the Council policy and ensure that it is followed whilst using Council facilities
- d) Ensure leaders have valid enhanced DBS checks as appropriate and know where the first aid boxes are and how to summon help from the Emergency Services
- e) Prepare risk assessments for individual activities

8. Safe working practice

8.1 All users of council facilities must always follow this policy. For example they should:

- a) Never leave children, young people or vulnerable adults unattended with adults who have not been subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- b) Plan activities to involve more than one person being present or at least in sight or hearing of others. Alternatively, record, or inform others of their whereabouts and intended action
- c) Where possible, have male and female leaders working with a mixed group
- d) Ensure registers are complete and attendees are marked in and signed out (under 8's must be collected by a parent/carer)
- e) Ensure that photos or videos of individuals are not taken without written permission from their parents/carers
- f) Ensure they have access to a first aid kit and telephone and know fire procedures
- g) When working outside, ensure activities, breaks and clothing are suitable for the weather conditions and that shelter is available where possible

9. Allegations against staff and volunteers

9.1 The Council should follow its own complaint procedures for managing allegations against staff/volunteers. No attempt should be made to investigate or take action before consultation with East Sussex County Council in line with the Sussex Safeguarding Policy and Procedure. East Sussex Health and Social Care Connect can be contacted on 0345 60 80 191.

10. Whistleblowing

10.1 All Councillors, staff and volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice will be sought

from the Sussex Safeguarding Team as to how to handle such allegations. The Council must not make a judgement on whether the allegations have merit for further investigation, this decision must be for the County Council team.

11. What should be a cause for concern

11.1 Staff and volunteers should be concerned by any action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child. Abuse falls into four main categories and can include child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation, referred to as FGM. The categories are as follows:

- a) Physical Abuse
- b) Emotional Abuse
- c) Sexual Abuse
- d) Neglect
- e) Financial Abuse/Manipulation

The Council is committed to ensuring the safety of all users of our services and facilities and take our responsibilities seriously. We regularly work with other agencies and East Sussex County Council to ensure compliance with changing laws and guidelines in relation to safeguarding. The Council confirms this safeguarding policy will be updated as and when such legislative/best practice changes take place or at least annually.