

Lewknor Parish Council Safeguarding Policy

March 2026 (1)

Introduction

The Parish Council recognises it has a responsibility to promote the health and welfare and safeguarding of children, young people, vulnerable adults participating and anyone with a mental health condition in activities organised by the Parish Council. This policy promotes good practice in safeguarding those using Parish Council facilities.

Definitions

- Children and young people: Anyone under the age of 18 years
- Vulnerable Adult: Anyone over 18 who is:
 - Unable to care for themselves
 - Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
 - Or may need community care services

Safeguarding

Safeguarding relates to concerns about action, or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child include, and are not limited to:

1. Physical abuse
2. Emotional abuse
3. Sexual abuse
4. Neglect

Responsibilities

The Parish Council takes the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults very seriously. By promoting good practice and addressing subjects such as bullying, emotional, physical and sexual abuse, all members of the Parish Council are working to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults will be able to pursue their chosen activity in a safe, happy and enjoyable environment.

The Parish Council and those involved in Parish Council events have a responsibility to:

- Identify Designated Persons for Safeguarding
- Ensure the health and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults whilst participating in Parish Council activities
- Respect the rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- Implement procedures to safeguard the well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults and to protect them from harm and abuse
- Prevent the radicalisation of children, young people and vulnerable adults from minority groups and be aware of this as a risk to their wellbeing
- Ensure relevant personnel to adopt and abide by this policy
- Respond to all allegations of misconduct or abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults or vulnerable adults with discretion and thoroughness
- Report any incidents or disclosures to the Designated Persons for Safeguarding

It is everyone's responsibility to report concerns, for the designated person to report it to the protection experts with the local authority to determine whether abuse has taken place.

To Whom this Policy Applies

This policy applies to anyone working for, or on behalf of, the Parish Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity (such as a contractor). It also applies to any individual hiring, leasing or use of Parish Council facilities for the purpose of delivering any service to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Lewknor Village Hall has its own Safeguarding Policy.

Promoting a Safe Environment

To promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, the Parish Council will:

- Provide safe facilities and do regular safety assessments
- Ensure that employees, councillors and leaders of activities in parish facilities, are aware of the safeguarding expectations
- Ensure that the Policy for users of parish facilities includes a requirement that they are safe to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. For example, those adults who have regular unsupervised contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults during their duties should undergo appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service checks
- Display on notice boards the relevant safeguarding contacts for advice and help.

Safe Working Practice

All users of Parish facilities must follow the safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults' policy which includes, and not limited to, the following practices.

- Never leave children, young people or vulnerable adults unattended with adults who have not been subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check
- 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
- Where possible, have male and female leaders working with a mixed group
- Ensure registers are complete and attendees are marked in and signed out (under 8's must be collected by a parent/carer)
- Ensure that recordings, photographs and videos of individuals are not taken without written permission from parents/ carers
- Ensure they have access to a first aid kit and telephone and know fire procedures
- Ensure that where a child, young person or vulnerable adult needs assistance with toilet trips and when first aid is required, that this is carried out in pairs or in the latter case, that it is carried out where they can be seen

- When working outside, ensure activities, breaks and clothing are suitable for the weather conditions and that shelter is available where possible.

Expectations of Behaviour

All users of Parish Council Facilities should:

- Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction with users should be appropriate and professional
- Treat each other with respect and show consideration for other groups using the facilities
- Refrain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism and bullying and in addition to report any instances of such behaviour to group leaders and the Parish Council Designated Person for Safeguarding or parents and carers, as appropriate.

Allegations Against Parish Councillors, Staff and Volunteers

- All councillor, staff and volunteers should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or vulnerable adult. It is advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults.
- If an allegation is made against a Parish Councillor, member of staff or volunteer, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Designated Person for Safeguarding or the Parish Clerk
- If the allegation made to a member of staff concerns the Designated Person for the Parish Clerk the recipient of the allegation will immediately inform the Chair of the Parish Council
- The Parish Council should follow the South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) procedures for managing allegations against Councillors/staff/volunteers on the SODC website. No attempt should be made to investigate or act before consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Whistleblowing

All Parish Councillors, staff and volunteers have a duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice sought from the SODC Safeguarding Team.

Contact Details.

In the event of having any concerns or wish to discuss in more detail, please contact any of the following.

- Parish Clerk:
Andy White clerk@lewknorparishcouncil.gov.uk
- Parish Chair:
Caroline Hjorth carolinehjorth@lewknorparishcouncil.gov.uk
- Designated Person:
Andrea Fawell andreaawell@lewknorparishcouncil.gov.uk

- SODC Safeguarding Team

Office hours (8.30am – 5pm, Monday to Thursday, 8.30am – 4pm, Friday): **0345 050 7666**

Outside office hours: Emergency Duty Team: **0800 833 408**

[Safeguarding - South Oxfordshire District Council](#)

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/community-help-and-safety/protecting-vulnerable-people/safeguarding-and-prevention/>